Breaking the Book

Wiley Blackwell Manifestos

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Breaking the Book

Print Humanities in the Digital Age

Laura Mandell

WILEY Blackwell

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Advertisement

> *Engagement with a single human artifact, in the palm of your hand, is the fundamental act of humanities scholarship. If the digital age is an age of abundance–let us teach attentiveness. (Nowviskie 2012)*

The title of this manifesto, *Breaking the Book*, is meant to be tendentious, and it is meant as well to indicate a critical engagement with the book as a medium that may enable breaking its hold on us, on our thinking, written by a person who has been working in the field of digital humanities. But before I start criticizing, I must say: it is only the book medium that allows such critical thinking, including about itself, a fact that indicates possibility and limitation at the same time. The inability to understand their essential co-presence has impaired bookwork in literary criticism, especially over the last 10 years. And I have to say directly to the book before I start: that my criticism made here in this manifesto forebodes no severing of our loves.

Shortly after moving universities, when I was at large in the suite of offices and lounge space that have been dedicated to the new Digital Humanities Center at Texas A&M, one that I was hired to direct, a pipe burst, and the building started to flood. My Research Assistant Shawn Moore yelled out, "Laura, we're flooding, grab everything." I ran into my new office, looked at the stacks and stacks of boxes of folders representing over 20 years of academic work, at the computer (which should have reminded me of the

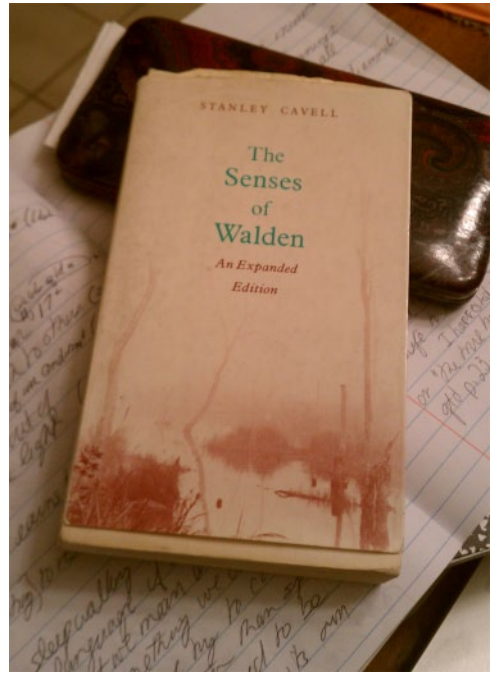


Figure A.1 A North Point Press Edition of *The Senses of Walden* by Stanley Cavell; photograph by Laura Mandell.

time machine that backs up all my work, a few doors down the hall), and, what did I grab? A North Point Press edition of Stanley Cavell's *The Senses of Walden*, one of the most beautiful little paperbacks I have ever owned (see Figure A.1).

The only edition now currently available, the Chicago University Press reprint of this book, is not the same book as the North Point Press, not in meaning though perhaps in words. Because different to my senses, it is sensed differently: the North Point Press book is shot through with human intention, from every chapter head and margin to the words that Cavell could so carefully indite. So I grabbed it and ran out. Now I know what is "everything" to me, and it's here: you are holding it in the palm of your hand.

To recast a statement made by Charles M. Schulz about humans and humanity, I love books; it's the current state of humanities disciplines I can't stand. And of course, these humanities disciplines were founded at the very moment that mass print culture came into existence, in the early nineteenth century. This disciplinary book culture, what might be called humanities by the book, has not been particularly receptive to works like the North Point Press edition of *The Senses of Walden* (1981). Oh, yes, of course, the book got good reviews—it looked like something recognizably Derridean. And a description of what it does, its performance, is adumbrated in a relatively recent book on "over-reading" that contains a chapter on Cavell (Davis 2010). Cavell's most stringent claim in this little book—not one repeated often in literary criticism—is that he doesn't read *Walden*; *Walden* reads him, us. Cavell goes to *Walden* the way Thoreau goes to Walden pond, to disrupt his life-habits so that he can know them for the first time. It is the capacity for a particular form of attention particularly capitalized upon by books that makes us human and humanistic. Unfortunately the printed codex can and does foster countervailing forces as well.

That attentiveness to meaning that could be required by books, to point to my epigraph written by one of the major Digital Humanists of our time, is threatened, but not by the usual suspects. It is not only iPads and computer screens that distract us. The forms of attention that can be elicited by this thing that you are holding right now in your hand are subjected to major forms of resistance, forms as blank and pitiless as academic institutions in their current evolution, forms as dark and sarcastic as book reviews written during the days when moral condescension takes the place of real thinking (discussed a few pages from now, pp. 127–130).

In this manifesto, I want to break open the book to look inside in order to find out what might predispose us to attentiveness and resistance in the medium itself. But the metaphor breaks down insofar as

the workings of this machine, the one that makes use of human page-turning energy rather than batteries, is subjected to forces outside its control, both economic and academic. I would break up with those forces if I could, but one can only "disown" blood-family, not "break up" with it—or achieve enough insight about its predations and deformations of character to notice their emergence in intuitions, intimations, and temptations toward habitual modes of thought. Here, then, the *Senses of Walden* and I will not be breaking up but together lying on the couch. And this for a desperate purpose, the one adumbrated by Nowviskie above, to bring forward what is deeply humanistic into a brave new digital world.

The old fashioned term "advertisement" reminds me that books are commodities, and that a Preface should "advert to" or perhaps even give warning of its contents. The breaking of a book can literally only happen to its binding. I am here trying to figure out what binds us to the book and what intellectual binds we get into in producing books. My interest in the book as I have been writing about it has shifted to articles, the unbound or temporarily bound pages that are bound into books by journal publishers, collectors, and libraries. This may be partly because of their trajectory from unbound to bound, but it may also be because these humanistic scholarly articles bear on books: one can imagine articles of literary criticism as extended marginalia, ways of altering and expanding printed books. In any case, they propound ideas, like any other printed writing, about the intellectual content we have privileged by living in books. I'm interested in a medial ecology in which books interact with articles and vice versa—an information system that is for most disciplines breaking down at the moment (Bowker 2014: 100).

Each chapter in the following manifesto takes something one can do with a book as its topic. In writing it, one imagines rationalizing ordinary language in such a way as to make revolutionary, monumental changes in the way the world works (Chapter 1). In reading a book, one looks at a particular "case" of something, even when it is not explicitly a case history or its fictional equivalent, a novel. Such positioning puts the author of literary criticism into

the position of a doctor directing his or her disciplinary gaze toward a sick object (Chapter 2). The humanities disciplines, at least, are disciplines of the book, and in fact mass print culture and the discipline of English literature emerge simultaneously, producing a literary and cultural critic-historian who imagines himself to have fearful powers (Chapter 3). Those imaginary powers are wielded in the most recent attacks against the emerging field of Digital Humanities in ways that falsify criticisms' claims. I conclude here by examining the contention that publishing a book gives its author "voice" for eternity: given that this promise of immorality has afforded some self-deluded books, can we prevent that promise from carrying over to the screen (Conclusion)? In each of these chapters, including the conclusion, my method is to examine the change from coterie to mass-print to digital culture. Those who, in the British Battle of the Books, sided with "the Ancients"—those who were pro-coterie, we might say—worked in a medial environment that included manuscript and print. They were therefore very savvy about how printing affected their meaning. Second, I look at authors moving into the world of mass print: they too look at print culture askance, though in the case of Romantic-era writers in Britain, anxiety more than satire is expressed in their relation to mass print. Finally, in each chapter, I look at the digital world. Here I strive neither to be u- nor dys-topian, though such polemical hazards are very difficult to avoid in manifesto form. Ideally, there will be reviews, and the reviews will correct the excesses. If only the reviews of this book could appear between its covers, here. If there are any, please sew or staple them into the cover.

PART I

Pre-Bound

1

Language by the Book

Preamble: *This introductory chapter discusses and carefully quotes book historians as well as authors who published between 1700 and 1800 in England. The chapter enacts more or less well what literary studies books do best: it brings together all kinds of work in one place, not only providing a filter for massive amounts of data through selection, but also shaping that selection via argument. I don't think data can yet be presented via digital media in the same way except insofar as such data resembles printed scholarly articles and books. This chapter does bookwork: it provides an accounting of passages previously published in other articles and books. Each passage quoted is examined not only for what is said, but for how it is said because the precise manner of speaking has intellectual consequences.*

So, for instance, below you will find a passage written by Ludwig Wittgenstein juxtaposed with a passage by Ernest Gellner that "summarizes" Wittgenstein's point. A summary always pretends to be saying the same thing in a different way, but the difference between Gellner's summary and Wittgenstein's statement is that the summary leaves out and slightly warps the original. The careful attention made possible by printing the two passages next to each other brings to the fore some essential ideas. This form of attention made not only possible but likely by printed books reveals that there is a very significant difference between, on the one hand, what Gellner

Breaking the Book: Print Humanities in the Digital Age, First Edition. Laura Mandell.

says that Wittgenstein says and, on the other, what Wittgenstein actually says. Gellner's complaint against Wittgenstein's philosophy misses a crucial part of that philosophy, but we might not have seen that crucial part without Gellner's important (mis)interpretation. Books of literary criticism allow us the luxury and time to set two passages next to each other and compare.

I have seen no such precision in arguments that are truly digital (as opposed to merely printed texts that have been put up on screens—kindles, iPads, computer screens), and so agree completely with Aden Evens when he says that computational "exactitude … must not be confused with an infinite precision. On the contrary, the digital is calculably imprecise; it measures its object to a given level of accuracy and no further" (Evens 2005: 69). *I'm not sure that this will be true forever, or that it is true about the digital* per se, *but, for the moment, it is only in printed book form (whether the printed book is on the kindle or the web making no difference, as far as this claim is concerned) that one can carefully compare two sentences, explicate the difference, and argue for the importance of that difference, not only to the original writer, but to us all.*

When someone writes, prints, and mass-distributes their patterns of thinking, they know that printed proclamations cannot be effaced from their "body of work," and so, they work hard to make sure that their formulations are careful and compelling. They get help from readers and editors of manuscript copy before it is printed, readers of offprints who send a note, sometimes, in response, reviewers among their peers who print their own mass-distributed and careful evaluations of the book. Then in writing something new, I as a literary critic, draw as many of those careful and considered formulations together as I can. Sifting through ideas, comparing sentence to sentence when precise formulation is at stake, that's the way that literary- and cultural-studies book writers argue now, as exemplified by Amanda Anderson's important book that makes and tracks argumentation per se (discussed below, pp. 40–41). Gellner's formulation is so important because it tries out—essayer, *the French word for "tries" constituting our word for "essay"—a pointed reformulation of Wittgenstein, and it only through the work of multiple trials of that sort that we can fully understand the sentences from Wittgenstein or other important documents that we are trying collectively to read. The work of literary and cultural studies* is *therefore interactive, collaborative, albeit slowly, and grounded in precision.*

One conclusion that can be drawn from the difference, articulated by Evens, between computational exactitude and literary precision is as follows: that only precision allows for ambiguity, and ambiguity generates precision, since the imprecise exactitude of coding and programming languages accompanies their intolerance of ambiguous statements. And now, to my topic and my chapter, Language by the Book. *I begin with an epigraph:*

> The other project [at the School of Languages of the Grand Academy of Lagado] was a scheme for entirely abolishing all words whatsoever, and this was urged as a great advantage in point of health, as well as brevity. For it is plain, that every word we speak is, in some degree, a diminution of our lungs by corrosion, and, consequently, contributes to the shortening of our lives. An expedient was therefore offered, "that, since words are only names for things, it would be more convenient for all men to carry about them such things as were necessary to express a particular business they are to discourse on." And this invention would certainly have taken place, to the great ease, as well as health of the subject, if the women, in conjunction with the vulgar and illiterate, had not threatened to raise a rebellion, unless they might be allowed the liberty to speak with their tongues, after the manner of their forefathers; such constant irreconcilable enemies to science are the common people. (Swift 1726)[1]

In *Gulliver's Travels* published in 1726, Jonathan Swift here rather famously mocks the writing ideal promoted by the Royal Society as articulated by Thomas Sprat in his *History of the Royal Society* (1667): "to return back to the primitive purity, and shortness, [of language] when men deliver'd so many things, almost in an equal number of words" (Sprat 1667: 113).[2] But why, in the passage written by Swift, do "women, in conjunction with the vulgar and illiterate" feature as defenders of the language "of their forefathers," a.k.a. common speech? In Swift's fantasy, women defend what will come to be called the "mother tongue" or non-book language (Cavell 1981: 16).

Swift writes during coterie print culture, a moment when print runs were still very small, publishing still dominated by subscription

and patronage, and—here is the most important part of all—when manuscript circulation was still a viable publishing alternative to print (Ezell 1999, 2009; Karian 2010). In fact, the medium of handwritten manuscript was often preferred for reasons of prestige,[3] just as in our moment print publication is often preferred to digital publishing. We live in an era of mass-print publication that is ceding to something else. Each scholar who publishes a book imagines that it reaches a wide, at least partially anonymous audience because, as I discuss fully in Chapter 3, living with mass-printed books structures the writers' imaginary beliefs about what he or she is doing when publishing in printed codex format. However, the "mass-printed" book that I currently hold in my hand, Ann Moss's *Printed Commonplace-Books and the Structure of Renaissance Thought* (1996) probably, like most academic monographs these days, had a print run of 200 (McGann 2006b, qtd. in Kirsch 2014), approximately one third the size of the print run of Alexander Pope's translation of the *Iliad* printed by William Bowyer for Bernard Lintot (Foxon 1991: 53), although it was printed again in 2002. My copy of Moss (as we say when speaking of printed books) is clearly a copy produced via print on demand: I can tell by the thickness of the letters, their warping in places, the fact that the pages look more like photocopies or laser printing than traditional imprints. And indeed, the copyright page states the case explicitly: "This book has been printed digitally and produced in a standard specification in order to ensure its continuing availability." We live in an age in which expectations structuring book-rhetoric are based upon the mass-print run, but, given that almost all scholarly articles are now available in pdf form online, an age in which digital publishing is the unstated norm.

