

# Vandalism of Ableist Sensibilities in Edgar Allan Poe's "Hop-Frog"

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Think of your Eddy writing a story with such a name as "Hop-Frog"! You would never guess the subject (which is a terrible one) from the title, I am sure.

—Edgar Allan Poe, a letter to Annie L. Richmond,  
Feb. 8<sup>th</sup>, 1849.

## Introduction

Edgar Allan Poe's "Hop-Frog" is a tale of a disfigured person named Hop-Frog's revenge upon his cruel master. Although Hop-Frog is at the center of the short story, he has hardly been taken for who he is. Rather, he has been read as a medium representing, for example, Poe's indignation against the publishing industry and the American readership, or the potential of slave uprising.<sup>1</sup> People with disabilities or impairments tend to function as metaphorical devices in literary discourse, largely ignoring their reality. Kevin Stagg says the following:

The personal, social and political implications of disability are constantly elided whilst the physically different body is incessantly invoked. Thus, discourses of monstrosity invariably reflect on issues of gender, sexuality, race and ethnicity but the disability or deformity that underpins the original category of monstrosity is overlooked.<sup>(20)</sup>

This paper reveals how Poe deliberately traces and overturns the accepted notions of physical disability or perceptions of corporeal otherness in the mid-19th century. In this process, we focus on emotional ableism, dealing with the representations of real and fictional people of small stature in newspapers, a biography, and a novel. Emotional ableism is key when we discuss the representation of disabilities as Margaret Shildrick argues that "responses to disability are never objective precisely because binary differences are constantly undone by the irreducible

operation of *différance*, an imbrication of self and other that frustrates separation and distinction" (757). In this paper, we will see that disability is positioned as the other that generates a normative anxiety and destabilizes the integrity of the self in "Hop-Frog."

## I. Two Small Couples

It is necessary to introduce two small couples upon whom we will focus hereafter. First, let us turn our eyes to a front page of *Harper's Weekly*, the February 21, 1863 issue, which shows a big portrait of a newly-wed couple. At the first glance, there seems to be nothing peculiar, but upon a closer look, the viewer sees the couple's size in comparison to that of a chair deliberately drawn behind the couple. Most readers at the time must have easily recognized that they were Charles Sherwood Stratton and Lavinia Warren who were famous for their small, but "normally" proportioned physical statures. They were also popular performers at P. T. Barnum's American Museum. Especially, Stratton, who was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut, in 1838, became a "public favorite" (Barnum, 140) as soon as he started his career. Their wedding was held on February 10, 1863, and given their great popularity, their portrait made the cover of *Harper's Weekly*, one of the most widely-read journals in the U.S., up to more than one week after the wedding.

*Harper's Weekly* was not the only medium that publicized the wedding; newspapers as *The New York Times*, *Sun*, *New York Herald*, *Chicago Tribune*, and others also replaced news of the Civil War with this event. For example, *The New York Times* published a spectacular report on February 11, 1863, the day after the wedding. The column with the headline "THE LOVING LILLIUPUTIANS" devoted more than a half of a page to describe the wedding at Grace Church on

Broadway, the ceremony at the Metropolitan Hotel, bridal presents, and crowds of people following the newly-wed couple. The writer of the column says, “The marriage of Gen. Tom Thumb cannot be treated as an affair of no moment—in some respects it is most momentous. Next to LOUIS NAPOLEON, there is no one person better known by reputation to high and low, rich and poor, than he” (3).

Here is another little couple: Hop-Frog and Tripetta in Edgar Allen Poe’s “Hop-Frog,” which was written and published in 1849, the year Poe died. Tripetta is a small but beautiful person, whose description is very similar to that of Lavinia Warren. However, Hop-Frog’s physicality is disfigured, and he suffers from a walking problem. They are favored by the king who owns them, but, having been abused physically and mentally by the tyrant king, they eventually carry out a cruel revenge on the king.

Among Poe’s works, Hop-Frog is not the only person with a short stature. The followings are examples, ordered chronologically. The narrator of “Loss Breath” (1832) is “somewhat diminutive in stature” (153); “an insignificant and misshapen little page” in “Metzengerstein” (1832) is described to have “deformities” (141); the person on a balloon in “The Unparalleled Adventure of One Hans Phaall” (1835) is “more than two feet in height” (953); in “King Pest” (1835), a seaman’s stature does not exceed “four feet” and his “bow-legs supported his squat, unwieldy figure, while his unusually short and thick arms, with no ordinary fists at their extremities, swung off dangling from his sides like the fins of a sea-turtle” (241); in the author’s hypothesis, a “dwarf” actuated the chess-player in “Maelzel’s Chess-Player” (1836); Pompey in “How to Write a Blackwood Article” (1838) is “three feet in height,” and has “bow-legs” (289); a “very diminutive” (302) man appears in “The Devil in the Belfry” (1839).

