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The business of race-making in the Torrid Zone:

Dr. Jonathan Troup's illustrated diary of Dominica, 1789-1790¹

Figure 1 is a drawing executed in pencil, ink and watercolour in which a man shown seated in profile to the right reading a book is having his hair dressed by a barber. At the barber's feet accompanying the 'pots and pomades' of hair styling is a naked child. A caption written on a vertical axis to the left behind the figures describes the scene as follows: 'Barber w^t a little Negro powdering his head w^h is a very common thing they always cry for it'. The encounter takes place in Roseau, a port town and the capital of Dominica, an island (29 x 16 miles) cum 'tropical iceberg of vegetation' in the Lesser Antilles on the eastern part of the Caribbean archipelago, which was then part of the British West Indies.² The seated man is a white colonist, shown wearing breeches and a jacket of yellow horizontal stripes. His white complexion contrasts with the inky black skin of both barber and child. The drawing occurs on the bottom left of a page (127) of a diary, a material object taller than it is wide (32.5 x 19.5 cm) belonging to the Scottish doctor Jonathan Troup, where it is surrounded by his untidy cursive written in brown ink in which he describes the events of 15 November 1789.³ The diurnal entry opens with the morning temperature (77°) and a meteorological description of the cloudy skyscape, followed by 'Horse lashing of woman at Mr Morson's' and overheard snatches of the enslaved and Creole vernacular including "Which side" meaning 'where is it'. It continues post meridiem in much the same vein. The diary entries are written throughout the volume of 175 pages in this compressed prose style and shift from subject to subject with

¹ Many thanks to David Bindman, Freya Gowrley, Julie Park, Diana Paton, Emma Pearce and Sarah Thomas for reading earlier drafts; to the staff at Aberdeen University Special Collections and to Lennox Honychurch for sharing his unrivalled knowledge of Dominica with me on a visit to the island in December 2019. The article has been immeasurably improved by the comments of readers for *SHR* and I am indebted to Emma Macleod for making the review process as painless as possible.

² M.-R. Trouillot, *Peasants and Capital: Dominica in the world economy*, (Baltimore, 1988), 28.

³ University of Aberdeen, Special Collections (UASC), MS 2070. Folio numbers are given in parentheses.

alacrity.⁴ They commence on 5 December 1788 as Troup left his native Aberdeen and headed for Portsmouth via London and end on 9 August 1790 as he departed on the Dominica packet to return to Scotland. During the fifteen months of his West Indian sojourn he spent the first eight months in Roseau and the last seven in Prince Rupert Bay on the North-West coast of the island. The inscribed pages of his diary are intermittently illustrated with an assortment of sketches of a miscellany of subjects seemingly-arbitrarily recording aspects of Dominican life and culture in the late 1780s, during the so-called loyalist period under the British Governor John Orde (1783-1793).⁵ They include Figure 1, a vignette of colonial hair styling that parodies the European practice of powdering the hair being adopted by an African child whose dark hair is rendered an incongruous white.

This article considers the demarcation of bodies, black, white and racially intermediate in Troup's diary. It offers a close reading of its diurnal contents, both pictorial and textual, for its representation of the multi-racial society that was later eighteenth-century Dominica. Troup is already familiar to historians of this period and place, in particular those concerned with medical humanities, who have mined the relevant textual component of his diary for specialist information ranging from his professional network of Scottish contacts, to his charges for medicines and attendance (94).⁶ What follows seeks to complement and extend these existing analyses by addressing an element of Troup's diary that has not been discussed elsewhere,

⁴ As L. Z. Bloom notes, truly private diaries are 'Written with neither art nor artifice, they are so terse they seem coded.' See her ' "I Write for Myself and Strangers": Private diaries as public documents', S. L. Bunkers and C. A. Huff (eds.), *Inscribing the daily: Critical Essays on women's diaries*, (Amherst, 1996), 25.

⁵ W. Brown, 'The Governorship of John Orde, 1783-1793. The loyalist period in Dominica,' *Journal of Caribbean History*, 24.2 (1990), 146-177.

⁶ D. J. Hamilton, *Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic World, 1750-1820*, (Manchester, 2010), chapter 5 'Scots doctors in the West Indies', 112-139; R. B. Sheridan, *Doctors and Slaves: A medical and demographic history of slavery in the British West Indies, 1680-1834*, (Cambridge, 1985), 302-305; M. Cournil, "What Dangerous Men". La pratique de la médecine sur l'île de la Dominique à la fin du XVIII^e siècle." *Revue de la Société d'études anglo-américaines des XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles*, 75 (2018).

namely his diurnal account of race-making.⁷ The ensuing discussion is divided into three unequal parts. Part I performs the contextual work that is establishing the allure of the West Indies to migrating Scottish professionals in the decades after the 1763 Treaty of Paris when Dominica was ceded by the French. Troup graduated with an M.A. from Marischal College, Aberdeen in 1786 and afterwards studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh. The blended medical curricula of the Scottish Universities in the period of the Enlightenment will be shown to have shaped his intellectual ideas of race. The climatic significance of the titular Torrid Zone is also elucidated. Part II shifts from the historical context of the diary linking Scotland's Enlightenment and Britain's Empire to its written notations and visual content. It looks in detail at Troup's diurnal account of race-making in Dominica in terms of a four-tiered racial system or calculus of colour that he delineated in its pages, where the conceptual looseness of what constituted race as expounded in University medical curricula is applied and adapted as medical practice and colonial testimony 'in the field'. Troup's emphasis on women across all four tiers highlights the import of gender as an innate constituent of his race-making schema. The third and final part of the article focuses on the branch of medical knowledge that was natural history via colonial correspondence and the collecting of natural curiosities, which Troup increasingly turned to as occupation as a doctor in Roseau foundered. It seeks to offer a prognosis of the significance of Troup's diary for a range of disciplines, historical, literary and visual, and their discreet historiographies which pertain to his imperial career.⁸

The article argues that Troup was a product of a Scottish Enlightenment medical education. And the inscribed and illustrated pages of his manuscript diary with their emphases on race

⁷ M. W. Hauser reproduces a number of images from Troup's diary in his account of *Mapping Water in Dominica: Enslavement and Environment under colonialism*, (Washington, 2021).

⁸ On imperial career as 'a useful and evocative idea' see D. Lambert and A. Lester (eds.), *Colonial Lives across the British Empire: Imperial careering in the long nineteenth century*, (Cambridge, 2006), esp. 21-24.

was in turn, a further product of the colonial application of the diagnostic tools of that education, which equipped practitioners with the skills to classify human diversity through careful observation in the colonial field. The discussion is framed by the concept of colonial business which for most professionals in the Caribbean involved more than one economic occupation. Dr. Alexander Johnston, for instance, whose twenty-four year colonial career from 1763-1787 has been discussed by Alan Karras, was also from the middle level of Aberdeen society and claimed have been educated at its medical schools, although his academic qualifications cannot be substantiated and seem to have been deliberately fudged. He worked first as an assistant and later a partner in a medical practice in St. Ann's, Jamaica. After acquiring land, he embarked on a second profession of cattle ranching.⁹ For Karras, Johnston 'embodied the ambition and desires which brought many men to British colonies' although he was not what Karras dubs a typical island white as he did not diversify into business as a sugar planter.¹⁰ Neither did Troup. Loudon's statement that 'Medicine was both a business and a profession,' is particularly prescient to bear in mind in relation to Troup.¹¹

I

Troup explicitly addressed the risks of colonial business, both economic and mortal, in a diary entry dated 30 July 1789:

'one man only makes a fortune in the W. Indies out of 500. It is long before he gets into business & when he is in business he risques so much by bad pay loss of negroes – that in space of 20 years he will not be able with great frugality to make more than 3,4,000 £ In Britain when one

⁹ A. Karras, 'The world of Alexander Johnston: The creolization of ambition, 1762-1787', *Historical Journal*, 30.1 (1987), 53-76.

¹⁰ For an account of a typical white West Indian, see C. Petley, *White Fury: A Jamaican slaveholder and the Age of Revolution*, (Oxford, 2018). Petley describes his subject, Simon Taylor, who owned three sugar plantations on Jamaica in precisely these terms at 43.

¹¹ I. Loudon, *Medical care and the general practitioner, 1750-1850*, (Oxford, 1986), 28.

gets into business he will make a vast deal more. D[octo]rs and managers of estates die more than any set of people from their greater exposure on all occasions.’ (33v)

Here, Troup unfavourably contrasts the fortunes to be made in business in the British West Indies with those back home in Britain. Risks were socially constructed in the business culture of the British Atlantic, as Sheryllyne Haggerty has established.¹² Her study focuses on the mercantile community who traded in a wide variety of goods over four continents, with the north-west port of Liverpool providing an axis for analysis. The contents of Troup’s diary as a medium for the discussion of his colonial business - medical and otherwise - offer an alternative profession within historical business culture. They also provide an example of economic failure from imperial careering rather than success since he never secured a medical partnership that could have been a route towards economic independence which brought increased political and social status.¹³ Based on his bald calculations in July 1789, the odds were very much against the colonists, especially those in his line of work and those plantation managers with whom he had extensive dealings for both were expected to maximise the profits of the labour of enslaved people.¹⁴ James Cunningham, a soldier in the 69th Regiment wrote to his mother in Renfrewshire in December 1778 that the odds of him ever returning to Britain from the West Indies were ten to one.¹⁵ For Alexander Watt of the 88th Regiment in 1796 the West Indies was ‘a place which I never wish to see as there has been more lives lost by the climate than by the

¹² See S. Haggerty, *Merely for Money? Business culture in the British Atlantic, 1750-1815*, (Liverpool, 2012), 35; chapter 2 ‘Risk’, 34-65, in which she discusses risk of different types: moral, natural and technical hazards, categories which often overlap.

¹³ S. Haggerty and S. Seymour, ‘Imperial careering and enslavement in the long eighteenth century,’ *Slavery & Abolition*, 39.4 (2018), 642-662, which looks at four generations of the Bentinck family; A. L. Karras, *Sojourners in the Sun: Scottish migrants in Jamaica and the Chesapeake, 1740-1800*, (Ithaca and London, 1992), 213.

¹⁴ R. A. Hogarth, *Medicalizing Blackness: Making racial difference in the Atlantic world, 1780-1840*, (North Carolina Press, 2017), xii. See for instance, his diary entry ‘Death of Scot manager of Camelfield [estate] very young stout healthy lad’ (20). T. Burnard provides some ‘hard data’ of colonial mortality rates from three parish registers from South-East Jamaica, see ‘“The Countrie Continues Sicklie”: White mortality in Jamaica, 1655-1780’, *Social history of medicine*, 12.1 (1999), 45-72.