Just as Swift had one foot in manuscript and one in print culture, we too straddle two publication media, print and screen. It is because of that similarity, because coterie print culture mingled print and manuscript forms just as we mingle printed and digital material forms, that we can now really see, I believe for the first time, precisely what Swift was saying about the print medium.

Before now, we were ourselves too embroiled in mass printing to fully understand. It takes the entirety of this introductory chapter to explicate the epigraph from *Gulliver's Travels*; taken together with other recent analyses of the passage, the full import of this epigraph is visible now perhaps for the first time.[4]

In this book, I examine the book, the printed codex as it has been conceived after mass-printing became possible and automated binding techniques were developed in the early nineteenth century, looking at the book as "a simulation machine," in the words of Jerome McGann (2006a: 60): the book is a machine for simulating or modeling communication. Thinking about the book as a machine allows, metaphorically, for breaking it open to examine its inner workings, though of course literally, only the spine of a book can be broken. I look primarily at scholarly communication, which, as it currently accounts for a little under 1% (0.68%) of net book sales per year, so it seems grandiose to call my subject "The" book. However, "the" book that most concerns me in the following chapters, the book of literary and cultural criticism, is the book about books. Pre-bound, the book of a literary critic is often a series of published articles or talks: here in this chapter, I'm interested primarily in the earliest printed articles circulating in the earliest journals which were written primarily in the field of natural philosophy or early modern science. They are quickly and in multiple configurations bound into books. The Society's journal, *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*, is the longest-running journal in Western literature, published as it was from March 1665 up to the present day, and, because they began to be bound annually shortly after they began being published in the 1660s, the *Transactions* constitutes the most consistently published printed codex as well.[5] Additionally, collections of important essays from the Royal Society's *Philosophical Transactions* are printed from the 1690s onward. But if the physical articles were pre-bound and then bound, the discourses in them are also "pre-bound," not yet bound to the common sense that was instilled by living habitually with mass-printed and mechanically bound books. Many Royal Society authors therefore

state explicitly their hopes for what their own book-language will do, hopes that we later tacitly, unconsciously assume.

Breaking the Book gathers together and filters—by forging them into an argument—a number of the books and essays published in the last two centuries about book history, asking through them, "how does the book machine work?" It would be too easy to slip into a critique of the printed book medium that conceives it as an omnipotent, inexorably thought-determining machine, but it is precisely such paranoid critiques, I'll argue below, which the book medium most fosters and which it takes a conscious effort to resist. So I want to break open the book machine to look inside, allowing us to be fascinated without being overwhelmed by its workings. It's not a machine that I personally can live without, and so I won't be breaking up with it, nor doing any machine breaking for the sake of breaking away, but only for the sake of tweaking slightly, trouble-shooting my own engagement with books, and tracking the extent to which the simulation-machine's conditions in codex form carry over to scholarly communication's form on the computer, the iPad, the smart phone.

A lot is at stake. The field of digital humanities is one among numerous interdisciplinary movements that are currently restructuring the academy, and all of them could perhaps be demonstrably connected to new media. In this book at least, I will argue that the discipline of English literature qua literary criticism and cultural studies is book-based and book-sustained, its dismantling proceeding apace with the work we are now doing to digitize the archive. And so it seems to me important to write a book about what portions of our discipline we should try to retain in the face of cuts and media transformations—how to shape the digital instantiations of our cultural heritage by keeping, if we can, the best parts of book culture and letting go of the worst. This shaping won't just happen on its own: digital media, like the book, makes some things easy that are very good for the new academy, and some things that are not; new media could make some things that we care about disappear if we don't clamor to keep them—clamoring

about what matters, like Swift's "women and the vulgar," to keep academic discourse healthy.

But did Swift succeed? That is, were he and Pope and other writers who straddled manuscript and print culture able to keep the things they cared about alive in print culture? What were they afraid would be lost? *Breaking the Book* attempts to revitalize the complaints of those entering print culture to see where we succeeded and where we failed in making sure that we ran the book-machine rather than it running us: the mass-printed book that came into being around 1800 shifts, in fact, from being a machine operating on its own to being a tool wielded by human hands only to the extent that we work with it by being consciously aware of the book's limitations.

So then, back to Swift. First: "things." Swift is making fun of the article-publishing early scientists of the Royal Society, in general, and, in particular, of Sprat's *History of the Royal Society*, first published in 1667. Swift takes literally Sprat's infamous mandate to deliver things in words by having his Lagado academicians hold up "things" instead of using the "eloquence" that has made Sprat and his society so "disgusted" and "angry." But for me, at least, the Lagado Professor's idea problematizes the Royal Academy's: what could Sprat possibly mean when he says that the writers for this new community of scientists have decided to "deliver things in an equal number of words"? Does he mean that writers will attempt to string together nouns that name things, using as little of the other parts of speech as possible? If so, how would doing so protect "the whole spirit and vigour" of experimental design? (Sprat 1667: 111–12).

Over half a century ago, A. C. Howells traced the use of the Latin phrase "res et verba" in philosophical discourse of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, noting that "res" changes from suggesting "matter," as in subject-matter, to indicating "things." The phrase occurs in an admonition culled from Cicero and Quintilian to use verba—words—that are intimately bound up in a subject: "More matter with less art," Gertrude says to Polonius in *Hamlet*,

urging him to make his point instead of pedantically pontificating upon majesty, duty, time, and madness by way of introducing what he has to say about her son (Shakespeare 1604–5: 230). Shakespeare too is making fun of the style of philosophers in the schools that is universally condemned by Bacon, Hobbes, and Sprat.[6] Gertrude's "more *res* less *verba*" comes gradually to be interpreted to mean using the "plain style" rather than to focus on saying something meaningful. And while it is easy to understand the Royal Society's desire to bring metaphysicians back down to earth, it is less easy to understand the relationship between words and things in the writings of this anti-academic and anti-humanist scientific society, as Sprat defines it.

In his *History of the Book*, Adrian Johns devotes one full chapter to describing how, in a "culture of usurpation" and piracy, the Royal Society worked to create a trustworthy, reliable "civil domain of print."[7] *Philosophical Transactions* reported experiments and discoveries which could be seen as the manipulation and finding of things—hence the obvious importance of these authors to words representing things. But other kinds of words besides noun-names of things would have to be involved in the explanations, and so Sprat's enmity against "Tropes and Figures" surely exceeds the need for concrete descriptions in experimental reportage. The passion of his exclamations is legendary: "Who can behold, without indignation, how many mists and uncertainties, these specious Tropes and Figures have brought on our Knowledg?" (1667: 112). Sprat is furious, he says, with his "Predecessors" in the field of natural philosophy for showing off their "Wit" at the expense of describing their own "bare" observations and experiments; by that means they attempted to be "Tyrants over our Reasons" rather than our "Benefactors" (1667: 116).

This statement accords of course with the history-of-ideas notion that the emergence of modern science required rejecting past authorities. The academic urban legend, if there can be such a thing, is that, since Aristotle said that the back legs of skunks were shorter than the front, no one bothered looking until the great

instauration of the new empirical method in the seventeenth century when people began observing for themselves. But I want to look now at the how the *sine qua non* of the Enlightenment—"think for yourself"—in all its glorious performative hypocrisy ("I command you to think for yourself") is fostered by the printed book medium.

Before relying upon past authorities was depreciated by the Enlightenment, there was common-placing, and, at the very outset of printing's history, printed books attempted to teach this chirographic activity. Ann Moss writes about early modern printed commonplace-books which instructed their elite readers in moral virtues, certainly, as well as other topics, but were also designed to teach literate students how to collect quotations from their own reading, how to organize passages for future use under various headings as they copied them in their own manuscript commonplace-books. The resulting handwritten "Commonplace-books were the principal support system of a humanist pedagogy" (Moss 1996: v)—its infrastructure, we would say now. ("Humanities" at this moment refers to the study of Latin and Greek; it is opposed to theological subjects.) These commonplace-books were not simply lists of quotations but were "digested," organized according to topics (topos = "place") that comprised various conceptual systems, by authors such as Erasmus in *De Copia*. Their mode of collecting quotations of authorities or respected authors that they passed onto students was explained using the image of a bee culling honey from flowers that made its way into Swift's *Battle of the Books*: the bee, Erasmus says, "lies busily round to every flower" gathering "material" that then passes through its "digestive organs," turning into honey "in which it is impossible to recognize the taste of any flower or shrub from which the bee has sucked."[8]

Erasmus's printed commonplace-book, *De Copia*, gathers together copious amounts of "copy" (writing) for the sake of students who wish to produce elegant, organized thinking. The goal is not simply to remember, but to produce, and the capacity to write in this worldview requires knowing how words and ideas co-occur.

Before the advent of modern science, linguistic prowess is crucial not only for arguing and persuading (dialectic and rhetoric), but in itself as a form of knowing: "generally the best words are inseparable," Quintilian says (in translation), "from their things [or subjects—*res*—which] are discovered by [the] light" shed by the words—*verba*. In contrast, because investigating the workings of words seemed to Enlightenment thinking only subservience to previous authorities, exploring their meanings was demoted as a mode of knowing. But like Quintilian, Erasmus's *De Copia* precedes Enlightenment. Organizing words into subjects, Erasmus says, is necessary "in order to ensure that an undigested mass of material does not engender confusion."[9] This philosophy of the ancients reiterated by Erasmus clearly corresponds to Alexander Pope's famous adage from an *Essay on Criticism* (1711):"But true *Expression*, like th' unchanging *Sun*, / *Clears*, and *improves* whate'er it shines upon …" (Pope 1711). For manuscript writers of commonplaces, words are a means to truth, a means for clearing off the fog of incomprehension, whereas for the new scientists, words themselves do not forge truth but are only translucent pointers to things.

The value most touted by Sprat in his *History of the Royal Society* is "undigested," "naked" writing. Royal Society members should avoid imbibing all intellectual systems that pre-digest or organize according to preconceived hierarchies of topics: he is not only rejecting past authorities, the Humanities or adages by classical authors, he is rejecting the early modern theory that had developed from Quintilian, Seneca, and Cicero, through Erasmus, Agricola, Melanchthon, and Vives, as a method for organizing one's thinking. Sprat's ideas participate in the "seventeenth-century decline" of the commonplace-book from a tool for the production of "intellectual activity" into a mere "notebook of references" to be remembered and cited. After Bacon, Port-Royal grammarians, Bishop Lamy, and John Locke, whose works span early to late seventeenth century, "the commonplace-book does keep a role in production, though that role is for information only"—that is, it gives us matter for the index, footnotes, and bibliography of a

printed codex (Moss 1996: 275, 278). Experimenters, Sprat says, do "read over books and digest into Manuscript volumes all that has been hitherto try'd. This is the only help that an Experimenter can receive from Books" (Sprat 1667: 252).

Erasmus insists that labeling sections of notebooks "with commonplaces, that is to say with short phrases" delineating topics—not simply alphabetically, as Locke advises—allows you to better remember "an example or strange occurrence or a pithy remark or a witty saying or any other clever form of words or a proverb or a metaphor or a similitude" and thereby allows you to "make use of the riches you have acquired by reading."[10] By the seventeenth century, this kind of study was risible. Shakespeare shows us its failure in action at the very moment when Hamlet's mother asks Polonius for more matter with less art:

> My liege and madam, to expostulate
> What majesty should be, what duty is,
> Why day is day, night is night, and time is time,
> Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time;
> Therefore brevity is the soul of wit
> And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes.
> I will be brief: your noble son is mad.
> Mad call I it, for to define true madness,
> What is't but to be nothing else but mad?
> But let that go.
> … .
> Madam, I swear, I use no art at all.
> That he's mad, 'tis true, 'tis true 'tis pity,
> And pity 'tis 'tis true: a foolish figure!
> But farewell it, for I will use no art.
> Mad let us grant him then, and now remains
> That we find out the cause of this effect—
> Or rather say the cause of this defect,
> For this effect defective comes by cause.
> Thus it remains, and the remainder thus. Perpend,
> I have a daughter … . (2.2.86)

Polonius is running through the heads in his commonplace book: majesty, duty, time, wit, madness, cause, effect, defect, and he's not really remembering anything written under those heads, only the heads themselves, which he has embellished with the "artful" device of rhetorical figures, particularly chiasmus and anaphora. That commonplace-books were the occasion of abuses is registered in René Descartes's comment on them that they provide people with the opportunity "to speak, without judgment, about things of which they are ignorant rather than to learn them."[11]

Sprat's *History of the Royal Society* codifies this distaste ("disgust") with the quotations from past authorities gathered in commonplace-books as a way of distinguishing the new technologies that constitute the Royal Society's infrastructure: the post, whereby intelligence can be received from all over the world, and printing which publishes all the correspondents' experiments to the world.[12] The members of the Royal Society will receive letters from people of all sorts from all over the world about experiments and observations—"histories," Sprat calls them—will try out the experiments, and will then publish them in print. Bacon had earlier accepted the possibility of collecting adages about science, but without the "vulgar and pedantic" commonplace-heads, one of many systems constituting Idols of the Tribe, and also read differently: not as unassailable truths but as testable hypotheses (Moss 1996: 269–71). In Sprat, too, far from showing off the "wit" of the author, far from "tyran[nizing] over reason" with their own systems, Royal Society print publications will invite readers to test and observe for themselves: "What depth of Nature, could by this time have been hid from our view?" (i.e., none), "if, instead of raising so many Speculative Opinions, [the Ancients] had only minded the laying of a solid ground-work, for a vast Pile of Experiments, to be continually augmenting through all Ages." The Antients didn't reveal their experiments ("Experiences") only their "systems" (Sprat 1667: 116–18).