The most notable examples of small characters among Poe’s works are Dirk Peters in “Narrative of A. Gordon Pym” (1837) and the Frenchman in “Why the Little Frenchman Wears His Hand in a Sling” (1840). The former is described as being “short in stature, not more than four feet eight inches high” while his limbs “of Herculean mould” and his “arms, as well as legs, were bowed in the most singular manner” (1043). His features are quite similar to those of Hop-Frog even though Hop-Frog is much smaller compared with Dirk Peters. In terms of nicknames, as well as Hop-

Frog, the Frenchman in “Why the Little Frenchman Wears His Hand in a Sling” is notable. His height is described to be “rarelly more than three fut and a bit” (364), and called “Mounseer *Frog*” (367, 368) or “Ye little spalpeeny *frog*” (368, emphasis mine). Given some images of these predecessors, Hop-Frog plays a central role, which is quite a different one from theirs, shaking our emotions in various directions, as we will see in the following chapters.

This chapter introduced two small persons Stratton and Hop-Frog briefly, but it does not claim that Stratton is the precise model of Hop-Frog.<sup>2</sup> Before discussing the narratives concerned with them in the following chapters, it is necessary to clarify the differences between them. First, they are different in terms of race. Stratton is an American from Connecticut, and his whiteness is emphasized in the media, described as “the precious porcelain of human clay” (*Harper’s Weekly*, 114) for example, while Hop-Frog is taken to a court, and the stage is not in the non-monarchical America, but in some other place. In the next chapters, we will see that the binary opposition, whiteness/non-whiteness, does not yield too much influence in the cases of Stratton and Hop-Frog. The second difference is in their physical features. Stratton is small, but perfect in proportion, while Hop-Frog is crippled and small in stature. Because of these differences, Stratton seems to be represented favorably in various media, but this is not necessarily true. We should not dismiss the able-bodied subject’s affect beneath those representations. In the following chapters, we will see that the narratives concerned with Stratton and “Hop-Frog” obscures the complexities of physically extraordinary figures and serves the need for normalcy in the reader.

## II. Man to be Laughed at

It is notable that “Hop-Frog” starts with the exposition that all people but Hop-Frog and Tripetta at the court are obsessed with laughter. Commencing with the king, the narrator says at the beginning of the story, “I never knew any one so keenly alive to a joke as the king was” (899). This preliminary background information makes it understandable for us that the king has a jester in his court, even though court dwarfs were rare by the end of the 18th century according to Betty M. Adelson. As for the others at the court, the king’s “seven ministers were all noted

for their accomplishment as jokers" (899), although we never see them play the role of jokers. They do laugh with the king as the narrator says, "[the king's] laugh was chorused by the seven" (902), but they never make the king laugh. Here, Poe clearly classifies the characters in "Hop-Frog" by laughter. In the court, laughter works as a signifier that differentiates Hop-Frog, who is an object to be laughed at, from the king and the ministers, who are the subjects doing the laughing. The question, then, is what causes laughter?

The king's court is obsessed with jokes, and that is precisely the reason why the king owns Hop-Frog. Jesters were "common at court," but Hop-Frog's "value was trebled in the eyes of the king by the fact of his being also a dwarf and a cripple" (899, emphasis mine). In other words, the king would not own a common jester. Because of Hop-Frog's bodily difference from the other "normal" jesters, the king owns him, and Hop-Frog's body itself becomes "practical joke" to the king. Here, we should not forget that the narrator has deliberately said in advance that the practical joke is "suited [the king's] taste far better than verbal ones" (899).

Actually, Charles Stratton, who was widely known as General Tom Thumb, had been a person to be laughed at as Hop-Frog is supposed to be in the court. While P. T. Barnum and Stratton were in London, they went to the Buckingham Palace several times at the queen's invitation. According to Barnum's autobiography, the queen, prince, duchess, and a number of nobilities fell in a "burst of laughter" when Stratton walked into the room where they were waiting for him, "looking like a wax doll gifted with the power of locomotion" (150). On their second visit to the palace, all those present raised "shouts of laughter" while Stratton "strutted up and down as proud as a peacock" (153). At the wedding ceremony, Stratton and his wife Lavinia Warren are also the objects to be laughed at. *The New York Times* reports that "a sense of the ludicrous seemed to hit many a bump of fun and irrepressible and unpleasantly audible giggle ran through the church" (3). In spite of the style of the narrative, Stratton's representations are almost always associated with laughter.