¹⁵ National Register of Archives for Scotland (NRAS), 2725/bundle 1.

enemy'.¹⁶ The unremitting nature of the tropical diseases on temperate European bodies constituted the so-called other war in the Caribbean.¹⁷

Despite the high risk of death and small chances of economic success, British colonies in the West Indies remained a distant site of promise for enforced and 'voluntary exile' for thousands of Europeans and notably educated Scots across a range of professions, medical, martial, trading, planting, and politics.¹⁸ Troup met a Mr. Buie, 'a Prince Charly's man in 1745 at Culloden' (66v) who was 'obliged to fly after it to West Indies' (124v) where he worked as a baker '& made a fortune' until his death in Dominica in November 1789. 'his own strong constitution torn to pieces by debauchery & meds & a drunken wife', Troup remarked. That same month, 'an aged man from Aberdeenshire named Grant with his wife & children had heard that a relation had died & left an estate in Antigua (I think) they immediately sold all & shipped to West Indies – But how great was their surprise that there had not been such a man in the Island & if there was he had no estate (this I am not surprise at)' (121v). Drawing on the discipline of behavioural economics, David Alston offers an account of the paradox of Scottish emigration in which prospect theory is the central insight of loss aversion.¹⁹ The reportedly 'immense', 'splendid' 'rapid' and 'large' West Indian fortunes a sojourner might make - or in the case of the Grant family, inherit - were wildly inflated in this period and drew adventurers

¹⁶ 3 April 1796. Orkney Archives, D3/267. See H. J. Cook and T. D. Walker, 'Circulation of medicine in the early modern Atlantic world,' *Social history of medicine*, 26.3 (2013), 338.

¹⁷ M. Duffy, *Soldiers, sugar and seapower: The British expeditions to the West Indies and the war against Revolutionary France*, (Oxford, 1987), chapter 14 'Death and the Doctors: The other war in the Caribbean', 326-367.

¹⁸ The phrase 'voluntary exile' is from T. Atwood, *The history of the island of Dominica*, (London, 1791), 210. On the professions of Scottish colonists, see Hamilton, *Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic World*, 4 and A. L. Karras, *Sojourners in the Sun: Scottish migrants in Jamaica and the Chesapeake, 1740-1800*, (Ithaca and London, 1992), 11 (Table 1.1).

¹⁹ D. Alston, '“You have only seen the fortunate few and draw your conclusion accordingly”: Behavioural economics and the paradox of Scottish Emigration', A. McCarthy and J. Mackenzie (eds.), *Global Migrations: The Scottish diaspora since 1600*, (Edinburgh, 2016), 46-59.

seeking to benefit from the spoils of colonialism. Troup's own prospects in July 1789 were more measured: with an estimated 1 man out of 500 making a fortune of £3,000 to £4,000 after twenty years.

With law and the church, medicine was one of the traditional triumvirate of learned professions that Troup hoped would propel him into a more lucrative colonial business as time passed on Dominica. The overcrowded nature of the medical field in Scotland explains in part why Scots left home to practice.²⁰ The year after Troup graduated with an M.A. from Marischal College, Aberdeen, nearly a quarter (24.4%) of the 1787 cohort pursued a medical career and students could practice without a formal degree as an apprenticeship was considered sufficient training.²¹ Consequent medical study at Edinburgh makes Troup a product of a Scottish Enlightenment education, with its febrile intellectual climate surrounding issues of humanity and race, which Silvia Sebastiani situates within the context of continental Europe from the 1750s-1780s in 'an uncertain and fluctuating semantic field'.²² Another of Troup's surviving manuscript volumes contains lecture notes from Dr. James Beattie's moral philosophy class taken at Marischal College from 1796-97, after he returned to Scotland from Dominica.²³ A further one contains transcripts of the 'Lectures on the Practice of Physic' delivered by Dr. William Cullen at the University of Edinburgh between 1787 and 1788 where Troup appears to have studied after graduating.²⁴ In later eighteenth-century Scottish University curricula,

²⁰ R. B. Sheridan, 'The role of Scots in the economy and society of the West Indies,' *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 292 (1977), 97.

²¹ C. McLaren, *Aberdeen Students, 1600-1800*, (Aberdeen, 2005), 98. Troup is listed as the son of Matthew Troup of Aberdeen who graduated after four years of study in P. J. Anderson (ed.), *Fasti Academiae Mariscalleneae Aberdonensis*, Volume II, Officers, Graduates and Alumni, (Aberdeen, 1898), 359. See too Anderson's *Notes of the Evolution of the arts curriculum in the Universities of Aberdeen*, (Aberdeen, 1908).

²² S. Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment: Race, gender and the limits of progress*, (Basingstoke, 2013), 15.

²³ UASC, MS 2901.

²⁴ UASC, MS 2900, 20-86.

medicine as a branch of Enlightenment knowledge was integrated with natural history and moral philosophy as part of a burgeoning ‘scientific’ study of race.

In this respect, Troup’s educational trajectory aligns him with a cohort of graduates of Edinburgh’s medical school whose pursuit of empire in a variety of colonial contexts have been recently discussed in microhistorical studies by intellectual historians. Minakshi Menon looked at William Roxburgh in Madras c. 1790, whose medical training equipped him with skills to make natural history useful for commerce in the Indian Ocean World.²⁵ Another of her case studies is Dr. Francis Buchanan, a Scottish surgeon with the East India Company in Bengal, whose natural history education as part of a medical degree at the University of Edinburgh informed his published survey *A Journey from Madras through the countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar*, (1807).²⁶ Bruce Buchan focussed on the ethnographic writings of a trio of colonial travellers, William Anderson, Archibald Menzies and Robert Brown, whose natural-historical explanations for diversity among human populations were inculcated, he suggests, in the medical training they received at Edinburgh.²⁷ And finally into the nineteenth century is Alexander Berry, who travelled in China, Australia, Fiji and New Zealand, and became a landowner in New South Wales. Buchan and McLaren argue that Berry was a product of the vibrant blending of natural history and moral philosophy in the medical curricula at the University of Edinburgh whose intellectual formation imbued his later writings about human diversity as a surgeon, a merchant and a voyager.²⁸ In other words, among the colonial career

²⁵ M. Menon, ‘Medicine, money and the making of the East India Company State: William Roxburgh in Madras, c. 1790’, A. Winterbottom *et al.* (eds.), *Histories of medicine and healing in the Indian Ocean World*, (Basingstoke, 2016), 151-178.

²⁶ M. Menon, ‘Transferrable Surveys: Natural history from the Hebrides to South India’, *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*, 38.1 (2018), 143-159.

²⁷ B. Buchan, ‘Scottish medical ethnography: Colonial travel, stadial theory and the natural history of race, c. 1770-1805’, *Modern Intellectual History*, 17.4 (2020), 919-949.

²⁸ B. Buchan and A. McLaren, ‘Edinburgh’s Enlightenment abroad: Navigating humanity as a physician, merchant, natural historian and settler-colonist’, *Intellectual History Review*, 31.4 (2021), 627-649.

trajectories of this group there are a number of precedents for thinking about Troup as a product of his medical training at Edinburgh and how it served in his identification of racial typologies during his truncated career as a doctor on Dominica. He was not in the colonies long enough to diversify into cognate professions as these contemporaries did.

Among Troup's colonial patients, Aberdeen's colleges enjoyed a transatlantic reputation. A Mr. Morson 'made mention of great learning at Aberdeen – a hint that I had got my share of it' (71v), he boasted in the diary. Scots in business outside of Scotland were known for their clannishness, for the networks in which they operated with kin and kind.²⁹ When Morson 'took me for a relation of Dr Clarks', Troup made it clear that their association was professional rather than familial. Dr. James Clark was a fellow Aberdeen alumnus: he graduated with a medical degree from King's College in 1773 and is listed among their North American and West Indian graduates, demonstrating that medical education and expertise circulated across the circum-Atlantic ocean, rather than a unidirectional east to west.³⁰ Clark was in medical partnership on Dominica with another Aberdonian, Dr. Andrew Fillan. The same evening Troup arrived at Roseau on 11 May 1789, he met Fillan, who he described in his diary as 'an excellent attentive practitioner generally beloved by inhabitants 14 years never out of island – There are 16 practitioners in Roseau in military & French & English yet D.^f Fillan has 2/3 of

²⁹ There is a rich secondary literature on patronage networks, see D. Hamilton, 'Transatlantic Ties: Scottish migration networks in the Caribbean, 1750-1800', A. McCarthy (ed.), *A Global Clan: Scottish migrant networks and identities since the eighteenth century*, (London, 2006), 48-66; D. J. Hamilton, *Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic world, 1750-1820*, (Manchester, 2005); A. L. Karras, *Sojourners in the Sun: Scottish migrants in Jamaica and the Chesapeake, 1740-1800*, (Ithaca and London, 1992), especially chapter 4 'Webs of patronage', 118-169.

³⁰ W. B. Bell, 'North American and West Indian medical graduates of Glasgow and Aberdeen to 1800', *Journal of the history of medicine*, 20 (1965), 412. The entry for Clark notes that he was recommended by Doctors Livingston and Robertson of Aberdeen, meaning his medical degree was awarded on the recommendation of these established physicians which was common practice up to 1793 when Professor William Livingston offered a regular series of medical lectures.

practice' (11). Troup also met Fillan's other assistant in this foremost island practice, one John Carson from Galloway, who he recounts as being 'very tall good tempered & affable of a sanguine temperament'.³¹ Note the reference to Carson's temper and temperament, criteria which along with 'complexion' will inform Troup's diurnal discussion of white, black and racially indeterminate peoples, notably women, below. Clark recommended Troup for the assistantship and paid his transatlantic passage, which Troup later reimbursed when he left the Roseau practice for Prince Rupert's Bay (134v, 138). When it became clear that this second posting with a focus on military medicine would not satiate Troup's professional or economic ambition, he returned to Scotland. Once back in Aberdeenshire, he worked unhappily as a doctor – 'burying myself alive to live in Cromar' - while flirting with the idea of returning to the West Indies or going to London, until he died at Corrachree in 1800.³²

In a diary entry dated 19 May, Troup makes clear that one of his employers, James Clark, had diversified into the lucrative but risky plantation business. He records seeing an enslaved man 'with chain & collar of iron round his neck tho' strong weight make him bleed at nose & mouth. Dr Clark has about 50 negroes employed – he makes very great profit by them' (14).³³ In keeping with common parlance, Troup's diary refers to all enslaved people as 'negroes'. The word 'negro' meaning African descended from Portuguese and Spanish usage and was rooted in the word for 'black'.³⁴ De la Fuente and Gross have documented how from as early as the

³¹ Troup later records Carson's height as 6 foot 2 inches; some six inches taller than him (52).

³² UASC, MS 3027/8 folio 167. Portions of Troup's diary written in Scotland during the 1790s are transcribed by W. H. Cranna, 'The folklore of Dee and Don', *Scottish Notes and Queries*, 1 (1923), 55-57 and W. H. Cranna, 'The Lowe o'Life', *The Aberdeen Book-Lover*, 4 (1923), 62-67.

³³ To put this figure in context, when Thomas Thistlewood died in Jamaica in 1786 he was worth £3,000 and owned 34 slaves. T. Burnard and R. Follett, 'Caribbean slavery, British anti-slavery, and the cultural politics of venereal disease,' *Historical Journal*, 55.2 (2012), 432.

³⁴ E. B. Rugemer, 'The development of mastery and race in the comprehensive slave codes of the Greater Caribbean during the seventeenth century', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 70. 3 (2013), 438.