Here, in discussing the Royal Society's methods as opposed to those of the "Schoolmen" is where Sprat's treatise sounds most like the proponents of digital humanities discussing their difference

from traditional humanists—in our case, not professors of classics only but also the modern languages and literatures, history, philosophy, and other disciplines categorized as "liberal arts."[13] So, at a recent symposium on data modeling held at Brown University, Julia Flanders asked "whether data modeling in the Humanities is to generate a conversation or to allow an individual to demonstrate his or her insight"[14]—to demonstrate his or her "Wit," Sprat would say, and Bacon as well. And, as for us in the Digital Humanities now, the whole gambit of the Royal Society and its infrastructure of correspondence and printing is designed to escape disciplinarity and cultivate an educated public. It is professors in the schools whose methods must be overcome. The Royal Society rejects "that which is call'd Pedantry in Scholars: which is nothing else but an obstinate addiction, to the forms of some private life, and not regarding general things enough." The attack on the school men is also an attack on disciplinarity *per se* insofar as the Royal Society overturns past beliefs about knowledge acquisition:

> Men did generally think, that no man was fit to meddle in matters of this consequence, but he that had bred himself up in a long course of Discipline for that purpose; that had the habit, the gesture, the look of a Philosopher. Whereas experience on the contrary tells us, that greater things are produc'd, by the free way, than the formal.

In lieu of the ancients' "abstruse doctrines" that "could be known but only to those, who would throw away their whole Lives upon it," the Royal Society accepts members from all the literate classes ("Gentlemen," "Physicians," "Mechanicks," "tradesmen," "Merchants") and all nations of the world to write "Histories" "by the plainest Method, and from the plainest Information" (Sprat 1667: 66–7, 73, 118–19, 257). Such a celebration of public knowledge resembles the opening statement in *The Future of Learning Institutions in a Digital Age* by Cathy N. Davidson and David Theo Goldberg, in which they say that the Internet has "the

capacity to allow for a worldwide community and its endlessly myriad subsets [a.k.a. factions] to learn from one another in a way not previously available" (2009: 2). Davidson explicitly discusses interdisciplinary teaching experiences enabled by digital media: her "Project Classroom Makeover" sounds just like Sprat's desire to turn the world into a school for science (2011).

I myself have had such heady, interdisciplinary teaching experiences as the one described by Davidson in the *Chronicle*: I write this not to dismiss it but to point out that it is not something that has, will, or can happen *because* of the Internet, that the hope for the widest circulation of ideas, for global and interdisciplinary conversation, animated the witnesses of the advent of print circulation as well. Print did not by itself turn the world into a school, for reasons that can be tracked. Although Cathy Davidson was the Vice President for Interdisciplinary Studies at Duke for many years, her original scholarship is in American revolutionary print culture: she already knows the utopian claims that were staked on mass-circulation of printed matter, but not quite realized. My argument is therefore not directed at her but at historically unaware interpretations of her more recent digital advocacy. We have another opportunity at global enlightenment, a second one, and so let's try to do it right this time. Knowing what went wrong the first time might help.

And for that very reason, back to Sprat. What Sprat means when he speaks of Histories produced by Royal Society members, like his own *History of the Royal Society*, is "accounts" or "observations," not historical research in the way that we understand it. (In *Tristram Shandy*, Laurence Stern calls John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* a "History" "of what passes in a man's own mind."[15]) "Scholemen," Sprat says, do not converse with the world; they are "private Writers," whereas the Royal Society offers "Public Registers" of everything they do:

> By their fair, and equal, and submissive way of Registering nothing, but Histories, and Relations; they have left room for others, that shall succeed, to change, to augment, to approve, to contradict them,

> at their discretion. By this, they have given posterity a far greater power of judging them; than ever they took over those, that went before them. By this, they have made a firm confederacy, between their own present labours, and the Industry of Future Ages …

After testing the experiments logged in their manuscript registers, revising them, and sometimes even combining some of them as they rewrote,[16] the Society then published articles relaying these experiments in the *Philosophical Transactions* and thereby making their registers "public." The Royal Society imagines interactivity—though, in actuality, a quite controlled one—of the slow sort that does in fact happen in print through peer review, editorial review, and books reviews. The Royal Society's vision of interactivity through time is utopian. Sprat imagines building through time a new tower of Babel—that is, discerning "nearer into heaven" than ever before, which will not be punished "as it was in the Old World" because accompanied this time by the intent to admire rather than usurp God. Sprat imagines and asserts that "the Royal Society will be Immortal" (Sprat 1667: 19–20, 115, 116, 110–11, 79).

Sprat says in his *History* that recounting "Experiments" means keeping "closer to material things." But we should notice in the preceding that circulating repeatable experiments in print also means having the ability to communicate with the future—immortality in the sense of always being understood: "the Royal Society has put [philosophy] in a condition of standing out, against the Invasions of Time." It is, Sprat explicitly maintains, the Royal Society's usefulness to people that will keep it alive despite the death of a few intellectuals or the burning of "a Library." Print circulation escapes the singleness of that burning library in Alexandria by populating many libraries, but the effects of such an extrusion into the world are moribund if no one can understand what the books are saying, if one has to become a philologist to dope out the culturally relative meaning of their words. Sprat describes how hard "philologists" have had to work to make the meaning of the Ancients understandable that, "by the distance of times, and change of customs, were grown obscure" (Sprat 1667: 118–19, 23–4). If one can

write in words that point to things, such work will be unnecessary, and one will not have to depend upon one's own work being explicated by the philologists of the future in order to communicate with future ages. Sprat's belief that the publications of the Royal Society will participate in scientific conversations of the future depends upon imagining that there is a language of things free of cultural connotations, that there is out there a world made up of timeless things onto which words can be permanently pinned.

Bacon, lauded by Sprat as the most brilliant mind, despite his detestation for admiration of past authorities, says in the *Advancement of Learning*: "Here then is the first distemper of learning, when men study words and not matter … for words are but the images of matter; and … to fall in love with them is all one as to fall in love with a picture."[17] Though according to the O.E.D., images could refer both to representations made available both to sound and sight, Bacon is not saying that written or printed words are graphic images of the auditory, of spoken language. He's claiming that words are pictures of matter: if it were not so familiar to us after a long history of philosophical discourse that sees sentences as truth propositions, the utter strangeness of such a claim would be apparent.

The only way one can imagine words as images of matter, I would like to suggest, is in some kind of scenario such as the one recently described by Katie Trumpener in her attack on Franco Moretti for an argument made in *Critical Inquiry* deploying the methodology of "distant reading," a.k.a. the quantitative analysis of literary texts. Trumpener attributes her ability to read the title pages of German novels in bookstores to a scene of instruction that occurred before she moved to Germany with her family as a young girl:

> To prepare us linguistically for an impending sabbatical year in Germany, my American mother had affixed German labels to everyday objects around the house. For one summer, at least, to look into our dining room was like looking into a three-dimensional children's picture dictionary; palpably real objects all sported slips of paper bearing their proper names and thus existed at an odd remove from their usual selves.[18]

This exercise did not actually prepare her children to *speak* German but rather to *read* it. Only if they had been instructed to say each word aloud upon encountering the slip of paper, or if one could push a button and hear the word spoken while looking at the object, would one learn to speak from this scene. If those words on those slips of paper had been *printed*, one would here have what Bacon and Sprat must mean in thinking about words as images of things: each individual printed graphic emblem—a word taken as an ideogram—pictures a thing to which it could be pinned. For words to function like bricks in the new tower of Babel being built through global print circulation, words had to function as things that one could pick up and throw, living free and independently of local, historical cultural descriptions and practices, readable without any help from the historical expert, the philologist. Though referential theories of language were certainly not invented along with print, nor by print *forced* upon us intellectually, print culture cherishes them. Nominalism as found in Locke, theories that simple ideas refer to things, dominated intellectual life through the age of print. Why? If our words refer to concrete things in the world, future ages will always understand us. Word-things offer us immortality by the book.

Swift's professor at Lagado's Academy of Languages is also a "Projector," entrepreneurial, rather in the mode of some of the new Digital Humanists like myself. However, he's an absolute idiot: someone has said to him, "Ahh, don't waste your breath!" meaning "shut up!," and he stupidly took their statement as a problem to overcome, that is, how to speak without wasting your breath.[19] He is an idiot savant, unable to understand the "pure and neat language" loved by Ben Jonson, that is at once "plaine and customary" (Jonson 1620–35?: 39). As we have seen above, one can purchase immortality via printed books only at the cost of rejecting in them the use of language that is either disciplinary or customary. In Swift's passage, it is not just "women, in conjunction with the vulgar" who want to speak "after the manner of their forefathers": it is "women, in conjunction with the vulgar and illiterate"—i.e., those who cannot read.

It seems as if Sprat wants to embrace ordinary language in rejecting disciplinarity:

> [Leaders of the Royal Society] have exacted from all their members, a close, naked, natural way of speaking; positive expressions; clear senses; a native easiness: bringing all things as near the Mathematical plainness, as they can: and preferring the language of Artizans, Countrymen, and Merchants, before that, of Wits, or Scholars. (Sprat 1667: 112)

But from subsequent history, we know that this search for clarity in the "plain style" led to the invention of nosologies and highly specified disciplinary vocabularies in the sciences.[20] Swift's parody proved right: even though the disciplinary discourse of the scholastics was rejected, the gulf only widened between this new scientific thing-language and "customary" discourse.[21]

For John Locke, at least, in his 1700 edition of the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, clarifying language by reducing it to simple ideas (things susceptible of being sensed; Land 1974: 43) is a way for the discipline of natural philosophy to improve upon ordinary language, about which he complains in his "Epistle to the Reader":

> [F]ive or six Friends meeting at my Chamber, and discoursing on a Subject very remote from this, found themselves quickly at a stand, by the Difficulties that rose on every side. After we had a while puzzled our selves, without coming any nearer a Resolution of those Doubts which perplexed us, it came into my Thoughts, that we took a wrong course; and that, before we set our selves upon Enquiries of that Nature, it was necessary to examine our own Abilities, and see, what Objects our Understandings were, or were not fitted to deal with.[22]

The "remote Subject" is most probably politics, and if so it would be hugely important to Locke, in imagining some kind of democratic political system, that people be able to agree—it probably seems more important to him than it is actually necessary, which we can

say in hindsight, from the perspective of a working democracy: by "working," I mean one that hasn't fallen into continuous revolution as those who opposed democratic forms of government in the eighteenth century sometimes imagined might happen.

For Locke, the meanings of words that refer to combinations of simple ideas are not learned via sensation, and "*Definitions*, or the teaching of the signification of one word by several others, … *may make us understand the Names* of Things, which never came within the reach of our Senses …" That is, while most words are learned from interactions between the mind and the world, there are some words that are learned only through social interaction (Locke 1700: III.iv.11–III.iv.12).

The words naming "Collections of Ideas"—what Locke calls "mixed modes"—are learned only from others. As an association of ideas not found to be connected by nature in the material world, the socially defined word cannot be clarified via the senses: these "Names … that stand for Collections of *Ideas*, which the Mind makes at pleasure, must needs be of doubtful signification." A child learns the meaning of moral terminology only from hearing other people use the words rather than from building up their meanings by associating them with things in the world. This kind of word is only socially significant: it is associated with nothing but another's use of it and consequently has a very "obscure and confused signification" (Locke 1700: III.ix.7–9).

In *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* printed in 1757, Edmund Burke explains how the meaning of words can be obscure, though for Burke such obscurity is valuable insofar as it is emotionally affecting—sublime. For Burke as for Locke, some words are learned from hearing other people use them before the words have been associated with any determinate idea. Burke's "compound abstracts," like Locke's "mixed modes," are "unoperative" words; that is, they do not refer to things. "I am convinced," Burke asserts, "that whatever power [compounded, abstract words] may have on the passions, they do not derive it from any representation raised in the mind of things for

which they stand." People's "passions are affected by words from whence they have no ideas."[23]

Burke describes in more detail that time when words do not apply to any set of sensations that may be experienced, when (unfortunately, Locke would say) they do not stand for any idea:

> Mr Locke has somewhere observed with his usual sagacity, that most general words, those belonging to virtue and vice, good and evil, especially, are taught before the particular modes of action to which they belong are presented to the mind; and with them, the love of the one, and the abhorrence of the other; for the minds of children are so ductile, that a nurse, or any person about a child, by seeming pleased or displeased with any thing, or even any word, may give the disposition of the child a similar turn.

Words not associated with any idea of their referents will be associated with the passions of the person who first used them in speaking to the child. However, there is a big difference between Burke's notion of "compound abstracts" and Locke's "mixed modes." In Burke's account, Locke's child never grows up: that is, for Burke the child never does later acquire an idea which corresponds to "honour, justice, liberty," and similarly abstract words:

> If words have all their possible extent of power, three effects arise in the mind of the hearer. The first is, the *sound*; the second, the *picture*, or representation of the thing signified by the sound; the third is, the *affection* of the soul produced by one or by both of the foregoing. *Compounded abstract* words … (honour, justice, liberty, and the like,) produce the first and the last of these effects, but not the second.

