Title: “Where similar cases are stated”: Medical Reasoning in Charles Brockden Brown’s *Wieland*

The first successful novelist in the United States, Charles Brockden Brown (1771-1810), was well versed in medical knowledge and discourse. In this chapter I elaborate this context by demonstrating the author’s close association with the first U.S. medical periodical, *The Medical Repository* (pub. 1797-1824). Brown’s debt to medicine is well known in scholarship: two of his later novels take contagious disease and its treatment as their central plot device. By reading *Wieland: or The Transformation* (1797) alongside the medical periodical, however, I not only demonstrate the influence of medicine as a thematic element, but also argue for the fundamental role of the medical case study as a logical tool which structures Brown’s epistemological method. As the charts and tables included in early volumes of *The Medical Repository* demonstrate, the increasingly professionalized medical field of the late eighteenth-century attempted to coordinate general observations about disease patterns through a central authority. While this shift in medical epistemology has been understood as a movement from narrative to non-narrative forms of knowledge, I demonstrate instead how the narrative form of the case study persists in medical writing, particularly due to its ability to render a general observation particular enough to be useful for practicing physicians. Taken either as data points or as exemplars of a given constitution, case studies offer provisional, affective knowledge in the era of clinical medicine. While Brown’s novel addresses the hereditary and social sources of madness, or mania, as manifest in the titular Wieland family, I argue its greater debt to the medical field is in probing the relationship among early U.S. republicanism, affect, and the origin of mental diseases. As such, *The Colonial Case* concludes by offering not only a glimpse of the history of an un-accounted for genre—the medical case study—but also responds to the longstanding critique of the American novel as an immature sub-genre of its European, particularly British, forebears. When understood through the history of the medical case study, what emerges is a version of the American novel that is epistemologically, as opposed to aesthetically, experimental.