1500s ‘legal race making’, or the creation of discriminatory racial regimes in law, reduced Africans and their descendants to ‘negroes’.³⁵ As they explain, ‘Blackness obliterated and flattened a multitude of cultures, languages, histories and experiences into a single legally defined, socially constituted category of discrimination.’³⁶ Troup uses ‘negro’ throughout the diary as a category of inferiority tied primarily to the labour of enslaved people.³⁷

Troup’s truncated occupational sojourn on Dominica confirms Emily Senior observation that, ‘Disease defined colonial existence’.³⁸ Working as an assistant, first in Fillan and Clarke’s medical practice, Troup treated plantation managers and owners (the latter, members of the planter class or so-called plantocracy), their dependants and slaves, alongside sailors and soldiers in the port at Roseau, prisoners in the prison there, soldiers attached to Fort Shirley at Prince Rupert Bay and on occasion, himself. Troup suffered seasoning sickness ‘Fever & vomit to spasmodic fits & faintness’ (13) soon after his arrival, was ‘much bitt by musketos’ (15) and contacted ‘G. V. [gonorrhoea] from a negroe wench of D[r]. C[lark].’(17) Burnard and Follett note that there was little medical or social stigma attached to such sexually transmitted infections among white sojourners, indeed that that they were ‘thoroughly embedded within the prevailing discourse of masculinity and empire’.³⁹

³⁵ A. de la Fuente and A. Gross, *Becoming Free, Becoming Black: Race, freedom and law in Cuba, Virginia and Louisiana*, (Cambridge, 2020), 15.

³⁶ De la Fuente and Gross, *Becoming Free, Becoming Black*, 15.

³⁷ S. Block, *Colonial Complexions: Race and bodies in eighteenth-century America*, (Philadelphia, 2018), 64.

³⁸ E. Senior, *The Caribbean and the medical imagination, 1764-1834: Slavery, disease and colonial modernity*, (Cambridge, 2018), 9.

³⁹ T. Burnard and R. Follett, ‘Caribbean slavery, British anti-slavery, and the cultural politics of venereal disease’, *Historical Journal*, 55.2 (2012), 430.

Tropical diseases festering in the so-called ‘torrid zone’, the warm region between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn, were known to be fatal to the temperate European constitution and among them, yellow fever, a mosquito borne viral infection, was especially notorious.⁴⁰ The titular ‘Torrid Zone’ derives from a well-known and often reproduced coloured aquatint by the amateur artist Abraham James which was published in London in 1800 (Figure 2). Its alternative title at the bottom of the image is ‘Blessings of Jamaica’. James served with the 67th Regiment of Foot in what was the largest and most valuable of Britain’s territorial holdings in the West Indies – as well as the most deadly.⁴¹ It soon becomes apparent that what might appear on the surface as the so-called blessings of Jamaica are on a closer reading and deeper level, its mortal misfortunes. In Kriz’s reading, James zones the picture plane into three spheres: the heavens, the earth and the hell realm. James links the proliferation of tropical diseases with the indolent behaviour of the planter class, whose men and women are shown idly at leisure, some sitting on chairs, smoking, reading, fanning themselves, with their legs elevated and their groins on display.⁴² These tripartite zones might be alternatively labelled the climatic, the inhabited and the diseased, where the temperate bodies of the planter class are enervated by the effects of the stifling climate above and soon to be despatched by its diseases lurking below an enormous scythe - ‘an agricultural tool used to reap a harvest of the dead’.⁴³ These diseases include in prime position a grotesque rendering of yellow fever as a hybrid human skeleton with an ovoid belly and webbed feet shown breathing fire and black vomit. So

⁴⁰ R. A. Hogarth, *Medicalising Blackness: Making racial difference in the Atlantic world, 1780-1840*, (Chapel Hill, 2017), 17.

⁴¹ Hamilton, *Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic world*, 33.

⁴² K. D. Kriz, *Slavery, sugar and the culture of refinement: Picturing the British West Indies, 1700-1840*, (New Haven and London, 2008), 167. See too N. Safier, ‘The tenacious travels of the torrid zone and the global dimensions of geographical knowledge in the eighteenth century,’ *Journal of early modern history*, 18 (2014), 141-172.

⁴³ V. Brown, *The Reaper’s Garden: Death and power in the world of Atlantic slavery*, (Cambridge Mass., and London, 2008), 255. My understanding on how the onset of diseases was related to climatic conditions from Hippocrates onwards has been informed by J. Golinski, *British Weather and the climate of Enlightenment*, (Chicago and London, 2007) and A. Bewell, *Romanticism and colonial disease*, (Baltimore and London, 1999).

called on account of jaundice being one of its indications, Spanish speakers called it ‘black vomit’ for its signature symptom.⁴⁴ Holding the scythe in his right hand and an hourglass in his left (Figure 2), yellow fever is accompanied by emaciated naked figures identified by James as sore throat and dry gripes. Behind them are silhouettes of skulls, snakes and other venomous creatures. In the sky under a burning tropical sun, an angel of death crawls into view wielding a bottle of opium. The astrological signs for cancer and leo, a crab and a lion, indicate the hottest months of the year that Kriz reads as the opposing power of disease and the British Empire.⁴⁵ These signs are not in opposition, but rather in tandem: the metaphorical health of the British Empire rested on the literal health of its subjects.⁴⁶ Empire and disease have always travelled hand-in-hand and medicine was a crucial weapon in the armoury of empire and colonisation.

We need to locate Troup and the descriptive contents of his diary that pertain to race within the climatic context of colonial disease and death to which James gives visual and satirical form in Figure 2. In contrast with the larger British colonial strongholds of Jamaica and Barbados, Dominica is under-researched in both primary and secondary sources, making Troup’s manuscript a rich and provocative historical resource. When he arrived at Roseau, the island was a British colonial possession, whose inhabitants marked 13 May 1789 as a fast day for the recovery of King George III’s health (11v) and celebrated the Queen’s birthday on 18 January 1790 (147v). Dominica was a young and fragile acquisition in Britain’s expanding and contracting territorial empire. With the other Windward Islands of St. Vincent and Granada, it

⁴⁴ J. R. McNeill, *Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater Caribbean, 1620-1914*, (Cambridge, 2010), 33.

⁴⁵ Kriz, *Sugar, slavery and the culture of refinement*, 167-8.

⁴⁶ S. Seth, *Difference and disease: Medicine, race and the eighteenth-century British Empire*, (Cambridge, 2018), 16.

was ceded from France in 1763 as part of the Treaty of Paris. The French recaptured the island in 1778 and following the battle of the Saintes on 12 April 1782, Dominica returned to the British.⁴⁷ Visiting a Mr. Fitzgerald in August 1789, Troup admired his ‘two fine plates’ of the maritime battle between the British and French Admirals Rodney and de Grasse, and proceeded to summarise the actions that took place between 2 and 8pm on that afternoon seven years previously (66v).⁴⁸ Troup estimated that the French ‘make up at least ½ of the inhabitants’ (18v) of Dominica.⁴⁹ During the Revolution in October 1789, when ‘20,000 people killed in Paris...people wore cocades in imitation, all young people in Martinique had done the same’ (95). In the neighbouring island and former French colony of Dominica, they were also wearing ‘the cocade of liberty in their hats’ (98) Troup remarked.

Alongside its French colonial population, Dominica is said to have had a higher proportion of Scots than Jamaica.⁵⁰ The cluster of Scottish doctors already in Roseau, including Fillan, Clark and Carson, made it a proven route for Troup to pursue his medical career.⁵¹ So too did his proficiency in the French language, which enabled him to converse with the other half – actually more like two-thirds - of the free settler population. Passages in his diary are written in French (12v for example); he reads Voltaire’s *Histoire de Charles XII* in its language of

⁴⁷ L. Honychurch, *The Dominica Story: A history of the island*, (London, 1995), 90.

⁴⁸ In his diary for 12 April 1791 he noted ‘This is the memorable day of Rodney at Dominique in 1782’. UASC, MS 3027/2 folio 8.

⁴⁹ J. A. Boromé, ‘Dominica during French occupation, 1778-1784,’ *HER*, 84. 330 (1969), 41, provides the following figures for 1778: 1, 574 whites (of which two-thirds were French), 574 free coloureds (mulattoes and blacks) and 14,309 slaves. His figures are cited by P. L. Baker, *Centering the periphery: Chaos, order and the ethnohistory of Dominica*, (Montreal and London, 1994), 67.

⁵⁰ D. J. Hamilton, *Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic world, 1750-1820*, (Manchester, 2005), 33. Hamilton notes that Grenada, St. Vincent and Tobago also had a higher proportion of Scots than Jamaica.

⁵¹ Four years after Troup left Dominica, Dr. William Bremner, another graduate of Marischal College, Aberdeen, who later trained at Edinburgh University joined Fillan and Clark’s medical practice on the island. See the *biographical memoirs of William Bremner M. D., written by himself between 1812 and 1815*. National Library of Scotland, MF.MSS. 447.

composition (56v) and notes on two occasions when he was asked by French plantation owners if he had been at Paris (71v & 84) – ‘a sign I speak moderate good French’ (84). He also read and wrote Latin and had some comprehension of ancient Greek. Notations dispersed throughout the diary reveal he was musical, playing the violin (158v & 170v) and flute (151v) and reportedly being told by his male companions ‘that I was one of the best singers in the island’ (133v). In addition to the images like Figure 1 that populate its pages, the diary records he painted a Mr. Knox’s portrait twice (35v, 64). Though ‘not commonly reckoned Academical’, French, music and drawing were subjects taught at Aberdeen.⁵²

The contents of Troup’s diary enable us to piece together their chronicler’s professional identity and extracurricular accomplishments in the colonial field of Enlightenment medicine during his short-lived transplantation to Dominica. They simultaneously allow mediated access determined by his own identity of white male supremacy to other social groups, free and enslaved, white and black and racially intermediate, that Troup encountered and that he demarcated as different in his written and visual diurnal notations. These racial demarcations bore the imprimatur of his medical training as a product of a Scottish Enlightenment education, as the following section will demonstrate.

II

One notable diary entry deals with specifically racial pathologies – or ‘race-medicine’ to cite Suman Seth’s neologism for the role of medicine in the construction of race - that pertain to

⁵² C. A. McLaren, *Aberdeen Students, 1600-1800*, (Aberdeen, 2005), 72.

Troup's profession as a doctor when in September 1789, he treated an enslaved man scalded with rum during its production in the boiling house.⁵³ Troup's diary records,

'where it fell on his legs his skin is as white as any European...Black children at birth are like mullattoes mullattoes like white children but both by exposure to air put on their natural complexions in a very short time tho' last not so soon – But their complexions are very various here Jet black to European whiteness 8 or 9 different degrees very perceptible upon minute examination. A mullattoe black & white interchanging alternately produces 6 different species these 6 uniting with w[hite] & black 3 x 6 18 different varieties' (77v-78)

Troup recounts studying first-hand blackness on an anatomical level, much as Vesalius had done in 1543 and Jean Riolan *films* in 1618, who in what has been heralded as 'a milestone in the history of race' saw the burned cuticle was pigmented but the cutis remained white.⁵⁴

Troup's diurnal account of his occupational exposure to black skin on this impromptu occasion is one occasion in the diary where he employs the term 'species', which originated in categorisations of physical substances more than people.⁵⁵ Like 'race', to which it was related, it was expansive in this period and conveyed differences of many types.⁵⁶ It is unclear whether Troup's use of 'species' suggests that non-Europeans are not human, or if he is using it as another kind of marker of human difference. Based on 'minute examination', a tool of his medical training applied in colonial practice, he calculates with mathematical exactitude the eighteen 'different varieties' produced by miscegenation between the three groups of white, black and 'mulatto'. All theories of race are culturally constructed, with the number ranging

⁵³ S. Seth, *Difference and Disease: Medicine, race and the eighteenth-century British Empire*, (Cambridge, 2018), 168. Seth notes that this term is fraught when applied to the eighteenth century, when race was only beginning to acquire the meanings we associate with it. Following N. Hudson. 'From "Nation" to "Race": The origin of racial classification in eighteenth-century thought', *Eighteenth-century Studies*, 29.3 (1996), 247, I understand a modern sense of race as a subdivision of the human species, identified by a shared appearance and other inherited traits.