Some words only ever produce in the mind a passionate effect rather than an idea reducible to sensations (Burke 1757: 165–6).

Burke sees a word as giving rise in the mind to memories of passions with which the word has been associated when used by other people throughout the individual's lifetime—and perhaps beyond, since people communicate passion to their children that had been

communicated to them by their elders, and so on. For Burke, the memory of how someone, or indeed a whole culture, uses a word is not an idea. Obscure words refer to the passions of others directly without the intermediary of any ideas because the sound of the word has been associated directly with the passion with which it was uttered by other people. The word refers not to one clear idea of its meaning, but instead is associated with many competing memories of the social interchanges in which it is habitually used and has been through time.

When Burke writes his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* in November of 1789, almost a half-century later, he again values these customary forms—so much so that he himself uses them in writing for print distribution his *Reflections* instead of the "polished" literary language of his day (Smith 1984: 36–9). Burke believes in what J. G. A. Pocock has called "the common-law mind," that traditions are like the thoughts of a huge, eternal, collective mind. When he speaks of the constitution of England, his foes mocking him by asking him to produce such a document, he is really talking about the constitution of an organism, his country as a living culture. For Burke, traditional practices obey only the sanest laws because they have changed so gradually in being passed from one person to another that individual quirks drop out, leaving only what is best for society and applicable to most people.

Writing in 1612, Sir John Davies, Attorney-General for Ireland, presented the idea that common law was better than written law because it has been put into effect by being passed down through generations rather than by being legislated by powerful individuals:

> And this *Customary Law* is the most perfect and most excellent, and without comparison the best, to make and preserve a Commonwealth. For the *written Laws* which are made either by the Edicts of Princes, or by Councils of Estates, are imposed upon the Subject before any Triall or Probation made, whether the same be fit and agreeable to the nature and disposition of the people, or whether the same be fit and agreeable to the nature and disposition of the people … But *Custome* doth never become a Law to bind the

> people, untill it hath been tried and approved time out of mind, during all which time there did thereby arise no inconvenience: for if it had been found inconvenient at any time, it had been used no longer, but had been interrupted, and consequently it had lost the virtue and force of a Law.[24]

In the common-law view, law decreed by a single person does not reflect the interests of the people "time out of mind." However, in the process of passing customary law through time, the people continually get the opportunity to ratify or reject it: they keep what works; what doesn't drops out.

Burke would say the same thing about words. First, he values the language people learn from their "nurses," he says, in his *Philosophical Enquiry*, since it comes to them "warmed" with "passions," "heated originally by the breath of others" (Burke 1757: 165–6). That passion is precisely what enables people to feel love for their country when they hear the word "patriotism." As customary language passes through time, it accrues these associated passions, some conflicting, many the same, but the memory of a-social, self-interested, or psychically diseased passions will be faint in comparison with the memories of the feeling that most people share.

While for Burke custom is healthy, for Locke ordinary language is inimical not only to rationality, but also to sanity. A covert syllogism governs Locke's thinking that is worth teasing out, most visible in the chapter called "The Association of Ideas," added to the 1700 edition of his *Essay.* Locke is "clearing the ground" in the first place because, while "Reason" traces "a natural Correspondence and Connexion" among ideas, "there is another Connexion of *Ideas* wholly owing to Chance or Custom." "This sort of Madness" he says, is often caused by "Education … and Prejudice is a good general name for it." Locke insists that he is not being extravagant in calling it "Madness": "I shall be pardon'd for calling it by so harsh a name as *Madness*, when it is considered, that opposition to Reason deserves that name." For Locke, customary culture makes us mad.

And the cure is philosophical correction of customary mis-associations, especially as they occur in language:

> [C]omplex Ideas … have their union and combination only from the Understanding which unites them under one Name: but … Men … have scarce any standing Rule to regulate … their Notions by, in such arbitrary ideas. 'Tis true, *common Use* … may be supposed here to afford some aid, to settle the signification of Language; and it cannot be denied, but that in some measure it does. Common use *regulates the meaning of Words* pretty well for common Conversation; but no body having an Authority to establish the precise signification of Words, nor determine to what Ideas any one shall annex them, common Use is not sufficient to adjust them to philosophical Discourses … . (Locke 1700: II.xxxiii.1–5; III.ix.7–8)

Common usage of words, like prejudices and other customary associations, is madness. Books provide a place where one can in fact assume the "Authority to establish the precise signification of Words" that Locke longs for here by carefully defining the meaning of words.

To Locke and subsequent Enlightement thinkers, the *only* place where a clarifying, defining, rational, and sane Authority can be established is books, for two reasons. First, authority requires reach. Whereas writing in a notebook or manuscript that circulates among a select few can show others one's thinking, only the wider circulation of print could impose Authority over usage—that is, upon thinking in general. Second, only in books can one take the time to justify definitions, allow people to contemplate and judge those justifications, and finally, give them the opportunity to "consent" to them. "Consent" and usage are the only two modes of meaning words, for Locke:

> Men learn Names, and use them in Talk with others, only that they may be understood: which is then only done, when *by use or Consent*, the sound I make … excites in another Man's Mind … the Idea … in mine … . (Locke 1700: III.iii.3, my emphasis)

"Use" is one way of defining words, but it doesn't work very well; "consent" is the other. Just as in Locke's *Second Treatise of Government* the King's subjects consent to be governed by him, so "philosophers" consent to be governed by the way a word is defined—philosophically, by edict, by book. The hope of scientific redefinitions of ordinary language is that culturally-induced madness will be cured, that we (all human beings who speak the languages of our cultures) will stop thinking in the deluded ways prescribed to us by customary language. Access to reality is at stake.

Robin Valenza quotes George Berkeley in his 1710 *Principles of Human Knowledge* bemoaning the fact that people continue to use their "traditional idioms": "They who … are convinced of the truth of the Copernican system," Berkeley complains, "do nevertheless say 'the sun rises', 'the sun sets', … and if they affected a contrary style in common talk it would without a doubt appear very ridiculous." Instead of using those ordinary phrases—"sunrise" or "sunset"—we should say, the earth just performed its diurnal rotation toward / away from the sun. But no. We still say, "I saw the sunrise this morning." Valenza then sums up an opposition to ordinary language that can be seen as prevalent, continuously from 1710 to 2010, with the dominance of modern disciplines grounded in the medium of the printed book:

> We still use the common phrase ["sunrise"], even when it no longer represents either expert knowledge or the *sensus communis* [i.e., we all know that the earth revolves around the sun]. More often than we acknowledge, there is a radical disconnect between the language we use in common conversation and what either experts or lay persons believe about the workaday world. If the very function of [modern] academic research regardless of discipline is, as Jonathan Culler has on occasion suggested, to dispute or at least to question commonly held views, then the tight alliance between common sense and common language needs to be broken or at least loosened.[25]

We have told people in book after book what is technically happening when they see a sunrise, but they still speak in the ordinary

way: "such constant irreconcilable enemies to science are the common people."

Obviously, I invoke Gulliver's words at the language Academy of Lagado because I think there is something wrong here. Not just Valenza, but modern book disciplinarity in general stakes this claim: that humans are befuddled, and we must clear up their confusions by setting language straight. What's missing from this disciplinary picture, however, so beautifully and clearly stated by Valenza, and so wryly contested by Swift, is this: when people talk about sunrise and sunset, they are not trying to make truth claims about reality—that's just *not* what they are doing. Making truthful statements is what professors and scholars are doing, in writing, printing, and publishing books and articles that address communities within our respective disciplines, and we have falsely generalized that mission to all of human discourse. To us, there is no outside text because we see the world as a book being written. It needs editing, cutting, clarification—and we are doing that work by publishing books.

From its inception with the print publications of the Royal Society, it's founders imagining it so widely distributed as to persist into the future despite the burning of one or two libraries, Western academic thinkers have imagined that the kind of care one takes in defining terminology will transform ordinary ways of speaking and, by this bookish, referential refinement of language, clear up faulty thinking: this is an Enlightenment project to which every disciplinary, mass-printed book subscribes, even those attacking the Enlightenment, and even—especially—those books that do not care about having an impact on the populace. Disciplinary disputations with the common are fostered by the printed book. Moreover, the discipline of English literature and cultural studies is encouraged by the mass-printed book's stake in rectifying customary beliefs to engage in the "social mission of English criticism" (Baldick 1983). In the field of literary and cultural studies, both the development of a specialized language and its foray into political critique is promoted by the book medium.

We are already quite accustomed to hearing debates over disciplinary "jargon" in the field of English studies. Some argue for the necessity of theoretical terminology by comparing English to Physics. But even in that discipline, there are those who maintain that, if a scientist can only explain the theory of relativity mathematically and cannot translate it into ordinary language, then that scientist does not truly understand it, as exemplified by N. David Mermin in a talk he gave at Cornell:

> Language evolved under an implicit set of assumptions about the nature of time that was beautifully and explicitly articulated by Newton: "Absolute, true, and mathematical time, of itself, and from its own nature, flows equably without relation to anything external … ." Lovely as it sounds, this is complete nonsense. Because, however, the Newtonian view of time is implicit in everyday language where it can corrupt apparently a-temporal statements, to deal with relativity one must either critically reexamine ordinary language, or abandon it altogether. Physicists traditionally take the latter course, replacing talk about space and time by a mathematical formalism that gets it right by producing a state of compact nonverbal comprehension. Good physicists figure out how to modify everyday language to bring it into correspondence with that abstract structure. The rest of them never take that important step and, I would argue that like the professor I substituted for in 1964, they never really do understand what they are talking about.
>
> The most fascinating part of writing relativity is searching for ways to go directly to the necessary modifications of ordinary language, without passing through the intermediate nonverbal mathematical structure. This is essential if you want to have any hope of explaining relativity to nonspecialists. And my own view, not shared by all my colleagues, is that it's essential if you want to understand the subject yourself. (1999)

Many if not most professors would disagree, as evinced by the dismissal of cross-over books: they are not simply seen as "mere service," but often as self-aggrandizement, punditry, or, worse, betrayal (McLaughlin 1998, qtd. in McGee 2005: 245 n. 6).[26] Too many

attempts by scholars to publish popular works are condescending in tone, if not disdainful. But there are some arguments against popularizing intellectual ideas developed in the disciplines that hold some weight. It is most evident in science, but true in the humanities as well, that specialization leads to greater discovery. If one has to explain everything from scratch, it seems, you cannot get as far in deliberations. On the contrary, if addressing a specialized audience, shorthand can be used to indicate ideas upon which one builds. It is amazing, really, how little one can actually accomplish in one book, and so all the shortcuts that can be taken through gestures and shared specialized languages pave the way to accomplishing more. It is precisely this problem that Jürgen Habermas confronts in thinking about modernity as an unfinished project. Disciplinary autonomy and specialization lead to the unbridled development of intellectual achievement in all fields, but Enlightenment has not yet finished doing its work, I am arguing here, if the results achieved are not brought back into the lifeworld (Habermas 1997).

Academics publish books to clear up the confusions of ordinary thinking by redefining the meanings of words, and such clarifications could be imported back into the Lebenswelt by educating the masses to understand disciplinary terminology. Publishing books while educating people to read them is implicitly, I would argue, the goal to which most humanities scholars in the academy devote their lives of teaching and writing. Such bookwork is definitely what I'm doing with my life—ideally, right now. Why is it a problem? That is, what is at stake for Swift in ironizing that mission of clearing up ordinary confusions? Or, what can he see from his perspective, when this mission is emerging, that could not be seen quite as easily from within the mass print culture that emerged about 1800 (Smith 1984: 161–2; Franta 2007), if anything?

Shamelessly copying Friedrich Kittler, I will now look at three different medial ecologies: 1700, 2000, and 1800, in that order. I will ask in examining each medial economy what is made of the fantasy that I have just described, that, given a properly educated

populace, the mass-printed book *could* in fact have legislative authority over common usage, that we can change language by clearing up its confusions.

The year **1700** is roughly Swift's moment, a moment when one could still decide whether to circulate one's work in manuscript form or publish it in print. "Even after 1710," Margaret Ezell persuasively argues, "script was still a competitive if not the dominant, mode of transmitting and reading what we term "literary" and "academic" materials." Her book, *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print*, demonstrates convincingly that

> What has been left out of existing literary histories of the Restoration and early eighteenth century is a sense of authorship and readers that existed independently from the conventions and restrictions of print and commercial texts. (Ezell 1999: 12, 24)

Ezell's picture in which manuscript circulation was a choice makes sense of so much that is otherwise strange or remarkable. For instance, David Foxon's account of Pope's relationship to publishing describes Pope as heavily revising and even leaving blanks in manuscripts to be run off by the printer. Pope used printing, in other words, in precisely the same way he used script copying: a fair copy, as it's revised, becomes foul papers or at least becomes blotted, and Pope's foul papers were sometimes printed. Foxon tells us that Pope, as his printer John Watts knew, was accustomed "to rewrite in proof." Foxon even quotes a letter from Lintot begging Pope not to delay printing the *Iliad* with any more corrections. In fact, Foxon argues that W. W. Greg's theory of editing in which one finds an author's final intentions embodied in manuscript, with only accidental changes made by printers in printed edition, won't work on Pope: no manuscript, but only specific editions, embody Pope's "final intentions" because he changed accidentals throughout each stage of printing and reprinting (Foxon 1991: 153–5, 59, 160–1, 153). Taking Foxon's insight further, I would argue that it is impossible to speak about "final intentions" at all in coterie print culture.