The impulse for the spectators to laugh at Charles Stratton was strategically induced by P. T. Barnum. He exhibited the little Stratton "in the aggrandized mode" (Bogdan, 150), assigning great titles such as "General," or presenting him as Napoleon Bonaparte.

The disparity between the physical appearance of a child and the mock heroic presentation made those who saw him laugh. In his study of cuteness, Lori Merish says the following:

Much like the "overblown titles" (such as "senator," "colonel," "Prince," and "Apollo") assigned black comic figures in minstrelsy and vaudeville, as well as print culture, the high aggrandized style used in conjunction with little people made comic capital out of the blurring of "high" and "low"; in particular, it ridiculed the pretensions of the "low" to the status and privileges of the "high." (190-191)

Barnum's strategy is based on people's assumption that individuals of small statures never reach positions of high status and privilege, and this assumption discloses "normal" people's contempt and consolation that "we" are not threatened by "them." Even though Stratton's exceptional popularity made him different from the other characters in Barnum's American Museum, people's laughter consolidated his otherness.

These implicit emotions behind the act of laughing also can be seen in "Hop-Frog." Even though Hop-Frog is never assigned a great title as Stratton was, Poe dramatizes the body of Hop-Frog by emphasizing the gap between him and "ninety-nine cases out of a hundred" dwarfs (900). The narrator says, "Dwarfs were as common at court, in those days, as fools" (899), but Hop-Frog was favored by the king because of his "his inability to walk as other men do" (900). His gait, which is described as "something between a leap and a wriggle," affords not only "illimitable amusement" but "consolation" to the king (900). Degrading Hop-Frog even further lower than typical dwarfs, the king secures a stable position as "a capital figure" (900). Laughing works as a mechanism for creating social distance between disabled and non-disabled people, and the distance gives consolation to the latter. Baltasar Castiglione says, "the source of the ridiculous is to be found in a kind of deformity; for we laugh only at things that contain some elements of incongruity and seem disagreeable though they are not really so" (155), which is represented in the narrative descriptions of Hop-Frog and Stratton.

### III. Man Deprived of Autonomy

The first half of "Hop-Frog" stirs readers' sympathy in some exaggerated way, following

sentimental stories that were enormously popular in the mid-19th century America.

In the process of introducing Hop-Frog, what the narrator first tells us is his physical deformity as a crippled dwarf,<sup>3</sup> and the “great pain and difficulty” (900) when he walks make us feel sorry for him. Besides, the fact that the king laughs and enjoys seeing him walk, as we have seen in the previous chapter of this paper, inflames the readers’ sympathy for Hop-Frog. On the other hand, his “sworn friend” Tripetta is also small in stature, but her body is perfectly proportioned. Her representation also calls for the readers’ sympathy when the narrator insinuates sexual exploitations in the court, saying, “*she*, on account of her grace and exquisite beauty (although a dwarf,) was universally admired and petted” (900).<sup>4</sup> In addition to these sufferings in Hop-Frog and Tripetta’s daily lives, the narrator augments the readers’ sympathy, claiming that it was not their own will to come and work as jesters at the court. They were “forcibly carried off from their respective homes in adjoining provinces, and sent as presents to the king by one of his ever-victorious generals” (900). This detail justifies some critics’ reading of Hop-Frog in which he is associated with popular antebellum images of black slaves. Nevertheless, he provides a good example of how disabled characters are adopted in literature as a metaphorical medium to present something other than his/her own self. In reality, dwarfs as well as people with anomalous physical features had been taken away from their hometown to courts, exhibition spaces, or performance halls.<sup>5</sup>

The crucial scene of the first half of the narrative is where the king forces Hop-Frog to drink even though he knows that Hop-Frog is “not fond of wine; for it excited the poor cripple almost to madness; and madness is no comfortable feeling” (901). The king’s cruelty grows when it is revealed that it is Hop-Frog’s birthday when he commands Hop-Frog to “swallow this bumper to the health of your absent friends” (901). Poe deliberately inserts a simple but striking description of Hop-Frog’s countenance parenthetically: “[here Hop-Frog sighed,]” (901). Poe goes further. Reader’s most sympathetic feeling will be evoked not because Hop-Frog complies with the king’s order, but because “[m]any large, bitter drops fell into the goblet as he took it, humbly, from the hand of the *tyrant*” and he “*reluctantly* drained the beaker” (902, emphasis mine). Poe augments our sympathy for Hop-Frog by

using the word “tyrant” and describing his laughter when Hop-Frog unwillingly empties the beaker. In actuality, the narrator apparently stands by Hop-Frog and echoes the sympathy of the readers, saying “poor cripple,” “poor dwarf,” (901) and “poor fellow” (902), and by Tripetta as well, who tries to help him, calling her “poor girl” (903).