⁵⁴ A. S. Curran, *The Anatomy of Blackness: Science & Slavery in an age of Enlightenment*, (Baltimore and London, 2011), 120; S. N. Klaus, 'A history of the science of pigmentation,' J. J. Nordlund *et al.*, (eds.), *The Pigmentary System: Physiology and Pathophysiology*, (Oxford, 2006), 5.

⁵⁵ S. Block, *Colonial Complexions: Race and bodies in eighteenth-century America*, (Philadelphia, 2018), 19.

⁵⁶ S. Block, *Colonial Complexions: Race and bodies in eighteenth-century America*, (Philadelphia, 2018), 11. The secondary literature on race is vast and expanding; key works that have shaped my thinking for this article are cited in the footnotes.

from three to over a hundred.⁵⁷ In 1735, Linnaeus classified man within the animal kingdom among the primates and divided into four varieties based on skin pigmentation: white, yellow, black and red.⁵⁸ Troup's own racial calculation and visual lexicon is a descriptive marker.⁵⁹ It provides an instance of race as a mathematical problem; what Sollors has dubbed 'racial mathematics' in which 'scientism [is co-opted] in the service of establishing "race".'⁶⁰ And as Sollors points out, efforts at creating such mathematical systems of racial mixing in the context of colonialism bear the mark of an interest that supported racially-based domination.

Troup's hierarchical categories of analysis are 'purposefully applied...to mark boundaries of slavery and freedom through descriptions of physical bodies'.⁶¹ His use of colonial racial designations like 'European whiteness', 'jet black' and 'mullattoe' inconsistently imply and reify intersections of heritage, skin colour and racial terminology. While 'European whiteness' connotes that heritage and colour are primary, 'jet black' seems to denote only complexion and a particular hue of dark skin. 'Mullattoe' in contrast is by definition a racialized term that denotes African and European heritage as will be considered below. Recognising that the vocabulary applied to racial designations is inherently problematic (in Sollors's phrase it is a 'heavy historical load'), Troup's close and sustained scrutiny of multi-racial bodies is manifest in the illustrated and inscribed pages of his diary.⁶² His pictorial figurations, the analysis proposes, seek to codify 'race' within a calculus of skin colour by hierarchically organising peoples within a four-tiered system (white, creole, 'mulatto', black) based on their visible

⁵⁷ C. Kidd, *The Forging of Races: Race and scripture in the Protestant Atlantic world, 1600-2000*, (Cambridge, 2006), 8.

⁵⁸ S. Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment: Race, gender and the limits of progress*, (Basingstoke, 2013), 14.

⁵⁹ Curran, *The Anatomy of Blackness*, 92.

⁶⁰ W. Sollors, *Neither black not white yet both: Thematic explorations of interracial literature*, (Cambridge Mass., and London, 1997), 115.

⁶¹ Block, *Colonial Complexions*, 8.

⁶² Sollors, *Neither black not white yet both*, 3; M. L. Bagneris, *Colouring the Caribbean: Race and the art of Agostino Brunias*, (Manchester, 2018), 28-29.

proximity to the poles of European whiteness or African descent. His written descriptions meanwhile, go beyond the surface level of physical, discernible traits observed by the coloniser's gaze and fixed by visual representation, to include other studied characteristics that constitute 'race' in this period of conceptual transition before it became an innate, fixist conception. The emphasis on women across all four tiers locates gender as a latent category of difference within his race-making schema. Such taxonomic organisation and close study of humankind is, the essay argues, a product of the application of Troup's medical training with its distinctive blend of medicine, natural history and moral philosophy in the colonial field. Adopting Troup's self-serving hierarchy, it offers a 'minute examination' of his account of what Sharon Block describes as 'physical appearance as a commonplace tool of race-making', starting at the apex of his vertical axis of discrimination with 'European whiteness'.⁶³

Soon after Troup left Portsmouth in January 1789, the *Duchess of Portland* had to return to refit after storm damage in the Bay of Biscay. Troup sketched the ship entering Dartmouth harbour (6v) and on the opposite page, as it appeared on 25 April when they crossed 'the line of Cancer'. In the end pages of his diary Troup also sketched 'Our situation when we asked assistance from French ship' (175v) and a second image, also on a horizontal landscape axis, showing the 'Dutchess of Portland losing her main top mast' (176). While waiting for the necessary repairs to be completed, Troup travelled around the South coast of England. His diary entries for February mention meeting a nineteen-year old woman, Eliza Thomas, at Exeter 'a comely country girl...I gained her heart & never more pleased with anyone' (3). His pleasure in Thomas abated as quickly as it arrived and later that same month, he notes having 'left Dartmouth & my sweet Mary' (4). Miss Mary Ford, the daughter of a Dartmouth 'farmer

⁶³ I am using the expression 'calculus of colour' after the title of chapter 4 in Sollors, *Neither black nor white yet both*. Block, *Colonial Complexions*, 5.

or mealman or miller' (125) with a reported dowry of £1,700, is a persistent manifestation in Troup's diary as a future bride with whom he would be reunited. As in other British colonies in the eighteenth century, white women were conspicuous by their absence and there are no visual depictions of white women in Troup's diary.⁶⁴ On 16 May, after five days in Roseau, Troup wrote of there being 'very few white women. Dr Lad has been 5 years & sent for wife from Edinburgh & married next day after her arrival & is properly settled on estates' (12v). Lad, we can conjecture, was another Scottish doctor in Dominica. Troup and Ford evidently corresponded; he mentioned writing her a love letter (19) and described on another occasion how she entered his thoughts, rebuking himself 'shall I encourage it no – till I am certain of a conquered Philosophy!' (151v). 'get[ting] Mary & a moderate Livilyhood' (82) became an unwavering and interdependent goal of his West Indian sojourn. On 26 October 1789, his 25th birthday, Troup wrote 'God I may get my dearest Miss Mary Ford and then to a blessing I'll think myself a happy man' (115). During a visit to a plantation house that same month, 'A beautiful picture of a Lady with her first child]struck me sensibly & I never saw an object bear a greater resemblance to Miss Mary Ford. And I'll visit that house every opportunity for the sake of the picture God grant I may get the original' (97). Troup attributed his unplanned furlough in Ford's hometown of Dartmouth to 'God's providence...& protection' (142), frequently citing the Lord and his preferred lady in the same invocation.

Once Troup's gaze shifts from England to the West Indies, or from the Island to the islands, 'Race turns polychrome'.⁶⁵ Elsewhere in the diary, Troup contrasts Ford's beauty with its idealised pictorial equivalent with the white Creole women of British and French extraction who he encountered in Roseau and at Prince Rupert. A Miss Depond is said to be 'a very

⁶⁴ Hamilton, *Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic World*, 32.

⁶⁵ P. Youngquist, 'Introduction', *Race, Romanticism and the Atlantic*, (Farnham, 2013), 10.

handsome mild French girl very well featured but my Dear Mary Ford excels in mildness & openness of countenance & features' (141v). When he met a Miss Lee despite her many polite female accomplishments - 'a capital painter music miss & a spinstress a pleasant enough girl' – Troup noted her 'large mouth rather clumsy habit & a dark skin indeed the country will reduce her' (173). In the colonial imagination, a female complexion only ever deteriorated by its climatic exposure so Creole women cultivated hyper white skin complexions from sporting bonnets, carrying parasols and even wearing veils and masks.⁶⁶ Troup's construction of European whiteness is not a unified one however, but one which draws a distinction between French and British Creole women and the idealised English woman back home. In this, his Creole/English contrast relies on differences of nativity or habituation between the climactic torrid/temperate zones. He vowed 'I will have nothing to do with her [a Miss Mckinnay] I'll treat her or any one else with coolness & reserve till I receive a letter from Dear Mary Ford. The Creoles are imperious overruling women know nothing but eat drink game curse & beat the negroes whereas the mild temper of Mary will sooth my pain in affliction & make the worlds cares set easy on my mind' (123). Troup's admiration for 'mildness' appears to embrace both a woman's easy temperament and her fair complexion.⁶⁷ His negative pen portrait of the local Creole women offers a dialectical contrast with his memory of the 'mild' Miss Ford of Dartmouth. On 17 May, his comment 'Ladies veiled & some carried on a pole two negroes & Madame dans etoff etaisse & variagatie de fleurs' accompanies a thumbnail sketch in ink of what must be a Creole woman under a parasol being transported by two enslaved men (12v) (Figure 3). This tiny image in the bottom left corner of the page indicates the extent to which Creole women's social mobility and climatic exposure was circumscribed in the tropics. Opening in English and closing in French, Troup's sentence aligns racial and gender categories

⁶⁶ D. Coleman, 'Janet Schaw and the complexions of Empire,' *Eighteenth-century studies*, 36.2 (2003), 169-193.

⁶⁷ B. N. Newman, 'Gender, sexuality and the formation of racial identities in the eighteenth-century Anglo-Caribbean world,' *Gender & History*, 22.3 (2010), 70.

with modes of dress, an association which becomes more pronounced in reference to the next racial type in his tiered calculus of colour which the diary considers in more detail: ‘mullattoe’.

On the day Troup landed at Roseau, he recorded in his diary that ‘Both D.^{rs} [Fillan and Clark] have 6 children from mullattoe girls called allways after the man who takes them in’ (11). Despite being identified by the man’s surname, these women had no claim to the legal appellation ‘wife’, so Fillan upbraided Troup, apparently telling him wife ‘is not but a vulgar expression & is never used by a man of breeding’ (29). In a diary entry for 17 May, almost a week after his arrival, Troup recounts witnessing a tableau of races, genders and ages:

‘Negroes dance to song & drum excellent time & men women & children join together in agreeable variety at Dr. Clerk’s door – 30 mullatoes & gentlemen standing on street watching Polly C who was elegantly dressed in plain coloured silk jacket trimmed with blue ribband & rose & belt of ribbands in same stile excellent beed bracelet for wrists with large medal in each – head covered gracely – napkin like Highland mutch but far more gracefully put on with rose inside of head.’ (13)

‘Variety’ was a contemporaneous term for explaining the physical diversity of humankind. Troup’s diurnal entry provides an extraordinary level of detail concerning the spectacle of Polly, a ‘mullattoe girl’ of one of his employers Dr. James Clark, itemising the individual components of her dress (jacket, belt, cap), their material (silk), colour (blue and rose) and accessories. The reference to the ‘Highland mutch’, a linen cap worn by married women, is one of a number of occasions in the diary when Troup makes sense of the unfamiliar circumstances of the new world by reference to the old world which he had left. A sketch of the coastal profile of Barbados is compared with that of the Highlands of Scotland (9v), ‘One [enslaved] female began song, all joined in the chorus. Much in the way of the Highlands in their own natural dialect’ he noted at Bridgetown (11), and when tasting guavas for the first time, he thought the ‘inside pap & seeds tastes something like strawberry at home’ (66).