Pope felt free to revise his works extensively between printings, the *Dunciad* being most extensively revised—substituting a new anti-hero, adding a book. As Ezell points out, Pope's constant revision of his manuscripts as well as "multiple print versions of the same text" demonstrates that he is treating even printed editions as if they were circulating manuscripts, malleable in form (Ezell 1999: 69).

One feature of manuscript circulation is that the people to whom you passed your manuscript could, and in fact were supposed to, correct and change things as they wished. "[T]he interactive literary mode of additions, adaptations, and responses [are] characteristic of manuscript circulated texts." Ezell recounts Pope's many "correcting" activities on manuscripts that were circulated, including some pushback by Wycherly (Ezell 1999: 64, 69). That Pope saw printing and manuscript circulation as much more similar than we do today becomes evident when Foxon points to a startling fact about Pope's practice of correcting print runs: "the public and not the subscribers received the more polished text." Pope expected his aristocratic subscribers to correct, and to want to correct, on their own, perhaps differently or better than Pope did himself, and he expected them to do it on printed texts just as they would have on manuscript copies. Foxon describes other strange incidents, in which proofs for the *Iliad* are sent to Pope's engraver's house and the engraver, Charles Jervas, performs some of the corrections. Similarly, corrections to Pope's translation of the *Iliad* in typeset proofs are sometimes made in another hand (Foxon 1991: 154, 67).

Notice that this rather explains the difference in notions of clarity long noticed by critics and mentioned earlier in this chapter (p. 12): as opposed to Locke and Sprat's notion of clarity, achieved by making words into pictures of their referents, Pope writes in his 1711 *Essay on Criticism*:

> But true expression like th'unchanging sun,
> Clears, and improves, what'er it shines upon,
> It gilds all Objects, but it alters none.

> Expression is the Dress of Thought, and still
> Appears more decent as more suitable; …

The sun clears things up the way it burns off fog, gradually through the warmth of its attention. Multiple sun-like interventions from noble readers will improve the text the way that the sun improves what one can see in the morning, without really changing those objects at all, just cloaking them in sunlight. Pope's idea that "public readers," non-subscribers, need pre-corrected texts, however, means that they are not suns.

For Pope, neither print nor manuscript would legislate correct usage, clarity, among the nobility, whereas for the public, it should, because it is part of publishing practice for "gentlemen" to correct each other's writing whereas the public would need to be given a correct text. This fact also goes a long way toward explaining the Royal Society's practice of appropriating, altering, and superseding some of the experiments logged in their registers by tradesmen: these people occasionally protested the appropriations and transformations of their work, but for Boyle and Oldenburg, it was, I surmise, just a gentleman's right—perhaps even his duty.[27] Swift too spent time correcting the writings of women authors whom he befriended (Doody 1988): these would be women writers who participate in the culture of gentlemanly writing and sociable exchange, not the "women" who protest along with the vulgar and illiterate against the Academy of Lagado's legislation of usage on behalf of ordinary language.

It is crucial, I think, to reconsider editing practices of late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century publishing, by thinking of manuscript circulation practices as the default view in 1700 of how publishing should work, among the lettered. These practices are evinced by Nahum Tate's and Pope's infamous revisions of Shakespeare, along with Pope's writing of the first modern editor into the *Dunciad* as star Dunce: for publishing *Shakespeare Restor'd* in 1725, Lewis Theobald is as ridiculous as Swift's projectors, and

in the same way. Theobald gets the starring role of Dunce because he attacks Pope's edition of Shakespeare (Levine 1991: 229).[28] But Pope attacks Bentley a modern as well as Theobald—Bentley, a modern philologist who works on the classics. It is thus modern philology itself which is mocked by Pope, as is evident in the *Dunciad Variorum*'s mock notes and apparatus. Around 1700 classical philology is scientifically interpretive. Although born of Renaissance Humanism, articles on modern philology number among the papers published in the *Philosophical Transactions*, it too attempting to pin words onto things.

One such paper was written by Friend of the Royal Society, Thomas Molyneux. Molyneux reads a passage from Horace in order to determine the true nature of "the Ancient *Greek* and *Roman Lyre*," thereby putting into practice Locke's theory as to how a specifically scientific understanding should operate. The passage contains "an ingenious thought" which, had Molyneux not intervened by reporting it, would have "been wholly lost in a piece of Poetry" (1267). Horace's poem begins,

> O Melpomene, who modulates the sweet music of my golden harp; and can, when thou pleasest, give the melodius voice of the swan to the mute fishes, it is wholly owing to you that I am pointed at by those who pass by as the prince of lyric poets: it is by you that I breathe and please, if I can flatter myself I do please.

In the passage, Molyneux says, Horace "[admires] his Muse's power, because she could give when she pleased even to *Mute Fishes*, the melodious Voice of the Swan …" (1268–9). When Molyneux first reads the passage, he is

> shockt and confounded, for I lookt upon the fancy [of fishes having the voice of swans] as perfectly forced and groundless; founded upon nothing that was real or true Nature; and therefore could pass for no more than a wild rant or extravagant whim of the Poets, signifying little if anything at all … (1269)

If Horace is being purely poetic, the passage is meaningless. What Horace really meant suddenly dawns on Molyneux:

> [Horace] makes a sudden exclamation to extol her great Art and Mystery, who by mixing various Notes, could compose such sweet Harmony upon the *Guilded Lyre* or *Testudo*, and by her suprizing Power could when she pleased, give [a voice] even to mute Fishes, or the hollow Shells of the Testudines Aquaticae or Water Tortoises, a sort of Fish, of which I imagined they made their Lyres in old Times … (1270)

In Horace's cryptic lines, he was really telling us that the Greek lyre was made of tortoise shells. The rest of the essay explains how Molyneux verified that ancient lyres were indeed made of tortoise shells during the time that Horace lived: "the Harmony of every speaking Lyre, was then no less than the voice of a dumb Fish …" (1271), Molyneux says. Horace allegorically attributes to "the power of the Muse" that "which now we should say was done by the skill of the musician." The only difference between the "ingenious thought" buried in this poem and Molyneux's report of it is that Horace speaks "in the Allegorick manner of speaking they affected in those days" (1271).[29] For Molyneux, being a natural philosopher and a modern philologist are overlapping enterprises: to Swift, Pope, and other parodists of the *Philosophical Transactions*, these are all "minute philosophers," whether gazing through a microscope or intently, for a long time, upon an incomprehensible, ancient trope.

In contrast to treating past authors' works as conundra with empirical answers, a version of philology to which twentieth-century editing is perhaps too indebted, Pope sees his predecessors as part of the elite with whom he circulates manuscripts and makes corrections: Pope feels empowered, welcome, to change Homer or Shakespeare for the better because that's what noble authors do: they clear and improve the writing of their peers by tweaking it here and there. Joseph Levine is exactly right to argue that the Battle of the Books was really about whether to see classical and even Elizabethan literature as historically distanced, or as part of an

ongoing conversation (Levine 1991: 2). Participants in the conversation work with each other to revise language. For Pope, the "public" witnesses must be schooled by aristocratic notions of correctness, but among gentlemen, people should make the wittiest changes they can conceive. Clarity is not a matter of finding referents and then legislating interpretation accordingly, as does Molyneux. Pope rebels on behalf of gentlemen to any notion of legislating meaning through clarity conceived of as transparency—for him as for Blake later, language is not a window through which one sees things. For Pope, linguistic meaning is warmed, improved, by the "eminent hands" of oligarchy. I wouldn't want to claim that Swift is a man of the people, in contrast to Pope, but, at the least, for Swift, "women along with vulgar and illiterate" are just as capable of seeing that the empirical projectors and philologists want to seize control of meaning, want to legislate it, by making things more clear.

2000. In our medial ecology, now, the fantasy that publishing books can legislate linguistic usage, trumping ordinary language, is not something any currently active literary critic would seriously maintain: decades of culture wars and conservative backlash in the U.S. have demonstrated how little political impact can be had by "public intellectuals." And yet, I think this fantasy, promoted (though not necessitated) by the regime of mass-print publishing to which Sprat and Locke look forward, informs and in some ways perverts our ideas about the constructedness of social reality.

The fantasy of legislating meaning has been most baldly stated by a recent President of the Modern Language Association—the organization overseeing all the disciplines of modern languages and literatures. In a chapter of *Rhetorical Occasions* that formed the basis for an English Institute talk published also in *What's Left of Theory?*, Michael Bérubé describes a debate with Alan Sokal, author of the infamous "Sokal Hoax" of the 1990s. During the debate, Bérubé brings up and glosses John Searle's *The Construction of Social Reality*

> which describes two kinds of "real" world—one of which, Searle claims, is susceptible to social construction and therefore is fair game for speech act theory, and the other of which is not. The first he calls "social fact," one crucial substitute of which is called "institutional fact," and it concerns phenomena like touchdowns and twenty-dollar bills—items whose existence and meaning are obviously dependent entirely on human interpretation, insofar as their properties could be redefined tomorrow by human fiat. The second he calls "brute fact"… (Bérubé 2000: 142).

The problem with Bérubé and Searle's account is that social facts, albeit constructed, are not, never were, and cannot be re-defined by "human fiat" ("tomorrow").

Dollar bills and touchdowns participate like language in social games—one rather literally. What Bérubé would have to be imagining here is some kind of legislation by the NCAA or government regulations of currency, and obviously language cannot be legislated in the same way. But usage is a bit like common law, and common law has always, in the case of unsupported legislation, put up a fight—or even caused people to out-and-out ignore the laws that were made to contravene common practices. For instance, the copyright act of 1710 in Britain, under Queen Anne, imposed a 14-year copyright with the option for one renewal, 28 years total. But the publishers in England behaved as if copyright was perpetual until a legal battle for copyright upheld that law in the 1774 case of Donaldson v. Beckett—and even then, publishers did not begin "willy nilly" to publish books no longer in copyright; the publishing industry changed slowly (Elliott 2011: 374). Some forms of legislation actually indicate a populace's refusal to adhere to government norms: think of the law stating that English is the official language of California—spoken English only had to become "official" when threatened with minority status. Or think of marriage law in both eighteenth-century England and here, in the U.S. now. Judith Butler has made what to me is one of the most dramatic statements about the impact of current attempts to either legalize or outlaw gay marriage in the U.S.: "my partner told me

that, if I tried to marry her in the state of California, she'd divorce me." These laws certainly impose punishments and deprivations, but the people are not adhering to them any more than eighteenth-century people adhered to Lord Hardwicke's Marriage Act: designed to deter clandestine marriage, it may have had the opposite effect, or at best, no consequences at all.

As Bérubé himself knows, I'm sure, the evolution of language works even more indeterminably than law.[30] Right now, "just sayin" and "really?" dominate the discourse of my pre-teens: will these locutions stay? For how long? Where did they originally come from? Why were they taken up? During Shakespeare's time, "trivial knowledge" was knowledge of the trivium: grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic. Did the scientific revolution make the adjective "trivial" mean "inconsequential," as it does now, by demoting the prestige of this humanist knowledge? Did Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*, in which Hamlet vows to wipe from the "tables" of his brain "all trivial, fond knowledge" participate in the change, given that Hamlet was wiping out of his mind his beloved school-boy knowledge of the trivium in order to replace it with real-world, hard, political knowledge of his father's usurpation by fraud, theft, and murder? The relationship between thinking patterns and linguistic change is fascinating, and will be relied upon in this book as a way of getting at book-thinking, but it would be impossible to specify precisely in each case which among the interlocking changes in habits, technologies, and media affect language most. The only thing that is certain about changes in customary usage is that nothing happens overnight, and nothing can be done by one dramatic human intervention such as legal decree.

Certainly it makes sense to argue that everything is constructed: even lightning, though real, is always reality under a description, and the minute we begin describing phenomena, they become human constructions (Bérubé's point). But we make a mistake if we add to that charge of constructedness some kind of implicit sense of falsity, or a whiff of consciously wielded power plays, or deliberate mystification, the sense that would come precisely from

a sense of constructions as willed or imposed by human fiat, "tomorrow." Within the Kantian and post-Kantian discourses of epistemology, our world is constructed AND real: to echo Frances Ferguson, the world defined via human forms "is as real as it gets." But the desire for literary critics to have a profound impact on ordinary confusions through the activity of publishing their work takes that notion of the constructedness of human reality and surreptitiously transfers agency to construction. Ordinary people are "common enemies" (to quote Swift's name for ordinary people) who work against their own liberation, a liberation offered to them by academic writers who reform language via mass-printed books.

Ah, but you might say, there's where you are wrong, Laura, because Cultural Studies critics such as Bérubé do not derogate but rather celebrate the agency of ordinary people, often finding and describing their acts of resistance. Bérubé et al. do not see people as "common enemies." Yes, I respond, they do. Here is Chris Baldick explaining the social mission of English criticism as ideology critique, which means for him shattering the complacency of people who think things are fine as they are. In describing how social criticism functions to usurp ideology, Baldick forgoes conspiracy theories, he says, in offering a view that

> sees ideologies simply as the line of least resistance taken in interpreting existing circumstances; as "lazy" reflections of the world [that people see] around them, [and they] either do not bother or do not want to consider the evidence unfavorable to their implicit tenets.[31]

While Baldick here claims to be talking about the "new critics"—traditional English professors who see nothing political at stake in their aestheticizing of literature as a way of abrogating criticism's intervention in politics—the absence of agents in his sentences which I had to insert is interesting. I would wager that most professors, graduate students, and adjuncts in literary and cultural

studies believe Baldick's statement to be true about non-humanists in general, both within the academy and without.

