"Illustrating 'The Gold-Bug'"
John Gruesser

According to Burton R. Pollin's exhaustive *Images of Poe's Works: A Comprehensive Descriptive Catalogue of Illustrations* (1989), illustrators have depicted "The Gold-Bug" more often than any of Edgar Allan Poe's other writings--308 times, outpacing by at least fifty the number for each of the texts with the next highest totals ("The Murders in the Rue Morgue," "The Fall of the House of Usher," and "The Raven"). Images for the story began with those created by Felix Darley that accompanied the tale's initial publication in the Philadelphia *Dollar Newspaper* in June 1843. These were among the mere handful of illustrations for texts by Poe that were published during his lifetime and have the distinction of being the only ones that we know for certain were commissioned by Poe himself. In addition to its comparatively high word count and its immediate, widespread, and sustained popularity, the story has attracted illustrators because of its appeal to juvenile and adult audiences and its unique combination of elements, including detection, adventure, cryptography, local color, and humor. Not surprisingly, many images, following Darley, depict multiple figures digging for, finding, or inventorying the treasure. Others portray a single figure, either Legrand deciphering or following the steps detailed on the coded map, or Jupiter on the tree branch with the skull nailed to it. Some illustrations rely heavily on minstrel stereotypes in presenting Jupiter; others, confirming Toni Morrison's assertions about the Africanist presence in American literature in *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (1992), place him in the background or in shade vis-à-vis Legrand and the narrator.

“The Colonial Geographies of Sympathetic Ink in Edgar Allan Poe’s ‘The Gold Bug’”
Daniel Couch

Known today as “invisible ink,” nineteenth-century writers called the chemical concoctions that could conceal writing by another name—“sympathetic ink.” Starting with a publication in 1795 in *The New York Magazine*, readers encountered descriptions of sympathetic ink in American magazines (the articles often included recipes as well). While its notoriety derives from its mysteriousness and its deployment in espionage, the most common use of sympathetic ink occurred in the household, in a game called “*Winter Changed into Spring*” in which a pristine landscape was drawn in invisible ink. The ubiquity of the game in the early nineteenth century coincided with decades that saw industrialization and colonial expansion that displaced indigenous peoples and threated natural spaces. In coordination with these realities, “*Winter Changed into Spring*” offers a fiction—an anesthetized idyllic of the creation of a pristine landscape through human artistry.

Capitalizing on the interest in sympathetic ink, Poe incorporated the device into his extremely popular 1843 story, “The Gold Bug.” The use of invisible ink in “The Gold Bug” shifts the scene from Philadelphia parlors to Charleston, South Carolina. Rather than categorically yearn for a return to an (always already vanishing) pastoral existence, as some Romantics might—Poe recognizes that scientific change cannot simply be erased from history. Rather, he promotes alternative uses of nineteenth-century industry. By preventing the extension of colonial knowledge through devices of concealment, Poe imagined a world in which valuable information could be kept hidden. And, by depicting the *difficulty* of accessing information, Poe could

transform the myth of the easy domination of the landscape perpetuated by "*Winter Changed into Spring*." In contrast to celebratory accounts of information exchange, Poe's story *resists* the free circulation of information—and points out the dangers of such unfettered transmission in a limited-resource economy.

"The Duplicitous Design of Four *Supposed* Tales of Terror"
Susan Amper

Four Edgar A. Poe tales written in Philadelphia share a similar design. The narrators of "The Black Cat," "The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Fall of the House of Usher," and "William Wilson" (as well as "Ligeia") are all found in the same situation: always with a dead body to account for, always the last to see the victim alive, and always offering a story that does not make sense. Anomalies in these accounts, including highly unreliable narration, have long challenged Poe scholars. This paper argues that the narrative lapses are caused by deliberate deceit, but clues in the text point readers to rational solutions.

The narrator who calls himself William Wilson says that he has long been hounded by some mysterious imposter. He lies: it is he who is the imposter. Of this we can be certain, for the imposter is incapable of speaking above a whisper, and at the end of the story the narrator says unequivocally of his antagonist, "It was Wilson, but he spoke no longer in a whisper." The narrator of "The Tell-Tale Heart," whose only hope of escaping the hangman is an insanity defense, proclaims histrionically that he is not mad, while managing to convince every reader that he is. Significantly, however, the investigating detectives reject his mad act, "making a mockery of [his] horror." This paper describes how these four tales present the narrators' cover stories while simultaneously allowing readers to deduce the true story the narrators are trying to hide.

"Abortion, Punctuation, and the Murders that aren't Murders in the Rue Morgue"
Dana Medoro

In this paper, I will argue that Poe's "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" is another of Poe's many confessional narratives, in this case a confession by the narrator, not so much about what he has done, but about what he knows: the motive behind the murders of the L'Espanaye women; the identity of the actual murderer, his friend, C. August Dupin. The narrator confesses by indirection (achieved by means of puns, allusions, and punctuation marks) what he knows about Dupin—the kind of violence he is capable of—because he is afraid of Dupin. Poe, composing this tale at one remove from the narrator, explores and manipulates the line his narrator treads between obscurity and clarity--between concealment and revelation—as a way of reflecting upon the world of pregnancy and abortion as one held apart from the brightness of daylight, understood metaphorically and literally.

The now-dead women were, I contend, abortionists, working primarily at night, in cooperation with the nervous undertaker, and from the top-floor room that is filled with beds; they are linked to the goddess Laverna to whom Dupin refers at the end of the tale. (While Poe scholars have discussed Laverna as the Roman deity who presides over thieves and rascals, no scholarship to date has discussed her as the deity to whom Roman women prayed to relieve them of unwanted

pregnancies). What I wish to focus on in this paper is the affinity between the punctuation marks and the state of the women's bodies. For, the ways in which the very deliberate composition of the words on the pages of Poe's tale—how they are set off; italicized; set inside quotation marks or not—points to the very symbolic presentation of the women's murdered bodies. There is nothing frenzied about the daughter shoved feet first up the chimney (so that she is pulled dead and warm from it) nor about the mother's decapitation (an allusion to the horror of late-term abortions, the kind that pro-natalists used to criminalize abortion during Poe's time, in state-by-state legislatures, from 1820 onward). My contention is that Poe wants us to read carefully because to do so means to carefully consider the material at hand: the very detailed, material composition of the pages and the bodies. Reading with such keen attention reveals the level of the fictions—Dupin's; the narrator's; the sailor's—that the women's dead bodies are made to bear; and to then disburden them of those men's lies and half-truths. What the women know or might have told is held in their safe filled with papers, which the narrator twice mentions but deems irrelevant. In a way, those papers hold secrets that no audience outside of those women should know. This is perhaps the essence of Poe's double gesture.

I think the problem that Poe wrestles with is the problem of abortion in the marketplace, its advertising, its lucrative potential, and the way in which the abortionists had to make themselves known in order to inform or attract the women who need their services. The L'Espanaye women attracted Dupin's notice, who exchanges the orangutan story for his wrongfully jailed friend. Just as Dupin conjures the sailor by placing an advertisement in the paper, so did nineteenth-century abortionists circulate their services.

They did so in coded ways—offering "lunar pills" and services in "fortune telling"—but their presence in the newspapers moved them into proximity with the world of banks and business, with the world that runs by daylight.