Scotland was a sensory mnemonic for the displaced Troup, in much the same way, the white English woman Mary Ford was a trope for articulating exterior markers of hereditary race.

Lisa Ze Winters describes the *mulatta concubine* as a ‘hypervisible figure’ – much like Polly Clark in Troup’s diary entry just cited - ‘whose apparent familiarity and recognisability...enact a domino-like chain of silences and erasures of free(d) and enslaved black subjects.’⁶⁸ Ze Winters’ 2015 study draws attention to the ‘veritable canon’ of representations of this transnational figure ‘across diasporic time and space’.⁶⁹ The ‘abundance of depictions’ dedicated to the transatlantic ‘mulatta’ and discussed by scholars are predominantly literary, ranging from late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century travellers’ accounts, to the ‘tragic mulatta’ figure, as a creation of white female abolitionists in post-Civil War American fiction, to her diverse political uses in antislavery literature authored by African American women up to the 1950s.⁷⁰ Sara Salih reorients emphasis around the mulatto (male and female) as a legal entity in England and Jamaica, based on accounts in the ‘textual spheres’ of fiction and non-fiction, including legal documents.⁷¹ As she writes in the introduction, the ‘mulatto’ was ‘a legally-enacted, legally-regulated entity – a category really – a set of prescriptions and proscriptions which could be enforced or lifted as the legislators saw fit.’

⁶⁸ L. Ze Winters, *The mulatta concubine: Terror, intimacy, freedom and desire in the black transatlantic*, (Athens, 2015), 107. See also 181: ‘Her hypervisibility in the official archive belies her unknowability. It is precisely in her unknowability, her resistance to coherence, that she is most generative.’

⁶⁹ Ze Winters, *The mulatta concubine*, 30, 50.

⁷⁰ T. C. Zackodnik, *The mulatta and the politics of race*, (Jackson, 2004). See too K. Snyder Manganelli, *Transatlantic spectacles of race: The tragic mulatta and the tragic muse*, (Piscataway, 2021) which considers the Tragic Mulatta as an American figure; the Tragic Muse as a British and French topos from the opposite side of the Atlantic and Sollors, *Neither black not white yet both*, ‘Excursus on the “Tragic Mulatto”’; or, the fate of a stereotype’, 220-245.

⁷¹ S. Salih, *Representing Mixed Race in Jamaica and England from the abolition era to the present*, (New York, 2011), 6.

In terms of colonial visual culture, Kay Dian Kriz has undertaken pioneering work on the émigré Italian artist Agostino Brunias, whose idealised canvases display what she describes as ‘an almost obsessive focus around the figure of the mulatto woman’ to the point that ‘she could almost serve as an authorial signature’.⁷² Brunias was invited to the West Indies by Sir William Young, the governor of Dominica and commissioner of St. Vincent in the Windward Islands, where he spent three decades up to his death in 1796 producing paintings that according to Kriz’s discussion entitled ‘Marketing *Mulâtresses*’, were part of a colonizing mission to promote the West Indies. ‘Brunias rendered these newly won islands as places where people as well as raw materials could be cultivated and refined,’ she argues.⁷³ For Kriz, the ambiguous social and racial status of the *mulâtresse*, (she uses this term knowingly to represent their French and African heritage, much as the marketing of her chapter title is a play on words) what she calls ‘her in-betweenness’, became a visual metonym for the West Indian islands, as ‘a place “in-between” civilized Europe and savage Africa.’⁷⁴ Building on Kriz’s work and providing the first monographical treatment of the artist, Mia Bagneris asserts that Brunias’s *mulâtresse* represents both the potential for developing a refined British civilisation in the Caribbean colonies and the illicit pleasures and profits to be had there.⁷⁵ Her seductive reading of his *A West Indian flower girl and two other free women of colour, c. 1769* (Figure 4), demonstrates how the *mulâtresse* was represented an object of desire to entice European men to the West Indies.⁷⁶ The figure on the far right selects a delicate cut flower from the tray of the hawker woman on the left seen from behind and holds it to the side of her face, inviting a comparison between her natural beauty and that of the picked flower. She looks out of the canvas, making eye contact with the external viewer. All the women are depicted in fashionable

⁷² Kriz, *Slavery, sugar and the culture of refinement*, 44, 58-59.

⁷³ Kriz, *Slavery, sugar and the culture of refinement*, 36. There was a gap in Brunias’s sojourn in the 1770s.

⁷⁴ Kriz, *Slavery, sugar and the culture of refinement*, 45.

⁷⁵ Bagneris, *Colouring the Caribbean*, 140.

⁷⁶ Bagneris, *Colouring the Caribbean*, 172-174.

European-style attire with Brunias paying particular attention to the adornments of their bodies, in the detailing of their dress and headgear and the display of jewellery.⁷⁷ The *mulâtresse* is shown engaged in a commercial transaction in the built environment of a colonial settlement under construction. Bagneris notes the tall modern structures and the cobblestones under her feet, writing, ‘Located somewhere between prelapsarian Eden and modern London, the islands promised to the colonial seeker through the figure of the mulatress, both primeval pleasures and unparalleled profit, a raunchy ride and a bit of refinement – and all in one pretty brown package.’⁷⁸

The *mulâtresses* as a group attract one of Troup’s most prolonged diary entries dated 20 October 1789. It is transcribed in full in an appendix below. Given the abundant bibliography on the ‘mulatta’ précised above, it is tempting to read his extended diary entry as a constellation of literary tropes. Like other male British and French travellers to the West Indies during the later eighteenth century, he describes the mixed-race women as a collective, one which is entrepreneurial in the buying and selling of cloth and textiles and violent in their behaviours towards their social inferiors. His account conforms with those of his British contemporaries in seeing them as grotesque; in his case as ‘slaves’ and ‘whores’, rather than the more romantic view of their French neighbours and warring enemies.⁷⁹ Troup designates the *mulâtresses* morally dubious, hyper-sexualised and vain. He remarks on their excessive fondness for ostentation in dress, textiles and gold jewellery, which is displayed on their bodies and is

⁷⁷ B. F. Tobin, *Picturing Imperial Power: Colonial subjects in eighteenth-century British painting*, (Durham, 1999), 144. See too D. C. Skeeahan, ‘Caribbean women, creole fashioning and the fabric of Black Atlantic writing,’ *The eighteenth century*, 56.1 (2015), 105-123; A. Lafont, ‘Fabric, skin, colour: Picturing Antilles’ markets as an inventory of human diversity’, *Colombiano de Historia Social y de la Cultura*, 43.2 (2016), 121-154.

⁷⁸ Bagneris, *Colouring the Caribbean*, 175.

⁷⁹ Snyder Manganeli, *Transatlantic spectacles of race*, 23.

noticeable on the women represented by Brunias in Figure 4.⁸⁰ We might ask is the *mulâtress* herself little more than a trope – a ‘category’ to cite Sahil’s designation again? In other words, where do we draw the uncertain distinction between literary mobilisations of mixed-race women and the plentiful studies of that literature by scholars including Ze Winters, Zackodnik and Manganelli, and descriptions and depictions of mixed-race women by eyewitnesses like Troup which are rooted in his historical reality? By prescribing Troup’s diary entry into a pre-existing canon of tropes are we at risk of proscribing alternative interpretations?

One interpretation of Troup’s diurnal entry is a masterclass in Scottish Enlightenment medical theory and its speculative practice in the ceded British colony of Dominica. As Bruce Buchan has documented, there was a complex interplay between concepts of race, ‘savagery’ and civilisation in the varied colonial contexts in which the medical graduates of Scottish Universities were employed.⁸¹ Doctors were supposed to apply their knowledge of medicine to the unique characteristics of the patients they treated, mental as well as physical, and the conditions of life that bore on their health.⁸² These conditions were not fixed, but variable. They included climate, diet, habits and disposition, which when studied over time manifest as racial or varietal distinctions between humankind. According to a systematic theory of nervous disorders that was part of an Enlightenment medical education – and we might remember Troup attending Cullen’s lectures at Edinburgh – a healthy state of sense and sensibility or temper and temperament found a balance between physical needs and appetites. As Seth observes, if

⁸⁰ E. Long, *History of Jamaica*, (London, 1774), II. 335; François Alexandre Stanislas Wimpffen’s *Voyage to Saint Domingo, in the years 1788, 1789 and 1790* (published in Paris in 1797, with an English translation, London, 1817), is discussed by Snyder Manganelli, *Transatlantic spectacles of race*, 22.

⁸¹ B. Buchan, ‘Scottish medical ethnography: Colonial travel, stadial theory and the natural history of race, c. 1770-1805’, *Modern Intellectual History*, 17.4 (2020), 919-949.

⁸² J. Golinski, *British weather and the climate of Enlightenment*, (Chicago and London, 2007), 183.

one does not find ‘race’ in these factors, one does find more emphasis on the social and cultural differences that separated whites and others.⁸³

Notable in Troup’s narrative is the extent to which the manifestation of the behaviour of the *mulâtresses* depend on the nature of their sociable and antisocial interactions and with whom, whether with enslaved peoples, with each other or with members of the white colonial male population (‘the gentlemen’) for whom they were in Troup’s words, ‘taken as housekeepers’. Brooke Newman has inventoried the many domestic and intimate services for white men that housekeeping entailed, including nursing, cleaning, cooking, washing, sexual intercourse, the bearing and raising of children. ‘The colonial phraseology of “housekeeping” [she explains] served as a discursive sleight of hand, characterising in polite terms deeply exploitative relationships between men and women who occupied asymmetrical racial, social and gender positions.’⁸⁴ If ‘housekeeper’ was a colonial phrase, so too was *mulâtress* only without the sleight of hand. For a long time it has been considered as etymologically derived from the Spanish for mule - the usually sterile offspring of an ass and a mare – although Sollors suggests it may also derive from the Arabic word muwallad meaning ‘Mestizo’ or mixed that did become intertwined with mule.⁸⁵ As a racial designation it ‘is at once precise and capacious’ contends Ze Winter.⁸⁶

⁸³ S. Seth, *Difference and Disease*, 20-21, 248.

⁸⁴ B. N. Newman, *A Dark Inheritance: Blood, race and sex in colonial Jamaica*, (New Haven and London, 2019), 147. See too T. Burnard, *Mastery, tyranny and desire: Thomas Thistlewood and his slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican world*, (Chapel Hill, 2004), 228-240 on Thistlewood’s long-term mistress Phibbah.

⁸⁵ Sollors, *Neither black not white yet both*, 127-128.

⁸⁶ Ze Winters, *The mulatta concubine*, 6. See too W. D. Jordan, ‘American Chiaroscuro: the status and definition of mulattoes in the British colonies,’ *William and Mary Quarterly*, 19.2 (1962), 184.