Since these are fighting words, I want to give at least one "proof," though I'm certain that the view is pervasive in print humanities professors' discussions: literary and cultural studies critics believe that people are enmired in ideology, and truly, only we know the way out. Although both these critics and Stanley Cavell engage with "popular culture," there are a number of differences between the kind of arguments you will find in Cavell's *Pursuits of Happiness* and those to be found in *Cultural Studies* edited by Grossberg, Nelson, and Treichler. The most important one, and my proof, is that Cavell tries to show us how director Frank Capra consciously decides to play out a problem in Kantian Philosophy in his movie *It Happened One Night* (albeit without necessarily having read Kant). If creators of pop culture do anything theoretically interesting in *Cultural Studies*, it isn't by conscious philosophizing or theorizing: contributors to that reader don't describe sitting down with the creators of popular cultural objects to discuss possible modifications of the literary critic's own thinking. With no interchange from the masses welcomed, an academic monograph is an oligarchy not a republic. While literary and cultural studies critics might like the politics of the masses, they cannot imagine, as Cavell's book suggests that he can, considering people outside the academy as theorists in their own right, on the same level as academics themselves. Popular cultural engagements are objects of study, not subjects with whom to engage in conversation.

For Cavell, Kant's categories or forms of thinking do generate the world we know. But in contrast to Kant, for Cavell there are not just 12 categories: every word proffers a worldview, constructing reality in a way that all of us need to discover. Only then can we consent to the meaning of the words we speak, as one consents to being governed by legislative bodies in a Republic. And for Cavell, no one native speaker necessarily has a better understanding of meaning's constructedness than any other.

Just as cultural studies critics do not count ordinary speakers of language among those capable of truly discerning reality

(theorizing), Habermas who champions bringing disciplinary discourse back to the lifeworld sees no possibility of the Lebenswelt informing theory. For him, communication must be rationalized, which is to say, "blind tradition" must be corrected by experts. Habermas bemoans the "increasing distance between expert cultures and the general public," but for him, ONLY the "lifeworld … threatens to become impoverished" by this problem. The culture of expertise, in contrast, only gains by "specialized treatment." What he imagines in bringing expert and popular culture back together is actually identical to what is imagined by the cultural studies critics whose work is grounded theoretically in the very "neoconservatives" whom Habermas deplores: bringing disciplinary knowledge back into the world is a one-way endeavor, and so it can only happen by the people "appropriating" disciplinary knowledge as a means for solving *the* problem which is that our "living heritage" has been "impoverished by mere traditionalism" (Habermas 1997: 45–6, 52). Insofar as Habermas theorizes "communicative rationality" only in the sphere of debates and procedures,[32] he is indeed theorizing the fantasy of legislating language use. He wants to throw the book at people outside this rational sphere, and their only contribution to the whole enterprise will be picking it up. In *The Way We Argue Now*, Amanda Anderson insists that Habermas is not simply proposing the rationalization of culture, but proposes an "ethos" as well. However, establishing this ethos also involves legislating to the populace rather than taking anything back into disciplinarity from popular culture. Habermas prescribes a collective, democratic ethos that opposes itself to a "blinkered adherence to custom" (Anderson 2006: 158–9): in other words, adherence to custom—which necessarily includes speaking ordinary language—is always "blinkered," never considered; it is always the unreflective life, always just "lazy."

None of us live that way, thinking if and only when we are writing or speaking book language, if the latter is even possible. All of us have good, intelligent, thinking friends who speak ordinary language and even think well in it. And in fact the strongest literary

histories written by scholars make use of—*think* in—ordinary language and customary ideas, as opposed to proffering what David Simpson calls "parodic" literary history in which the past wears a black hat and the critic a white one. Disregarding the intellectual value of ordinary language could almost be seen as a part of the body memory of literary critics whose habitus involves publishing out rather than taking anything in. Certainly there are reviews, and questions at talks, but these rituals are all confined to the game of clarifying through disciplinary language; they don't involve backtalk to it by the vulgar and illiterate, disciplinarily speaking. Habermas's theory of communicative rationality accurately depicts the way we live in our work-a-day lives, though not the way we live completely.

Ignoring the way we live now, the academy substitutes three general precepts generated via the way we publish disciplinary monographs now, which is to say, writing, publishing, reading, and reviewing disciplinary books that wish to reform customary language with their own, much more carefully articulated idiom, imposing upon traditions a series of "demands for justification":

- That publishing scholarly and theoretical monographs in a medial economy of mass-printed and circulated books does, *through the act of publication alone,* perform political action;
- That popular culture, customary language, and traditions outside the academy are to be critiqued and not engaged in any other way;
- That customary life and language has no rationality of its own worth contributing to disciplinary discourse, and in fact, in its totality as the constructedness of reality, implicitly exerts a malevolent agency, willfully upholding ideological blindness.

Book thinking proffers but does not force those precepts upon us: there are some who deliberately write and publish against those precepts. I mentioned the literary and cultural studies critics

who value ordinary language as an analytic tool, and name a few of them whom I have observed doing so: Deidre Lynch, Alan Liu, Michael Warner, and Frances Dolan—any cultural studies critic who makes use of our customary ways of speaking in order to situate themselves, their own current beliefs and ideas, inside the analysis they perform, to demonstrate its motivations. This deliberate use of anachronism is discussed again in Conclusion. There are also philosophers and theorists who have recognized intellectual value in ordinary language: obviously, the philosophers in the Ordinary Language Movement, J. L. Austin, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and Stanley Cavell. (My understanding of the first two comes from Cavell 1979). Finally, Bruno Latour, whose works are freely distributed on the Internet, engages in ethnographic practices that resemble Wittgenstein's insofar as they do not demystify in order to change the world, but lay bare simply to discover and reveal how something works. Wittgenstein and Cavell, I argue here, through their attentiveness to problems in the discipline of philosophy, have most explicitly argued that ordinary forms of thinking as codified in language need to have a disciplinary impact, and thus, in this argument, of thinking past book illusions. Whereas Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* identifies "grammatical illusions" troubling analytic philosophy, I will insist that these grammatical illusions are sustained and supported by media blindness.

I wrote above of Cavell's argument that the producers of popular culture are thinkers of a high order, undertaking intellectual problems that are also confronted by Kant. Cavell is accused of granting too much agency to directors, of upholding therefore the model of the "great man" in art. To answer that criticism, I would say that Frank Capra and Howard Hawkes are indeed men, but not great: that is, to see them as exceptional is once again to discount the intellectual power of those outside the humanities. Cavell has also been accused, at least in reviews of the *Pursuits of Happiness*, of ignoring the economic oppressiveness in which Hollywood movies of the 1940s and 1950s participated, and that may be true.

And so, in turning back to the moment of the emergence of mass print, I wish to ask, do we have to give up the political radicalness of literary and cultural studies if we question its devaluation of customary thinking, of ordinary language; if we gainsay the intellectual laziness of the crowd? If we recognize the intellectual strength of customary forms, grant that intellectual work itself can be distributed in this way, would that require adopting the conservative political views expressed by Edmund Burke in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*?

Medial ecology **1800**: Just to recapitulate Burke's argument in that treatise, we should follow tradition because it represents the inheritance from our forefathers. Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Men*, her response to Burke's 300+ pp. "pamphlet"—one of the most powerful responses, next to Thomas Paine's *The Rights of Man*—rightly asks, why should do what our forefathers tell us to do without questioning whether they were wrong (Wollstonecraft 1790, 23–4, 40–41, 74)? Why shouldn't we think for ourselves (Wollstonecraft 1790, 77, 131)? Burke's *Reflections* includes some of the most politically retrograde rhetoric imaginable:

> The body of the people must not find the principles of natural subordination by art rooted out of their minds. They must respect that property of which they cannot partake. They must labour to obtain what by labour can be obtained; and when they find, as they commonly do, the success disproportioned to the endeavor, they must be taught their consolation in the final proportions of eternal justice.

The "art" that Burke mentions here is the artifice of Enlightenment philosophers, "this new conquering empire of light and reason" by which "All the decent drapery of life is to be rudely torn off." So, to paraphrase: people must not be taught to think, because by thinking they will discover that inequality is unjustified and the reward for hard work too small.

Obviously, Burke did not expect "the body of the people" to be reading this book: he miscalculates the spread of literacy, which conservative thinkers such as Sarah Trimmer saw as dangerous in itself. The "body"—the masses—picked up on his phrase "a swinish multitude," used to describe a group of French peasants who had marched from Paris to Versailles to take their complaints about starvation to the King and Queen (Burke 1789: 372, 171, 173). These readers changed it slightly to "THE swinish multitude," a redaction that in my view effectively captures Burke's disregard for the masses in statements such as the one quoted above: let them not reflect upon customs, let them work hard, and, when it comes to naught, tell them they'll get their reward in heaven.

Burke's *Reflections* is a book that marks though indeed does not itself inaugurate a shift to mass print. Published on November 1, 1789, Burke's *Reflections* sold 5,500 copies in the first 17 days of publication, and, Burke says in a letter dated 29 November 1789, 12,000 within the first month (Boulton 1963: 79–80). The book's title may also mark one of the last times that the term "reflection" is used in its earlier eighteenth-century sense: to reflect (against) is to satirize. He is indeed reflecting on the French Revolution in the sense of thinking about it, but he vigorously condemns it as well. Paradoxically, however, the speech act performed by this mass-printed publication is an impossible one if it is directed not at aristocrats but at the mass public. To the nobility, he says, if you get the people thinking about whether social status is deserved, continuous revolution will follow, someone beneath always thinking that those in charge do not deserve their wealth, power, and status. He says, therefore, do not encourage the people to think about traditions critically—you'll be sorry! But if this speech act is directed to the public, it is a book that tells them, "don't think, just feel." It tells them, do not reflect, giving them all the reasons why they should not do so (i.e., reflecting upon reflection). Burke's friend Phillip Francis advised against publishing the *Reflections*, knowing what would happen: it of course set off a pamphlet war, giving Thomas Paine a platform for reaching an even wider audience. Radical

publisher Joseph Johnson sold Part I of Paine's *The Rights of Man*, which was widely distributed by the Corresponding and Constitutional societies: "at half a crown," James Boulton says, "half the cost of the *Reflections*," it sold between 400,000 and 500,000 copies; nine editions were needed in the first 12 weeks of sale (Boulton 1963: 86, 88).

Given that it launched laboring-class writers such as James Parkinson, Thomas Spence, and Daniel Eaton, wrote responses as well, theirs ventriloquizing pigs, we can honestly say that, as an attempt to forestall thinking about customary social structures, the *Reflections* failed. Burke attempted to publish an injunction against reflecting—not concerning the revolution, upon which he did wish to reflect, but upon customary ways of thinking, feeling, acting, and speaking. We can see from his failure that book language won't brook this kind of argument: it is of necessity pro-reflection, pro-revolution in the sense of overturning rather than uncritically accepting conventions.

Academic book-language requires that cultural meanings be rationally justified. It also fosters the fantasy that mass-printed disciplinary books can change common language, clear it up, and this utopian fantasy is shared by the sciences and literary and cultural studies, all modern disciplines of the book. Insofar as the printed book makes language use seem legislatable, it inflects the way we understand constructedness, as if it were automatically somehow allied with ideology in the sense of false consciousness, or worse, politics in the sense of conspiracy.

The first people to question the value of book-language were ordinary language philosophers. While early disciplinarians were interested in breaking the hold of ordinary language on common sense, ordinary language philosophers were interested in breaking out of philosophical terminology back into ordinary language. First, they thought through the relationship between the customary and justification. In contradistinction to Bérubé's claim that "human fiat" could change the meaning of a social symbol "tomorrow," Wittgenstein argues that "Philosophy may in no way interfere with

the actual use of language; it can in the end only describe it" (Wittgenstein 1958: §124, 49e). This statement articulates the powerlessness of book-language's careful redefinitions of terms to control customary ways of speaking. It is precisely to this comment that Ernest Gellner takes objection, and for political reasons, to "the 'late-Wittgenstein' theory of language, and of the authority it conferred on all its customs and norms, simply in virtue of being part of natural language":

> If ordinary speech, and the entire corpus of custom of which it is part, are a self-justifying system which neither permits nor requires external validation—well then, we need never fear the erosion of our customary ideas … Our idiom is shown to have a firm, secure grasp on reality; and the reality in terms of which we live is shown to be sound and true.

Wittgenstein promotes ideology, Gellner insists, which he implicitly defines as belief in the "validity" of "our rich old Lebenswelt": ideology runs rampant when philosophers "cannot hold our views to account" (Gellner 1979: 15, 7). As against Gellner, however, Wittgenstein does not defend customary language as "sound and true." According to Gellner, Wittgenstein says that "philosophy needs to leave everything as it is." But the passage about only "describing" language continues without making any truth claims for ordinary language:

> Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language;
> it can only in the end describe it.
> For it cannot give it any foundation either.
> It leaves everything as it is.