It would be too hasty to extend pity toward all dwarfs at this point, even though Poe’s description of Hop-Frog and Tripetta evokes our piteous feelings given their physical anomaly. In fact, the lives of court dwarfs were complicated. According to Beatrice K. Otto, court dwarfs “have enjoyed universal popularity” (23), but on the other hand, analyzing shifting attitudes toward dwarfs and individual nuances in each society, Adelson deliberately and justifiably claims:

In a few societies, dwarfs were treated with respect and honor; in others, violence and abasement were rampant. Sometimes both treatments coexisted. Dwarfs almost always occasioned some difference in status: they might have been viewed as having a special relationship with the gods, or employed for entertainment. (3)

What should be noted here is that Poe set “Hop-Frog” in a court, which has never existed in America. This setting might be Poe’s penchant for exoticism, but the description of the abused dwarfs in an unfamiliar place also contributes toward evoking the readers’ sympathy. In her discussion of disabled figures in literature, Garland-Thomson says the following:

If we accept the convention that fiction has some mimetic relation to life, we grant it power to further shape our perceptions of the world, especially regarding situations about which we have little direct knowledge. Because disability is so strongly stigmatized and is countered by so few mitigating narratives, the literary traffic in metaphors often misrepresents or flattens the experience real people have of their own or others’ disabilities. (10)

Different from exhibiting dwarfs like Stratton who attained autonomy to some extent and exhibited themselves for living when “Hop-Frog” was written, Poe uses the image of a court dwarf who is owned by others and regarded as the person who “could be indulged, abused, or ignored at the master’s or mistress’s pleasure” (Adelson 21). When Tripetta,

who tries to protect Hop-Frog, is pushed violently and thrown the contents of the goblet in her face by the king, the patient Hop-Frog first shows his own affect. Tripetta "got up as best she could, and, not daring even to sigh, resumed her position at the foot of the table," and Hop-Frog could do nothing but only make "a low, but harsh and protracted *grating* sound" (903). Being deprived of his masculine instinct to rescue a suffering woman determines Hop-Frog's lack of autonomy. The king and his ministers' ignorance of where the "grating sound" came from at that moment indicates that they only need Hop-Frog's body, but not his conscience.

For Jean-Jacques Rousseau, compassion or pity is the pure emotion of nature, which, "by moderating the violence of love of self in each individual, contributes to the preservation of the whole species" (345). However, Bill Hughes raises an objection to Rousseau:

[I]n the real world (amour propre) people are driven to compare themselves with others and, in this context, the drive to seek domination over others transforms pity from a state of natural sympathy and compassion into a base symptom of social inequality. (70-71)

The senses of superiority and, sometimes, even contempt works behind pity, which defines the pitied as inferior, needy, and invalidated in cases of disability. Non-disabled people regard pity as a virtue, and have utilized disability in the narrative of tragedy or triumph over hardship to aspire to be benevolent and to cultivate self-control. If we change the viewpoint toward disabled people, however, they are made to be the recipient of charity and deprived of autonomy in those narratives. "Hop-Frog" represents the problematic and complicated meaning of pity through the extravagant representation of Hop-Frog's body.

The lack of autonomy can be seen in the narrative of Charles Stratton as well. He was a wage-earning performer, but P. T. Barnum was always behind him even after the end of the contract. In the article reporting on the wedding, *The New York Times* declared that Stratton leads an independent life after his successful European tour, saying, "Since then he has remained at ease with his parents in Bridgeport, living on his money, conducting himself with eminent propriety, and developing into a good citizen, a sensible man, a good fellow generally" (3). However, the same report exposes that the wedding between

Stratton and Warren is under the control of Barnum even though the couple wanted to make the wedding strictly a private one. The description of the couple's appearance at the entrance of the bridal party is striking: "Preceding them was the self-possessed, the self-poised, the shrewd-eyed, kindly-faced BARNUM — BARNUM, the Prince of Showmen, the manager of affair, which is, in his own word, 'the biggest little thing that was ever known'" (3). The couple's own will was nullified, and it is plausible that some readers of this newspaper felt sorry for them and were concerned that they were being exploited for the purposes of making a profit.