Similar claims to precision and capaciousness, or what Geertz describes as ‘moving from local truths to general visions’, may be applied to Troup’s description of the *mulâtresses*.⁸⁷ It reads as an accumulated concoction of the blended components of his medical training and their application through studying humankind *in situ* as he had been for the previous five months. Troup’s extended diary entry mentions their diet, discourse and disposition. In other words, the diagnostic tools available to the physician to treat his patients are redeployed in a colonial setting to identify ‘race’ on a scale from European civilisation to African ‘savagery’. In respect of the latter, Troup appears to question the *mulâtresses* as a variety of the human species. Where they are said to ‘comb & pick the lice out of one another’s heads’, he presents them as non-humans due to their collective grooming practices. In a period when vermin signalled uncleanliness and laziness, Troup co-opts lice into racialised ideas about the *mulâtresses*’ human worth and moral virtue – or more properly, their absence.⁸⁸ His description casts their physical needs and appetites as being out of balance: ‘very cruel’, ‘extravagant’ and ‘immodest’ are among the pejorative adjectives he uses. In the British Atlantic, ‘Time was a tool of discipline and an aid to measuring performance’, so the *mulâtresses* torpid schedule of hedonistic pursuits contrasts with that of Troup.⁸⁹ He notes on 16 May how he rose at 6am and went to bed at 10pm. ‘In morning principal time for visiting between 12 & 2 hottest time of day very little do but dress & play music at 3 dine upon broth rice & roast & plenty of wine salads &c’ (12). His diurnal diary entries like this one were themselves another form of time keeping, which as we have seen, typically open with a thermometer reading and a summary description of the weather, the means for measuring and recording local climatic conditions in the torrid zone. For instance, the entry for 15 November 1789 (Figure 1) reads ‘Cool morn^g them 77°’, with an updated reading post meridiem. Troup also recorded the sights and sounds

⁸⁷ C. Geertz, *The interpretation of cultures: Selected Essays*, (New York, 1973), 21.

⁸⁸ K. M. Brown, *Foul Bodies: Cleanliness in early America*, (New Haven and London, 2009), 150.

⁸⁹ J. Roberts, *Slavery and Enlightenment in the British Atlantic, 1750-1807*, (Cambridge, 2013), 27.

of the metrological conditions in vivid and granular detail in the diary; his descriptions accompanied by painted sketches, notably a storm that took place on 4 August 1789 (36-38), the course of which he recounted over five pages illustrated with views of the changeable skylscapes in black ink and colour. ‘Sun shines 2 rainbows very beautiful’, he captioned an image (37v) annotated with colour descriptors ‘blue’, ‘red’, ‘dirty dark blues’ and ‘dirty white yellow clouds over mountain’ as the storm finally abated (Figure 5).

Troup’s extended account of the *mulâtresses* accompanies and is accompanied by a full-length drawing on the upper left-hand-side of the page (Figure 6). Captioned ‘Mullattoe woman in her morning dress’ it is unclear if it is portrait or genre; individual likeness or an ethnographic type indebted to taxonomic images of natural history specimens.⁹⁰ The image depicts a young woman with a dark complexion and black hair. She wears European-style fashionable dress consisting of a richly patterned ankle-length yellow skirt and a plain white jacket, large gold earrings and a gold necklace. Her skirt is translucent with the outlines of her legs clearly visible which may be a veiled reference to what Troup describes as their ‘quite immodest discourse’ and partial nakedness. Standing barefoot, she feeds a chicken, which his diary entry identifies as part of the *mulâtresses*’ diet.

This pen and watercolour drawing and all those in Troup’s diary may be classified as vignettes in which a single isolated figure is shown as an ethnographic type or in an individual portrait, as in Figure 6; or as groups of figures depicted in a social environment performing tasks or engaging in the routine habits of daily life, as in Figure 1. The majority of these images show enslaved West Africans who were at the bottom of the colonial social hierarchy and at one

⁹⁰ Tobin, *Picturing Imperial Power*, 139.

extremity in Troup's discriminatory calculus of colour ('jet black'). According to Troup's diary, in passages already cited, enslaved people were beaten by the creole women (123) and whipped by the *mulâtresses* (107v) in relationships of violent inequality. Since the historian must not endorse the colonial gaze, it is worth remembering that white men brutally and systematically assaulted enslaved people.⁹¹ Troup participated in the sexual exploitation of enslaved women. A diary entry for 9 August, for instance, reads 'make love to a number of girls in my drunken fit' (40v), although later (e.g. 124v) he seeks to distance himself from the 'debauchery' of the white West Indians whose medical complaints and conditions he treated. For Troup, such debauchery refers first and foremost to excessive alcohol consumption rather than the serial rape of local women.

One of Troup's earliest recorded encounters with enslaved peoples was at a plantation which he visited on 15 May, four days after he arrived on the island, where he 'saw negro hospitals & them lying on tables like a butchers stall', a spectacle which preceded that of 'the sugar & rum making' (11v), where he was shown the factories in the field which exploited so many enslaved lives.⁹² 'The negroes have their last names after their masters as Robin Lee belonged to Major Lee & they have their names after men, Gods, & places & things' Troup recounted once in Prince Rupert Bay, listing some forty-five examples including Hamlet, Pompey, Hector, Prince and Liverpool (160v). 'Negro' as discussed above, was a legally defined, socially constituted category of discrimination. In Hogarth's account, it 'defined blackness as a surrogate marker of difference to stabilize and reify racial difference.'⁹³ The imposition of

⁹¹ Block, *Colonial Complexions*, 8.

⁹² R. B. Sheridan, 'The plantation revolution and the Industrial Revolution, 1625-1775,' *Caribbean Studies*, 9.3 (1969), 8. On slave hospitals on Barbados, Jamaica and in Virginia, see Roberts, *Slavery and Enlightenment in the British Atlantic*, 164-166.

⁹³ R. A. Hogarth, *Medicalizing Blackness: Making racial difference in the Atlantic world, 1780-1840*, (North Carolina, 2017), 2.

names was another part of the taxonomy of race, where people of African descent were named after geographical locations or cities that held meaning to their enslavers.⁹⁴ While men had recorded names that seemed to mockingly refer to historical leaders, like Prince or Pompey, enslaved women were given names of inanimate toys or domesticated animals. Troup's diary reveals enslaved women were also named after reproductive organs: his list includes Matrice alongside Ball, Bidy and Angelique.

Troup's diary records treating enslaved peoples as part of his colonial occupation where one business – medicine – was expected by Dominica's white slaveholders to ensure the human productivity of their plantation businesses. According to his professional diagnosis the 'principal diseases' of enslaved peoples 'depend upon worms' (48v). The pages of his diary confirm that he treated enslaved men, women and children for all manner of medical complaints and conditions, ailments and accidents, across the life-cycle from birth to death, including the man whose legs had been temporarily whitened where they were scalded with boiling rum (78). His diary notes multiple instances of geophagy among enslaved Africans, including one where a 'negro eat the earth like bread named Antigua which brought on diarrhoea if he dies Mr Kemp is to put his head on a pole for an example to others' (32v).⁹⁵ Antigua is one of the few enslaved people who Troup identifies by the name foisted upon him. Among the ring worms, fevers, diarrhoea, 'chincough' and jiggers (a sand flea) that Troup routinely treated were a number of cases involving enslaved children in which Troup's diurnal entries cum case narratives were augmented with sketches of their infected body parts. He drew

⁹⁴ T. Burnard, 'Slave Naming Patterns: Onomastics and the taxonomy of race in eighteenth-century Jamaica', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 31.3 (2001), 325-346; M. Williamson, 'Africa or old Rome? Jamaican slave naming revisited', *Slavery & Abolition*, 38.1 (2017), 117-134; Block, *Colonial Complexions: Race and bodies in eighteenth-century America*, 96-98 looks at newspaper adverts for fugitive slaves.

⁹⁵ Hogarth, *Medicalizing Blackness*, chapter 3, 'Incorrigible dirt eaters: Contests for medical authority on Jamaican plantations', 81-103.

in outline the face of an enslaved child suffering convulsions from worms (39) (Figure 7); the ‘feverish’ face of a child he dubbed ‘hydrocephalitus boy’ who was teething his second set (58v) and two outline views – one hunched over in profile (‘The pain of blister made him step in this way’), the other squatting from the front (‘in the stile very common to negroes’) – of c. twelve year-old Ingelo (45) (Figure 8). Ingelo was a ‘stout healthy new negro’ at Bath estate whose movement caused by ‘giggers in his toes eating flesh nerves & vessels’ led Troup to nickname him ‘dancing boy’ (80). Troup provided a potted biography of this enslaved child who he wrote had been trafficked from Africa to Dominica, onto Liverpool and back to Africa (50v). During a fourth recorded encounter with Ingelo, Troup ‘gave him a whip with my cane at the toe most effected till it drew the blood he cryed from the pain very much. He appeared at once more recollected. I desired the nurse to cover his toes from air & apply bush & cow dung. Very commonly used in such Comp^t’ (81v). The ‘bush & cow dung’ remedy applied to Ingelo’s feet (81v) is one documented occasion when Troup showed an interest in what has been called the ‘know-how rather than the knowledge’ of Afro-Caribbean healers in the colonial Atlantic.⁹⁶

Specific medical conditions among enslaved people required local specialists skilled in African remedies and Troup’s diary for 11 August reads ‘The case of yaws taken from me & sent to Dr. who cures only sores a man by Regimen & Experience alone aged 70 years’ (42). Yaws was a bacterial infection which was considered an African disease, ‘a slave malady’ and was

⁹⁶ K. S. Murphy, ‘Translating the vernacular: Indigenous and African knowledge in the eighteenth-century British Atlantic’, *Atlantic Studies*, 8.1 (2011), 36. See too K. Paugh, ‘Yaws, syphilis, sexuality and the circulation of medical knowledge in the British Caribbean and the Atlantic world,’ *Bulletin of the history of medicine*, 88.2 (2014), 225-252; Weaver, *Medical Revolutionaries*; S. S. Parrish, ‘Diasporic African sources of Enlightenment knowledge,’ J. Delbourgo and N. Dew (eds.), *Science and Empire in the Atlantic world*, (New York and London, 2008), 281-310; C. Berry, ‘Black medical practitioners and knowledge as cultural capital,’ V. Barnett-Woods (ed.), *Cultural Economies of the Atlantic World: Objects and capital in the transatlantic imagination*, (New York, 2020), 56-75.

commonly confused by Europeans with venereal disease.⁹⁷ The expertise of these skilled healers, whose contributions are finally being recognised by the academic community, reminds us that colonial medical business was by no means restricted to white sojourners like Troup and his ilk. As Schiebinger observes, the Atlantic world medical complex melded people, plants and their knowledges.⁹⁸

When Troup was not treating enslaved men, women and children, who his diary catalogues as ill, dying or dead, he studied them ‘in the colonial field’ as part of his medical training in human nature – broadly conceived as their manners, morals and customs – within systems of labour and production which were a formative part of his race-making schema.⁹⁹ Part of a diary entry dated 16 November (127v), for instance, reads as follows:

‘when they wash the house they wrap up their nakedness with their petticoats brought up & turnd from the Backs upon their c---- Sky totally obscured with mist - & it falls down – They use coca nut skins or husks to rub the timber then wash it dry with rags – “one time” once – ’

At the foot of the page and shown from the knee up, is a drawing of an enslaved woman shown partially undressed and engaged in the activity Troup seemingly witnessed (Figure 9). Note how Troup censors his language – where the geographical territory of the torrid zone becomes a metaphor mapped onto the intimate parts of the sexually exploited enslaved female body.¹⁰⁰

The diurnal content moves seamlessly between social and metrological observations and back again where Troup records the Creole language of the enslaved peoples as he habitually overheard it (see too 26v, 55v, 59v, 61). Cocoa ‘is very common here’ (81v) noted Troup when

⁹⁷ Schiebinger, *Secret Cures of Slaves*, 50-54.