The passage makes a statement about the effects of performing philosophical work—here, Wittgenstein's—which in the tradition of Locke is about clearing the ground. But what Wittgenstein says here about his own work in fact applies to all disciplinary work that is accomplished by publishing in printed codex form, no

matter what it wishes it could do. That is, whether concerned with philosophy, history, or literature, a disciplinary book offers new ways of describing and understanding them, new ways of thinking, but its effects are completely indeterminate: a printed book in itself has no power to change anything. What is it to "hold ordinary views to account" by publishing a book? It is to give some people the opportunity for thinking harder, but it does not change those ordinary views "tomorrow." Wittgenstein is not ratifying ideology, as Gellner maintains, but honestly describing the effects that disciplinary works can have on language. And for me, there is a big unanswered question here, the question as to whether ordinary language should be uncritically equated with ideology, as Gellner presumes, and whether logico-empirical accountings of validity equated with science or truth, as opposed to ideology.

Second, ordinary language philosophers thought about how and whether ordinary language might be used to solve some disciplinary impasses. The impasse of modern Anglo-American analytical philosophy is skepticism. Wittgenstein analyzes philosophical discourse in order to determine when the language is actually not saying anything, all the while accounting for the fact that both writers and readers believe it to be saying something: "philosophical problems arise when language *goes on holiday.*" Disciplinary writers think they are analyzing the way things are when in fact, what they are in fact analyzing are "grammatical illusions" (Wittgenstein 1958: §28, 19e; §110, 47e). Wittgenstein doesn't say, but it is nonetheless true, that these illusions are made much more possible by printed books: when you define a term, no matter how you define it, you make it into a thing that then functions grammatically as if one were taking it out of a bag and examining it.

A *Peanuts* comic strip by Charles Schulz indicates disciplinary language unfettered, and the problems caused to thinking as a result. Lucy and Linus are walking down the sidewalk. Lucy sees a yellow shape on the sidewalk and begins lecturing to Linus about the amazing migration patterns of the monarch butterfly that comes to North America all the way from Brazil. Linus, leaning down over

the yellow shape, responds, "That's not a butterfuly—that's a potato chip." "That's *really* amazing", says Lucy, "how did a potato chip get here all the way from Brazil?" As Wittgenstein puts it:

> A *picture* held us captive. And we could not get outside of it, for it lay in our language, and language seemed to repeat it to us inexorably. (1958: §115, 48e)

Language of any kind, disciplinary or ordinary, provides "a *picture*" of the way things work in the world—captivating but illusory—but the printed codex and the disciplinary language in it give us the idea that each word is a picture of a thing in the world.

For one thing, books are indeed physical things, and printed words become things inside these physical codices. While of course the manuscript codex or even the scroll contain handwritten words, their hand-craftedness—indeed, the evidence of the *human hand* to be found in them—make them more human appurtances such as clothing or even limbs themselves. The printed words in books duplicate their own look over and over again with less variation than handwritten words, especially as printing becomes more clear and regularized. Elizabeth Eisenstein and Walter Ong see print as replicating exact images fairly early in the history of the invention, whereas Adrian Johns demonstrates, and David McKitterick agrees, that it takes rather longer for print to insure that books with the same titles were in fact duplicates of each other, since this was a social rather than a technological problem. I agree with the latter, locating the reification of language with mass printing. Insofar as printed books duplicate each other and are therefore two instances of the same thing (*res* as thing) rather than being two different material items that say the same thing (*res* as subject matter), they encourage us to see the bag of words that they contain as things. As Walter Ong points out, "Print suggests that words are things far more than writing ever did."[33]

That disciplines such as philosophy encourage us to conceive of words as pictures of things is a point made through the opening epigraph to Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, as interpreted by

Cavell.[34] Augustine discusses in his *Confessions* how he learned to speak, giving us a particular "picture of language," the referential theory that Wittgenstein will try to debunk: "When they (my elders) named some object, and accordingly moved towards something, I saw this and I grasped that the thing was called by the sound they uttered when they meant to point it out."[35] Of course, even for Augustine, the memory of being instructed to speak as an "infans" (unspeaking one) is a fantasy. As Jonathan Culler puts it in describing Saussure's theory that linguistic meaning is not referential but differential, a matter of relations between signs rather than a list of ostensive definitions, how would you point to "brown"? (Culler 1986).[36]

Wittgenstein himself, however, reveals Augustine's description to be a fantasy rather than a memory by imagining the "form of life" that would be lived if language worked the way that Augustine imagines it. Augustine's idea is "a primitive idea of the way language functions," but it is also "the idea of a language more primitive than ours." This primitive language could only be at play in the lives of the "slab" people in which a builder calls out "slab" and a worker brings the thing called for. Carriers of packs containing things used to speak Lagado's invented language would similarly only be able to issue calls for things—really, only calls for more things of which they already have one instance. This language couldn't be used for anything but primitive relationships, not social ones beyond "give me" or "bring." One couldn't even write a good poem about red wheelbarrows and white chickens, without the word "beside," though universal grammarians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries strove to find a way to hypostatize such words that they might be expressed universally and timelessly. James Harris, author of *A Philosophical Inquiry into Universal Grammar* (1765) sees prepositions as resembling "Nails or Pins" insofar as they bring substances together that would otherwise not naturally "coalesce" (Harris 1765: 262). It would be difficult to tell what someone meant if holding up a wheelbarrow and chickens.

Wittgenstein and Swift have a lot in common. The twentieth-century philosopher strives "to bring words back from their

metaphysical to their everyday use" as a form of analysis (Wittgenstein 1958: §19, 8e); the latter just gestures toward language habits of the "vulgar and illiterate." But they launch their critiques of this picture of language by embodying its workings in the activities of human beings, by giving this language material form, and asking, could humans live this way? Customary language does not refer but participates in socially productive activities, as one material condition among others, of those who undertake the tasks and activities of everyday life. When you bring ordinary language back into disciplinary discussions, you remind book-language of the way of living that subtends its production. And though traditional, and not reflective in the revolutionary way that books reflect, the ordinary language that participates in social interactions resists at least as much as it mirrors any ideology in the sense of false consciousness. It is governed by rules in the game of social interaction, but rules are not laws, and one can do many new, unexpected things even while playing by the book.

The typical deconstructive move to make here would be to say that ordinary language enacts the social as part of the body, and the body leaves a residue of un-ideologically inscribable stuff—a trace. Both Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* and Michel Foucault's *Care of the Self* might be seen as tracing that bodily resistance. But the creative use of linguistic rules governing ordinary speech is less sherely dumb material than what deconstructive and even Marxist theory typically imagines materiality to be: embodied living needs to be reconceived as enacting material forms that are, or can be, formally innovative and interesting.[37]

Instead, I will turn to someone whose whole oeuvre is, like Wittgenstein's, dedicated to thinking through the failures of their beloved discipline, the analytic philosophy that is dominantly Anglo-American rather than continental. In *The Senses of Walden*, Stanley Cavell discusses how to provide "therapy" for the disciplinary discourse, "the father tongue," in which one writes by attempting to force a meaning into words, via ordinary language, "the mother tongue." In *Senses*, "writing" of the sort done by Thoreau in *Walden* in which he works through words as if he were

hoeing beans "works" to "rescue" both disciplinary discourse and ordinary language. Thoreau "earns his living" by "unit[ing]" the mother with the father tongue. "Earning a living" is of course an ordinary phrase we use to describe what we do when we work. Cavell's *Walden* transmutes the phrase to mean that word work—turning words over, allowing them to arise in their own contexts, discovering where, when, and how they arise, tracking their meanings in multiple contexts—earns a writer and his or her readers a sense of aliveness to meaning: it earns them vital *living*. Thoreau and Cavell's point is this: we are sleepwalking through our use of language if we don't know what we mean when we speak. Thoreau's audience is an ordinary person who takes language for granted and doesn't think about his or her life—someone who lives a life, as he said most famously, of "quiet desperation." Thoreau thought that most "men" lead lives of quiet desperation: I'm not so sure. There are some of those; there are many "ordinary people" who do, indeed, think. Cavell's audience, his "we," is those among them, those ordinary people, who happen to work in the twentieth and twenty-first century American university system: it is primarily disciplinary writers whom he chastises for attempting as they write to choose meanings rather than words that are acknowledged to be already meaningful in their own right (Cavell 1981: 15–16, 28–29, 33, 64).

Ordinary language philosophy of the sort performed in *Senses* is what the best disciplinary discourse, the most permanently effective, does, and it did so even before there was such a movement led by J. L. Austin and Ludwig Wittgenstein. Thus, Immanuel Kant's *Groundwork for a Metaphysic of Morals* (1790) begins by discussing what we ordinarily mean when we say "moral." A more modern instance of this kind of work is Michael Warner's *Publics and Counterpublics* (2002) which opens by and continuously recurs to discussing what we ordinarily mean by "public."

We don't decree the meaning of words. Words have meaning that evolves from the living they earn through the work that they do. Cavell earns his living by taking into account all the other actual

and future occurrences of the word "sense" whenever he uses it. Do I successfully perform that bookwork? I'm trying, and therefore trying to make this book work differently than the disciplinary mass-printed books (of which it is one) that define by fiat.

There are other ways to work words than this, Cavell insists—Heideggarian etymologies, for instance. Let me here work the word "copy" via its Latin roots and subsequent history, since it names a thing that is involved in the publishing processes of manuscript circulation, dramatic production, and printing (coterie and *en masse*). Before entry into publishing, however, "copy" was "copia"—Erasmus's *De Copia* or design for commonplacing. According to Moss, this work published in 1512 and 1513 "is addressed to the independent reader about to embark on an unsupervised perusal of the (whole) of ancient literature." The commonplacing in which Erasmus instructs his reader is neither rhetoric nor dialectic, not about how to argue or persuade, Moss, insists. Instead, this reading-through-writing work is designed to provide its-reader-writer-producer with "a vastly extended phrase book, … a resource for the expressive variation of any proposition." Since the commonplace-book Erasmus instructs people to produce is not a rhetoric, it is concerned with subjects, ideas, more than mere art (*verba*), containing, as Moss puts it, "the most abundant store of matter (*res*) with which to vary any proposition." Moss quotes and translates from the Latin Erasmus describing how the machine of the handwritten (writerly) or even his own printed (readerly) commonplace-book works:

> whenever occasion demands, you will have ready to hand a supply of material for spoken or written composition, because you will have as it were a well organized set of pigeonholes, from which you may extract what you want.[38]

Copiousness is copy in the sense that the players on the Renaissance stage had copy, or early modern printers worked from copy. Its opposite is not originality, as its antonym certainly is in the modern

sense of the word, but scarcity: a manuscript page to be used by actors or printers provides a copiousness of language that matters, as in, "more matter, less art." Before copyright, and thus before we had a sense that an original work could be owned in the way that one property, "copy" referred to what *WE* consider to be, retrospectively and anachronistically, an author's original manuscript. What Hamlet reads are "words, words, words" because they belong to anyone, any artistic composition being simply a copiousness of words and subject-matter-things. That meaning of the word "copy," indicating an artistic creation, is preserved in the terms "copytext" and "copyright" itself: what a publisher got the right to was the right to reprint over and over again "the copy" or the (author's original) work. It is absolutely fascinating that the word "copy" or "copie" has gone from meaning an original work from which printed copies or multiple performances were produced to meaning duplications of some other original text or picture. It has slid into meaning its opposite as we have come to change our view of language, from seeing it as a shared inheritance to seeing it as material susceptible of individual ownership achieved through a distinctive arrangement of words.

We used printed words to take inventory of things in the world, our arrangement within a printed book of these word things being entirely our own property.

A notion of language as shared copiousness, as locutions found and disseminated for use by all, persists until the mid-eighteenth century. Roger Lonsdale discusses Thomas Gray's habit of re-using everything he read in his poems, so much so that at times Lonsdale's book of Gray's poetry could have contained pages that simply contained apparatus carrying over from text printed on the previous page with no "original" lines of poetry which is to say poetry written by Gray on it at all. He came to be seen by the writers after 1774 as a plagiarizer. Lonsdale argues powerfully that it was precisely the emerging idea that borrowing was plagiarism, rather than simply making use of one's copious reading, that stopped Gray from writing, prematurely aborting his career as an

author (Lonsdale 1979). No words are original; if we quote no other book, we all quote the dictionary.

Absurd, you say? Ted Nelson, famous for imagining something like the Internet before it had been created in the form of a "literary machine" that he called "Xanadu," had the idea that any quoted bit of text could be automatically traced to its original source on this machine, and whoever used the word automatically charged a fee that would go to the original author. So, if I were to say, reading requires the willing suspension of disbelief, monies for that phrase would go to Coleridge's heirs. Presumably the same would happen for "the suspension of disbelief" and for voluntarily letting go of "disbelief"—would the machine charge me if I said, "voluntarily forgetting that the world of the book doesn't exist"? How much would it charge me? If I even wrote, "the willing suspension of disbelief," would I get charged for quoting "the" and "of"? How would such a literary machine work? If it worked like Erasmus's *De Copia*, all the words in each pigeonhole and especially their "matter" would be yours for free. Cavell articulates that view of language as inherited copiousness or "riches" that somehow living among mass-printed books encourages us to forget:

> Words come to us from a distance; they were there before we were; we are born into them. Meaning them is accepting that fact of their condition… . The art of fiction is to teach us distance—that the sources of what is said, the character of whomever says it, is for us to discover… , (Cavell 1981: 64)

even (or especially) if it is the character that one discovers by them is oneself.

Certainly, people are born into the "dear old Lebenswelt," as Gellner puts it, but they actually live there, we live there, and we don't live without thinking. How, precisely, is living language (as opposed to printed thing-language) involved in thinking? How does it get wise? Ways of living change the way things work, including words, if

and when they are held in common because then and only then, they become a "form of life."