Both Stratton and Warren were of age and mature when they got married, but they were still protected and petted by others because of the small sizes of their bodies. They were adults, but seen and dealt with like children. A column on Stratton and Warren published then contrasts them with another extraordinary people, giants, saying that they "approach this *petite* piece of humanity with love, and make a pet" of him/her while they "look upon giants with awe, perhaps admiration" (Thumb, 8). Here, it would be informative to cite Lori Merrish's study of the significance of aesthetics of cuteness, which focuses on Stratton and Shirley Temple.

Like nineteenth-century sentimentalism, with which it is closely allied, cuteness is a highly conventionalized aesthetic, distinguishable both by its formal aesthetic features and the formalized emotional response it engenders. It is generically associated with the child, both in terms of the formal property of smallness or "miniatureness" (miniatures are often called cute).... Because of its association with childhood, cuteness always to some extent aestheticizes powerlessness: often cute figures are placed in humiliating circumstances... (187)

In spite of his perfect, proportionate, and white body, Stratton had been represented as an object to be protected and, as a result, deprived of autonomy, which put him in a similar situation as Hop-Frog.

#### IV. Fluidity of Disableness

In previous chapters, we discussed how the process of "othering" works through the interaction between emotions and the body. Here, it should be made clear again that our purpose is not to find out

the similarities between Hop-Frog and Stratton, but to consider that the narratives about them are similarly based on the able-bodied majority's emotion, in a novel, news reports, and a biography.<sup>6</sup> This chapter focuses on "Hop-Frog," specifically to discuss how Poe deconstructs the stability of ableness and shows the instability of physical normalcy.

Discussing the socially contextualized view of disability, Garland-Thomson considers that "disability depends upon perception and subjective judgment rather than on objective bodily states" (6). In "Hop-Frog," the form of the lower half of Hop-Frog's body and his dwarfism are emphasized intentionally, through which the narrator urges his readers to regard him to be pitiful and lack autonomy as seen above. However, it is a one-sided judgment by the normate, which is a neologism that designates "the social figure through which people can represent themselves as definitive human beings" (8). Then, normate is "the constructed identity of those who, by way of the bodily configurations and cultural capital they assume, can step into a position of authority and wield the power it grants them" (8), as explained by Garland-Thomson. Hereafter, we discuss how Poe utilizes the rhetorical effect of representing a disability familiar to his contemporary audience, and deconstructs it dramatically in the latter half of "Hop-Frog." He shows that, whether or not we are aware, none of us can ever escape from the vulnerability of our bodies, demonstrating that a hierarchy based on bodily differences can be overturned, and the fluidity of disability horrifies the normate.

Answering the king's request to think about "novel characters" (901) for his masquerade, Hop-Frog proposed an idea in which the king and his ministers would act as eight chained orangutans. Poe's metaphorical descriptions of apes in his works have often been read as associated with black people or slavery. In "Hop-Frog," the fact that Hop-Frog and Tripetta were "forcibly carried off from their perspective homes" (900, even though it is unclear whether their "homes" were in foreign countries), and that tar and flax (rather than feather) are used for the king and his ministers (eight orangutans), may justify a reading of this story as a slavery's rebellion against his master. However, it must be remembered that Hop-Frog's description is mainly focused on his disabled body, unlike the orangutan in "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," for example. As Douglas C.

Baynton argues that "[r]ace and disability intersected in the concept of the normal, as both prescription and description" (39), a disabled body tends to be read not as it is, but as a metaphor of the inferior, abused, dependent, or stigmatized.<sup>7</sup> The purpose of this paper is to read the disabled body as it is.

The zest of "Hop-Frog" is that the hierarchy in the first half of "Hop-Frog" is completely reversed in the latter half, where Hop-Frog becomes an absolute ruler. Saying, "[L]eave all that to me" (904), Hop-Frog proceeds with the king's masquerade as he wishes. The narrator emphasizes Hop-Frog's autocracy by persistently using those words such as, "the scheme of Hop-Frog" (904), "[h]is mode of equipping the party" (904), "the calmer judgment of [Tripetta's] friend the dwarf" (905), "his suggestion" (905), and "Hop-Frog's advice" (905). Even when someone from the group of the king and his ministers suggests something opposing Hop-Frog's ideas, it was "at once overruled by the dwarf" (904). Once the masqueraded king and ministers appear in front of the eyes of the invited, Hop-Frog dares to make his voice "easily heard" to everyone in the court, shouting and repeating the words, "Leave them to *me!*" (906).