⁹⁸ Schiebinger, *Secret Cures of Slaves*, 3.

⁹⁹ Instances of illness have been already quoted. When Troup attended a heavily-pregnant enslaved woman who died of a fit, Dr. Armourer, the surgeon of the garrison at Roseau, proposed to save the child’s life by a caesarian section, but her enslaver refused (25v). On another occasion, ‘Mr [John] Carson calld on me [Troup] was to dissect a negro of Mr Winston’s who was not dead when I went’ (93v).

¹⁰⁰ F. A. Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones: Maternity, sexuality and empire in eighteenth-century English narratives*, (Baltimore and London), 7.

he visited the cultivated valley of a Mr. Lucas and sketched a nut. The enslaved women made inventive use of the shells of this plantation crop for their domestic tasks. They also made ‘excellent’ finger rings of hair which Troup recounts them selling (122v) on 3 November. He sketched examples patterned and plaited with ‘Hair white & black’, recording that he bought three of them, while the fourth was a gift (Figure 10). This previously unrecorded aspect of slave hair in Troup’s diary contributes to White and White’s discussion in which hair ‘was an important medium through which cultural messages could be conveyed’ by enslaved people in African American culture in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹⁰¹ The rings demonstrate that, that like white colonists and *mulâtresses*, enslaved people were involved in a branch of commerce appropriate to their status. As such, Hilary Beckles’ definition of huckstering as ‘small-scale productive domestic activity’ by enslaved women might be extended beyond food production to include these types of homemade accessories.¹⁰²

On the opposite page of the diary (123), Troup’s entry for the day closes with the observation ‘A new negro catchd stealing plantain as I left the Bath [estate] throw him into bilboes Iron bilboes sometime wood – like stocks’. On a purely visual level, the drawing of the metal and wood shackles on the right-hand page by which enslaved peoples were confined mirrors their hand-crafted hair rings on the opposite page (Figure 10). Both were objects operating within the slave economy of the West Indies: one an instrument of colonial restraint, the other a commodity for sale or gift made from the materials of their own bodies. Two of Troup’s other drawings might be similarly juxtaposed. The first is of an ‘Iboe dance’ with a numerical key from 1 to 5 denoting eight male and female dancers – ‘men have rings & bells at knees to rattle’

¹⁰¹ S. White and G. White, ‘Slave hair and African American culture in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,’ *Journal of Southern History*, 61.1 (1995), 45-76.

¹⁰² H. McD Beckles, *Centering Woman: Gender discourses in Caribbean slave society*, (Kingston and Oxford, 1999), 141.

- plus a drummer and clappers on the far left (121) (Figure 11). The second, what must be field 'Negroes pulling a cart w^t goods' (133) (Figure 12), where the eight tiny men and women pulling and pushing the cart are followed by a driver with a whip, a form of restraint used on human and nonhuman creatures.¹⁰³ This is one of a number of pictorial representations of subaltern servitude in the pages of Troup's diary, that differentiate his informal and impromptu visual representations from the idealised pictorial productions of the professional artist Agostino Brunias (as in Figure 4) whose paintings of Caribbean slave society have been described by Sarah Thomas as 'a carefully contrived imperial fiction'.¹⁰⁴

One of Troup's more finished sketches of an enslaved man occurs in the diary entry for 20 November (130), so between the sketches of enslaved peoples dancing (121) and working (133). It is a full-length portrait of a cooper in profile accompanied with another vertical caption (like Figure 1) that reads: 'A cooper in statu quo with a handkerchief & old white hat cocked w^t pens on his head in a rainy day in town' (Figure 13). Troup attempts to insulate the figure from the encroaching text above him and to either side. We can be sure this is a portrait of an unidentified man as a second caption reads 'From life'. Bindman notes that the terms 'slave' and 'portrait' are oxymoronic ones; Figure 13 might be better classed as a stolen portrait taken without the sitter's consent or knowledge, an unsought product of white surveillance.¹⁰⁵ Shown barefoot, the cooper wears a striped shirt and a long apron, holding one of the tools of the timber trade in his right hand. In the right-hand corner of the page is a second coloured image – a head and shoulders of a 'Negro basket w^t plantains'. Plantains were known as 'white man's

¹⁰³ Weaver, *Medical Revolutionaries*, 82.

¹⁰⁴ S. Thomas, *Witnessing Slavery: Art and travel in the age of abolition*, (New Haven and London, 2019), 65.

¹⁰⁵ D. Bindman, 'Subjectivity and slavery in portraiture: From courtly to commercial societies,' A. Rosenthal and A. Lugo-Ortiz (eds.), *Slave Portraiture in the Atlantic world*, (Cambridge, 2013), 75; M. Pointon, 'Slavery and the possibilities of portraiture,' A. Rosenthal and A. Lugo-Ortiz (eds.), *Slave Portraiture in the Atlantic world*, (Cambridge, 2013), 48.

foot' since it sprung up wherever Europeans settled.¹⁰⁶ It was among the tropical staples cultivated by French planters in Dominica, with the cash crops of cotton, coffee and cacao; sugar plantations came later to the island with its volcanic topography and dense woodland than to neighbouring British territories.¹⁰⁷ Troup sketched a plantain tree in his subsequent journal (40.5 x 6 cm) for April 1791 when he was on board the Dominica packet en route to London (Figure 14).¹⁰⁸ It shares the page with drawings of a boat, a canoe and a woman with a child.¹⁰⁹ On a subsequent page, Troup drew in ink a map of the island of Dominica from the *West India atlas* (1780), a publication dedicated to William Young, the former governor and Agostino Brunias's patron.¹¹⁰ There are very few eighteenth-century maps of Dominica, so it is notable that Troup delineated the island territory in this way as he left it. Figure 15 reproduces the map as printed in the *atlas* for ease of comprehension.

The sketches embedded in the pages of Troup's 1789-1790 diary of enslaved and free people of African and multiple ancestries, as well of white men of European descent, have been designated vignettes. With the written diurnal entries that variously accompany, envelope, elucidate and ignore them, they objectify the sick and healthy bodies of the multi-racial inhabitants of Roseau and Prince Rupert on the island of Dominica at work and at ease. Yet to further comprehend the historical currency of Troup's diary during the late 1780s, we need to extend our discussion of Troup's race-making schema with its discriminatory calculus of colour to probe the contiguous question or interrelated idea of species. Natural history was a branch of a Scottish Enlightenment medical education which prized first-hand empirical study

¹⁰⁶ V. Dickenson, *Drawn from Life: Science and art in the portrayal of the new world*, (Toronto, 1998), 197.

¹⁰⁷ Baker, *Centering the Periphery*, 58.

¹⁰⁸ UASC, MS 3027/2 folio 13.

¹⁰⁹ For an edited account of his voyage see W. H. Cranna, 'The log of a ship's surgeon', *Caledonian Medical Journal*, 21 (1923), 81-88.

¹¹⁰ UASC, MS3027/2 folio 14.

of the three ancient kingdoms of animal, vegetable and mineral specimens. In the eighteenth century, it embraced a broader range of natural phenomena, including the weather.¹¹¹ Troup drew different species of tropical plants and animals, examples of flora, fauna, birds and fish, the latter shown swimming across or up and down the pages of the diary (Figure 16) alongside sketches of white European men (Figure 1), the *mulâtress* (Figure 6), enslaved adults (Figures 9, 11, 12, 13) and children (Figures 7, 8) and the changing features of the tropical skyscape (Figure 5). The entry for 14 November, for instance, includes a pen and watercolour drawing of a ‘Blue Gawlding of Dominica’ shown in profile (Figure 17); to either side of which are pencil outlines of what looks like a parrot. At the foot of the same page for the entry dated 15 November (127) is the drawing of the barber, his comb suspended in his hair, with ‘a little Negro’ powdering his hair (Figure 1). The spontaneous juxtaposition of drawings of human and non-human subjects, often on the same page, signposts Troup’s recourse to the study of natural history which formed a branch of knowledge of his medical training and as documented below, became an absorbing pastime as his medical employment foundered in Roseau. Troup characterised his natural history collecting and correspondence as ‘leisure’ pursuits by which he sought to establish a colonial reputation as his prospects for making an economic fortune in business via his medical expertise receded.

III

Within the business culture of the British Atlantic, Haggerty demonstrates how reputation was a form of capital that was of vital importance at community level, even if its currency was social rather than economic.¹¹² Troup and his professional colleagues were well aware of the extent to which reputations were constructed and maintained through correct performance and

¹¹¹ A. Cooper, ‘Picturing Nature: Gender and the politics of natural-historical description in eighteenth-century Gdańsk/Danzig’, *British Journal for eighteenth-century studies*, 36.4 (2013), 520.

¹¹² Haggerty, *Merely for Money?*, 97-131.

could be deconstructed by gossip and scandal. We might recall Fillan telling Troup (29) that wife was a ‘vulgar expression’ for a ‘man of breeding’ to apply to a *mulâtress* (29). In a diary entry for 21 November 1789, Troup remarked that he had been visited by Dr Clark who had returned to Dominica after six month absence. He ‘called me ungrateful for my conduct since I came to this Island [recounted Troup]...I wish I had not brought you out I’ll write your friends what a man you are – You expect to come & make a tool of us to collect curiosity for the Royal Society. I told him I would do that still in my leisure hours & there are many in a man’s life’ (130v). Notwithstanding Troup’s characterisation of natural history as a leisure activity, it was as much a business pursuit; a form of colonial knowledge and imperial expansion. Troup oriented the diary horizontally to repeat at its central crease: ‘D C said I wish I had not brought you out I am afraid your head is so much taken up with natural curiosities’.

Troup’s records in the diary having written to Sir Joseph Banks and to Dr. Monroe on 1 August (34v). As President of the Royal Society, Banks is arguably a more familiar figure than Alexander Munroe who was the second in a dynasty of three Alexander Monroes to hold the chair of anatomy at the University of Edinburgh. His lectures on comparative anatomy, which Troup may have attended from 1787 to 1788, taught that variation between species and genera required a rigorous taxonomic method taught in natural history.¹¹³ Troup’s colonial correspondence situates him within what Scott Parrish has designated the cultures of natural history in the Anglophone Atlantic world, which in her study focus on the period from the 1660s to the Revolutionary war.¹¹⁴ He was far from unique in this regard: ‘Many colonials participated in the informal, heterosocial culture of nature appreciation and curiosity,’ she

¹¹³ B. Buchan and A. McLaren, ‘Edinburgh’s Enlightenment abroad: Navigating humanity as a physician, merchant, natural historian and settler colonist’, *Intellectual history review*, 31.4 (2021), 631.

¹¹⁴ Scott Parrish, *American Curiosity*.

explains, through global correspondence networks and in the collection of specimens in their natural transatlantic settings, they sought to ‘turn nature into an asset’.¹¹⁵ In Troup’s case, natural history was already a branch of his Scottish Enlightenment medical training on which he increasingly focussed as a means for what he hoped would be a profitable career move and a rise in social status.

Whether Troup was acquiring curiosities for the Royal Society, as Clark accused him of in November 1789, is doubtful. He was however collecting them for himself. In early September, Troup noted that he ‘gave Mr Lowndes [the printer of the *Royal Dominica Gazette*] my advertisement for natural productions to be inserted into his Sunday papers’ (73).¹¹⁶ From this point onwards, Troup’s diary documents and on occasion, illustrates, the acquisition of natural curiosities for his own burgeoning collection. An entry for 16th contains a coloured drawing of a ‘land crab [he purchased] of a black purple cast on back a number of prickles on its small toes...It eats people in graves’ (84) (Figure 18). Other procurements included a ‘large thorny crab such as Pennant in his *Tour of Scotland* [(1771), plate XVIII] paints’ (89), a seven-foot long snake (95) and a bird’s bill (99).¹¹⁷ He heard from a fellow collector, a ‘Gentleman from Island of Damarara belonging to Dutch in the Spanish main he has a Number of Curiosities which I am to see’ (99) and delighted in the purchase of a cock’s comb as a ‘great addition to my collection of natural curiosities’ (119). In November, he bought an iguana (124v) and received a letter confirming that a Mr. Jones on Antigua was to send him shells (126v). Mr Edwards and Dr Malcolm ‘came to see my curiosities [Malcolm] the head surgeon of the Fort of Antigua a Scotsman from Island of Uist’ (127). During December, Colonel Maxwell from

¹¹⁵ Scott Parrish, *American Curiosity*, 104, 17.

¹¹⁶ J. A. Lent, ‘Oldest existing Commonwealth Caribbean newspapers’, *Caribbean Quarterly*, 22.4 (1976), 102 (on Dominica newspapers).

¹¹⁷ Troup reckoned ‘Pennant’s *Tour* is one of the best books that has been wrote upon Scotland by ancient or modern authors’. UASC, MS 3027/2 folio 141.

Grenada, who we can infer from his surname was also Scottish, commissioned Troup to write a list of the animals in Dominica (135v). Within four months of placing an advertisement in one of the weekly island newspapers, Troup was consolidating his collection of natural curiosities and was courted by fellow colonists on islands in the convex arc of the Lesser Antilles for his local expertise as a colonial naturalist.¹¹⁸ In this, Troup's early network of Scottish medical colleagues was superseded by an informal company of natural historians from various colonial professions.

In early October 1789, as visitors first came to see his self-styled 'museum' (99v) Troup projected it as means of 'mak[ing] myself popular & the sooner the better & when I am to become popular every thing will come and so the sooner the better "macte virtuto esto" ' (95). The reputation he sought as a colonial collector of natural history specimens, or collecting as part of the economic and reputational business of colonial careering, followed months of professional disagreement between himself and Fillan that eventually led to permanent estrangement and Troup leaving Roseau for Prince Rupert. When it came to diagnosing their patients' illness (63), offering appropriate treatments (67) and even the social etiquette of their professional transactions (59v), Fillan and Troup were unable to agree. The latter articulates his frustration with his employer with mounting fury in the pages of his diary. The 'excellent attentive practitioner' of their first meeting (11) is accused of being 'obstinate' (38v), 'miserly' (77v), 'a crack brain' (82) and repeatedly ignorant (56, 59v, 79v, 81). Much like accusations of quackery levied at occasional practitioners, Troup's derogatory designations say more about

¹¹⁸ K. S. Murphy, 'Translating the vernacular: Indigenous and African knowledge in the eighteenth-century British Atlantic,' *Atlantic Studies*, 8.1 (2011), 42 n. 4. Troup was a colonial naturalist in the meaning of the term used by Murphy to indicate individuals in British plantation societies who were engaged in the study of the natural world by correspondence, collecting and publishing.

his inflated conception of his professional self than the identity of his adversary, Fillan.¹¹⁹ ‘As for his knowledge of the animal oeconomy & of diseases I would give up the business & betake me to painting fiddle &c if I did not possess more’ (67) berated Troup as he considered his accomplishments as artist and musician as alternative professions to medic.¹²⁰ Even Dr. Clark ‘has not got a liberal education’ he fumed (82), when we know Clark was a medical graduate of King’s College, Aberdeen in the decade before Troup graduated with an M.A. from Marischal College. ‘all a parcel of green horns’ (67) is how Troup vilified his colleagues when he was Johnny Newcome having been in Roseau five months compared to Fillan’s uninterrupted fourteen years (11).¹²¹ Fillan’s length of service and his reputation ‘protect his ignorance’, insisted Troup, ‘But for myself...May God direct my way & sit Gloria tibi...I am “Nullius addictus in verba jurare majestre” ’(79v). Troup adopted the Latin motto of the Royal Society, whose President Joseph Banks he wrote to and whose fellowship he aspired to, as his own ‘unless I am rationally thrown a better’ (96v).

There is one occasion in the diary when Troup appears to allude to it as a material object in his possession. While based at Fort Shirley, Prince Rupert Bay as acting surgeon to the Royal Artillery (174), he noted that ‘Serg.^t Wilson of the [military] Hospital names my Book the Medisone Book’ (160v). Troup spells the word phonetically as Wilson spoke it. With its list of charges for medicines and attendance, its case narratives on the ailments of his patients and the details of their prescribed treatments, Troup’s diary has provided pertinent occupational data for scholars of colonial medicine since 1985 and the publication of R. B. Sheridan’s ground-

¹¹⁹ M. E. Fissell, *Patients, power and the poor in eighteenth-century Bristol*, (Cambridge, 1991), 68.

¹²⁰ Troup’s diary records he read James Keill, probably his *Essays on several parts of the animal oeconomy*, (London, 1717), which characteristically made him an expert on the subject!

¹²¹ Newcome – so-called from his status as new comer – was a prototypical British man who in contemporary graphic satire relocated to the West Indies in pursuit of fame and fortune. See C. Northrop, ‘Satirical prints and imperial masculinity: Johnny Newcome in the West Indies,’ *Nineteenth-century gender studies*, 14.2 (2018).

breaking *Doctors and Slaves: A medical and demographic history of slavery in the British West Indies, 1680-1834*. This article has demonstrated the extent to which the previously overlooked race-making contents of Troup's diary, both visual and textual, or illustrated and inscribed, make it more than a 'Medisone Book' or a specialist volume that pertained solely to the pursuits of his profession. It casts their chronicler as a product of Scottish Enlightenment medical training with its blended specialisms of medicine, natural history and moral philosophy. His diary is a further product of these combined diagnostic skills applied within the colonial field to its multi-racial inhabitants, native, displaced and deracinated.

A close and critical reading of Troup's textual and visual diurnal entries over a period of fifteen months, from April 1789 to August 1790, enable us to excerpt his account of race-making as it was theorised and practiced by this educated doctor, a white coloniser and a collector of natural history specimens in Dominica. The four-tiered system he devised (white/creole/'mulatto'/black) and demarcated in the pages of his diary signals skin colour or pigment as a salient characteristic of race. Predictably, it denotes a hierarchy of discrimination in which European-born white men like himself and women were superior to French and British creoles. They in turn, were superior to mixed-race peoples like the *mulâtresses*. Located at the bottom of the strata, as they had been for centuries in law, were the enslaved Africans with their 'jet-black' skin. Troup sought to gain from the socioeconomic capital of his racialized system, much as he gained reputationally from his collecting of flora, fauna, birds, animals and insects on which he increasingly focused his efforts when his medical career as a doctor foundered.

Troup's race-making schema of variability and hierarchy, as this essay has demonstrated, was multi-faceted in its speculations and speculative in its many facets. While his visual representations fixed a tiered calculus of skin colour as a physical marker of race, his written descriptions considered factors that were indebted to Scottish Enlightenment medical curricula in probing the surface of the skin – literally and metaphorically - to reveal his subjects' moral temperaments and social tempers. The latter are particularly diagnosed in respect of white, and mixed-race women, making gender a defining category in Troup's race-making schema. The 'place that we can see race in action [argues Seth] – is medicine in the colonies.'¹²² This microhistorical study of Dr. Jonathan Troup's diary, suggests that on the one hand, race as seen in particular gradations of complexion is rendered immutable in his ink sketches; while on the other, via his diurnal written testimony, it is observed, described and conjectured in social and cultural differences between humankind which are in processual flux, rather than representational stasis. Race and species, humans and nonhumans alike are objects of study or specimens exposed to the scrutiny of Troup's white, male, colonial gaze and his discriminatory knowledge regimes of classification and collecting.

Appendix:

'Mullattoe woman in her morning dress. They are slaves too most of them – taken as housekeepers make shirts are very prolific at times when she is chaste if not many abortions are consequence – they are very cruel to the blacks from whence they spring & a Black would do any thing before they had her for her mistress they delight in whipping the Negroes will throw themselves into passion & the Negroes skins know of it before they get out of it again. They are remarkably fond of dancing particularly minuets which some of them do with a good grace. Also fond of all caudy dress particularly of red yellow & green & in fact it suits their complexion best of any tho' often the dress in white particularly when they go to church. Some can read & wrote most can do neither but they are great gallants if you treat them with plenty of money they are far more extravagant than our women in general they must have a vast variety of gold ear rings & Locketts some of them very handsome also great variety of gold beads for necklace & lace round their baver hats & silks. They love always to be spending

¹²² Seth, *Difference and Disease*, 173.

money & buying different commodities lawn linen gauze calico & they sell it at great profit & sometimes make plenty of money if they have good management & know what will suit the times. In general they have quite immodest discourse all of them whores & they throw themselves into a number of tempting positions sometimes almost quite naked. They comb & pick the lice out of one anothers heads & think nothing of it. In a word nothing gives them shame. They are capable to do any thing they are very jealous of one another & parties are formed & they are named after their leader or the quarter of the town most of that party live in & they shine at their retrospective balls which they hold chiefly in time vessels are in Bay 2,3 months before & after Christmas They drink tea or coffee early they walk or lull about like a relish of fish & plantains or yawn at noon dine 2 hours after upon fish frogs called Crapos (excellent soup like chicken) sometimes a pig a hen or chicken with vegetables & fruit & glass of water or even two them of them meet & have chit chat about whats going on in town they ruin numbers by keeping them for mistresses – No poor house & seldom supper is taken – In evening different gallants come & discourse with them & if matters are made up they leave house of their own master & go a cruising. They speak broken English & little different from Negroes in field tho' some of them by being in good families many talk very properly. They wish a great many compliments conferred upon them by the gentlemen & if you are not particularly attentive to this you gain their dislike they are very sensible of hints given & give ready answers' (107v-108).