This shift of the subject of domination is accompanied by a functional or structural change of disablism. Being tied up and limited their ability to walk, the king and his ministers "rolled in" the grand saloon crowded with masqueraders, "fall[ing]" and "stumb[ing]" (906), and their mobility is further limited, when they are hanged from a chandelier by Hop-Frog's ploy. The environment wherein one can move without the function of legs breathes new life into Hop-Frog, and now he "leap[s]" with "agility" (907) into the air by grasping a chain hanging from the chandelier with the muscular arms that are almost forgotten in the first half of this novel because of the emphasis on Hop-Frog's other impairments.

This shift represents the destruction of the social process for physiologically "typical" humans and turns those who are impaired into something negative by creating barriers in metaphysical and physical terms. In the changed environment, the king and his ministers fall into an inferior state, as represented in people's perception of them as "ferocious-looking creatures to be beast of *some* kind" (906). Their identities are destabilized and completely deprived of autonomy; they are not the able-bodied subjects anymore. Eventually, they are conquered and burned

to death by Hop-Frog who is described in the first half of the story as the least likely being to commit such an act.

From the beginning of "Hop-Frog," the standard of the physical norm is described as ambiguous and unstable. The king is very fat with "the protuberance of his stomach" (like his ministers), and his head is constitutionally "swelling" (900). These descriptions implicitly suggest that they are different and exceptional from the "normal" body. On the other hand, Hop-Frog's arms have "the prodigious muscular power" (900) that compensates for the deficiency in his lower limbs. Both—the characters and the readers of this story—are lead to ignore Hop-Frog's physical strength until more than half of the story is complete because crippling impairments had a significantly negative meaning in 19th century America, especially in the South, according to Dea H. Boster, and because Poe emphatically and impressively describes the dwarf couple's abused circumstances. However, from the start, Poe scrupulously blurs the definition of the normal body and that of the abnormal body, and completely destructs the boundary between them at the end of "Hop-Frog." It is the destruction of normative expectations and identity of the able-bodied that threatens the people at the court and the readers. This unreliable perception of the body and the unstableness of able-bodies become Poe's tropes in his textual representation of Hop-Frog.

## Conclusion

Poe called "Hop-Frog" "a terrible one" (425) in his letter to Annie L. Richmond just before its publication. What was in his mind when he used the word "terrible"? Some critics associate "Hop-Frog" with slavery, while others read it as Poe's rebellion against literary circles. Indeed, both uprisings are "terrible" in a sense, but we should not ignore the fact that Poe uses physical deformity at the center of this work even if it is treated as a cultural, historical, or racial symbol for other topics. The destruction of the norm, wholeness, and ableness is the source of what Poe called "terrible" because it destabilizes non-disabled identity.

Disability is a socially constructed category, but with the development of technology, medical science, and disability studies, it is changing in the 21st century. Mentioning the somatic "impairment"

and the possibility that people can be disabled and cured at any time in life, Lennard J. Davis regards the instability of the category of disability as "a subset of the instability of identity in a postmodern era" (272). Following Davis's theory, we may be able to say that "Hop-Frog" represents a destabilization of disability, which transcends the problems of identity politics.

## Notes

- 1 See for example Dayan 239-73, Jones 239-254, and Gilmore 98-124.
- 2 Gilmore points out the similarities between Hop-Frog and Harvey Leach who was a well-known actor in the early 1840s. See Gilmore 105-108.
- 3 Small people were generally perceived in two different ways: there were "midgets" who were well proportioned and "dwarfs" who were physically deformed and disproportionate, for example, with large heads, short limbs, and sometimes hunched backs. However, the entertainment world did not differentiate among them clearly. In this paper, "dwarf" is used for Hop-Frog and Tripetta because Poe does not use the word "midget" for either of them. As for the words "midget" and "dwarf," see Silver 117-118 and Bogdan 148.
- 4 As for the sexual role of dwarfs in courts, see Mitchell 26-52.
- 5 Some dwarfs in European courts were purchased in Africa and given as gifts from the aristocracy to other countries. See Adelson 21. The historical information of court dwarfs also relies on Otto.
- 6 Burbick discusses how the metaphorical representation of physical disableness was associated with immorality, weakness, and reliance, while physical ableness was associated with American independence and democracy.
- 7 As for the notion of stigma, see Goffman.

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