"Form" is one of those ambiguous words that can mean something purely conceptual, such as the formal language of mathematics, or something very material, as when something takes such-and-such kind of material form. Wittgenstein's phrase "form of life" should be read precisely taking both meanings into account: ordinary language unites conceptual with physical stuff. How does one think by using ordinary things?

Lambras Malafouris is among the anthropologists who work on "the cognitive life of things," to quote the title of a collection of essays that he co-edits. He sees archeology as giving us not just evidence of prehistorical human thinking but instances of that thinking itself:

> From an archeological perspective, I see no compelling reason why the study of mind should stop at the skin or skull, despite what other disciplines might think. For one thing, most of our evidence about the origin and evolution of human intelligence comes in the form of material culture rather than abstract ideas and brain tissue. From another, the more we study material culture, the more it looks like a genuine element of the human cognitive system.

For Malafouris, the so-called handaxe enigma, a debate among archeologists concerning whether changes in the way that handaxes were carved were the result simply of becoming more skillful, the new shape that works better only subsequently affecting human cognitive development, an unintended consequence, as it were, or whether on the other hand the tool could only be developed because of human cognitive development? In the latter case, the material instantiation passively incarnates an idea rather than being a means for instilling such an idea. Malafouris's notion that cognition does not "stop at the skin or skull" solves this enigma. He first points out the "neurocentric attitude" that encourages us to locate thinking in the brain as opposed to thinking of tool use as "an

embodied cognitive process." Second, he notes that only the Cartesian notion that thinking represents things establishes the "boundary between the mind and the tool" in the first place.

Malafouris argues for another kind of picture, "distributed cognition." A knapper is someone who builds a handaxe with symmetrical sides, making it sharper and more effective:

> The stone [to be carved, 'knapped'] in the hand of the knapper [tool builder] is not simply a blank surface upon which the knapper's pre-existing mental plan will be realized, but a tightly coupled and intrinsic part of the knapper's cognition.

Building something that works, and not just the planning of what to build and thinking about its efficacy but the actual hand movements, environmental space, and elements manipulated, are all part of the cognitive surface being used to think thoughts. Even if unconscious in terms of ratiocination, problem-solving by physically manipulating things just is thinking (Malafouris 2010: 14–17).

Here is the meat of Swift's parable, precisely embedded in Malafouris's point. We do not think by holding up representations of things in our minds anymore than we speak by holding up things in our hands: speaking allows us to do way more than that. To put this in terms of Wittgenstein's slab people, compare the forms of life depicted in Figure 1.1.

If you try to imagine language that is only representational actually working in social instances, you get the last example in Figure 1.1, item no. 4: no one could live that life, or, it was in fact the essence of the interchange between German guards and foreign-speaking Jewish inmates at Auschwitz—only the worst possible degradation of life could work that way. The other examples, 1–3, show words that work, some markedly less well than others.

When we do things with words, to quote the title of J. L. Austin's book, we are performing cognitive acts, all kinds of them. When our speech-embodied cognitive acts don't work very well, as in the cases of 2 and 3, that's when we consider getting therapy or

analysis—it need not be psychoanalysis in any traditional sense. The difference between a therapist and an analyst is precisely relevant: the therapist will tell you that the meaning of your words is not justified—that they do not describe things as they are in actuality. An analyst will not tell you that, but will give a person the space, time, and techniques for coming to such a conclusion via a modification of both speaker and listener (see Schwaber

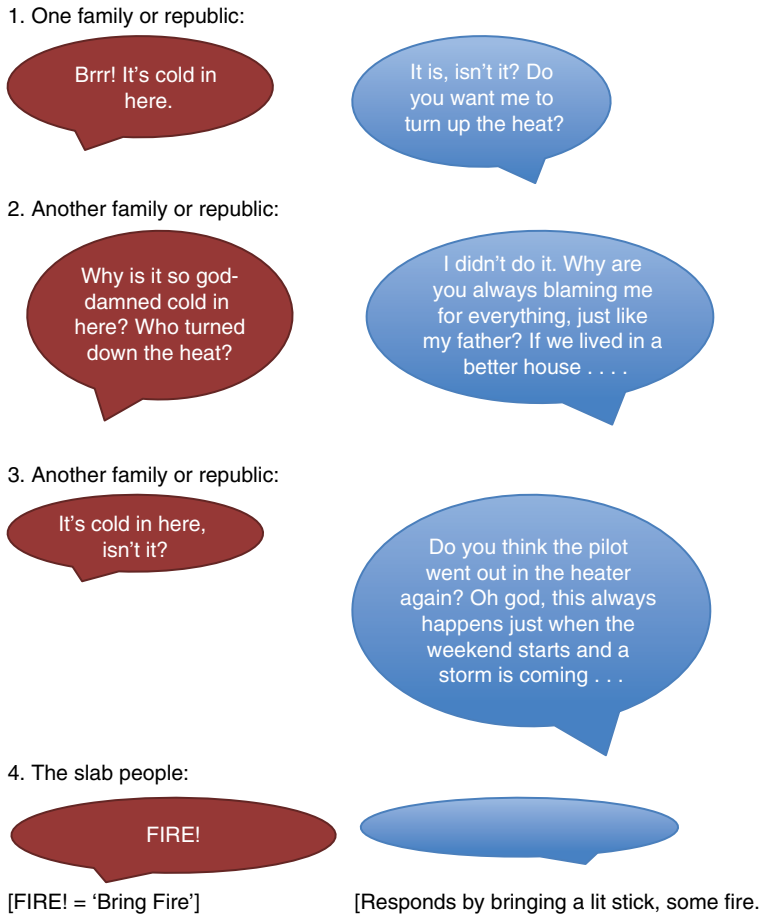


Figure 1.1 Forms of life.

1983). Therapists are probably as effective at changing long-term problems as books are at changing language. Sometimes they work: the word "grok," for instance, like "trivial," comes from a book. But often we just keep on saying, "I saw the sunset tonight," no matter how often we are told that the world turns, to quote the name of a soap opera, because describing reality is not what we're doing, and so knowing that the description is a bad one changes things not at all.

I wish to examine precisely what we are doing as we speak via Edmund Hutchins's *Cognition in the Wild* which argues that "cognitive science made a fundamental category error when it mistook the properties of a person in interaction with the social and material world for the cognitive properties of whatever is inside the person."[39] Since I just championed psychoanalysis over therapy, one might be surprised by this quotation. But a good understanding of transference, precisely the thing analyzed by psychoanalysis, would be to say that it is not a thing at all but a cognition of some sort that was unachieved in specific social interactions and continues to seek realization, which is to say, being thought out by people together, at least two.

Ordinary language is itself an abstraction covering all the ways we work with language, most of the time without reflecting upon each word, which is to say consciously interrogating whether the meaning of a word is justified. It is thoughtful in the way that I have defined distributed thinking, if not book-rational and book-reflective. Writers of printed books may reflect upon meaning without really thinking about it: asking a word to justify its accuracy as one possible description of mind or world is not the same as sounding the depths of everyday language in order to discover the mutual agreements, the worldviews—sometimes the ideology, sometimes the wisdom—to which we adhere when using our language. Uptake of a new word or phrase, the continuous evolution of meanings of words (as in "copy"), and daily usage are ways of thinking: "this word works better" is a kind of wise thinking, not wholly unconscious even though imitative. Users of ordinary

language, somehow collaboratively authorizing its communal shifts in meaning, are thinking through using language by adjusting it so that it works well for them, and writers of books are only thinking to the extent that they take the productiveness of the customary into account. Ordinary language works for what? For me: does it work for you? I didn't say "works *well,*" because the point that Cavell derives from Thoreau is that serious work is required to make ordinary language work well. Everyday uses of language—all of it, speaking, notes, texting, emailing, shouting—work to order, cognize, and count things in our world, as we move among them. But aliveness to meanings and activities involving words, what Cavell calls "serious speech" and Thomas Ogden "sincerity," requires discovering the thinking performed by words as we live with them day to day. Acknowledging the work that ordinary language performs is a means for earning aliveness and revivifying disciplinary discourse.

I want to draw two conclusions, the first answering the question with which medial ecology 1800 was introduced. Ordinary language cannot be adequated to the traditional, nor the unthoughtful, nor the purely ideological. Of course it can be used ideologically—it can become propaganda or can even be used like bricks to throw at people's heads, as in the case of "lager jargon" (Levi 1989). But it can also do some good work. One need not adopt Burke's politics to value it. Second, this overview of 1700, 2000, and 1800 gives us some ideas about the language of the mass-printed book. Drawing from Wittgenstein's picture proverb, I want to suggest that the captivating language that imprisons us in a picture of the world as inert things susceptible of being labeled is constituted of characters printed on paper. Language, comprising both common, ordinary (usually spoken) language and the printed disciplinary book-language that is designed to correct it, can create grammatical illusions about the nature of reality—hypostasize it into butterflies from Brazil—only to the extent that it lies inert on a page. Plato's greatest fear about writing down the words from Socrates' mouth, that they cannot and indeed need not answer

questions but imagine themselves to be authoritative and final, is most deeply realized in mass printing. What he didn't foresee, and our problem, is that mass-printing can so far remove words from active living that no one notices their falsity, which indeed one would the minute one tried to live them.

Here at this moment when it is most obvious I have to point out that language is not a medium, even though that disciplinary truism is repeated habitually. It does not physically resemble a mass-printed codex or a computer, material mechanisms for production and distribution embedded in social networks of meaning. "Language" is an abstraction, a "metaphysical" rather than a physical description. Invoking book-language, or especially the language of mass-printed books, reminds us that language has different effects depending upon the medium in which it participates. The widespread habitual use of books encourages us to see printed-book-language as pictures of things—the words in Katie Trumpener's childhood memory, in Swift's backpack, the words that picture things for Bacon and Sprat. Media blindness, in other words, can intensify grammatical illusions.

Ordinary language as spoken, dashed off in text messages or email or on handwritten notes, codifies not just meaning but living because it has to do some work for us everyday. It reflects and enacts our communal agreements about the way the world works grounded in their usefulness, their workability, in daily negotiations. By contrast, in mass-printed book language, grammatical illusions are grounded by disciplinary structures, which sometimes represent a kind of collective madness requiring the "therapy" of having ordinary language introduced back into the disciplinary realm—Wittgenstein's method. Ordinary language works everyday to create pictures of humanity and the world through usage; the mass-printed codex creates a picture of language as a set of nouns defining things. Rendering living things inert provides opportunity and means for dissecting them, for doing the most important work of "desynonymizing," to use Coleridge's term, an excellent mode of analysis. But we forget, as his collaborator Wordsworth

said memorably, that we "murder to dissect," that the Thing investigated is no longer living. Dead, it does not and is not called upon to work, and so our mode of analysis can only go so far and no further.

Though it was indeed possible for manuscript disciplines to develop a jargon known only to a few—this is precisely the complaint of Sprat against the scholastics—mass-printed book culture creates a place, the page, that predisposes language to become unmoored from the conditions of the lives we lead, conditions that are not forgotten in the ordinary language that is a constant companion—actant, participant—in those lives. This manifesto will not prove that books have shaped disciplinary discourses, especially their underlying epistemology as championed by modern Anglo-American philosophy, but you may be convinced by reading through to the end of it that the mass-printed codex as a medium played a shaping role in philosophical quandaries that we now seem to be moving out of via a new philosophy of screen.

This manifesto examines the consequences of putting "print" back into the picture we have of language. Walter Ong pointed out its absence from that picture during the height of "high theory" in the discipline of literary and cultural studies: "Despite the assumptions of many semiotic structuralists, it was print, not writing, that effectively reified the word, and, with it, noetic activity" (Ong 2002: 119). What are the consequences of imagining that the medium of print, the way it works, its relation to concepts central to literary, theoretical, and philosophical disciplines that have been central since 1700? Answering this question is, in my view, crucial to understanding how the humanities might unravel in a new academy not bound by print.

Cavell is very good at analyzing the effects, good and bad, of disciplines upon thinking, and in this Manifesto, I make use of his thought, his Wittgenstein, throughout, bringing ordinary language back into view as I discuss the different meanings of coterie-printed, mass-printed, and digitally performed ideas. But I also want to contest the notion that language is a material thing,

a medium: to me, that is a medial illusion. Language is only materialized in certain media: voice, print, manuscript, video, etc. Like Brian Rotman, I believe and hope to demonstrate in the following chapters that media with which we habitually live have psychic effects: "My concern," he says, "is to illuminate the way communicational media can facilitate new psychic entities and objects of belief. Such facilitation occurs when a new medium confronts and absorbs its predecessor" (Rotman 2008: 107). *Breaking the Book* tracks that confrontation.

Ideas to be drawn from this chapter: *Here follows a list of ideas that I hope to have adumbrated above—my list is a very un-book-like attempt to make this Manifesto user-friendly:*

1. *Mass-printed books make it seem possible to stand outside of culture and critique it with the authority of being a voice from nowhere: they are inherently revolutionary;*
2. *Disciplinary work published in books needs to be reined in by ordinary language and customary thinking;*
3. *Revolutionary mass-book thinking accuses customary thinking of being sheer ideology, thus rendering scholars unaware that their need for interaction with a public, a commons, is an* Intellectual *need.*
4. *Either we disciplinarians can change the way books work, the way we work, capitalizing on the affordances offered by digital media, or the disciplines can be dismantled along with traditional academic institutional structures. Those seem to me to be the choices. (This last point is not a summary, but an addition.)*
5. *Book-language differs from ordinary language in that it reifies and freezes the world, rendering words dead things that can be dissected. On the one hand, the chill slows things down so that one can pay attention to the precise meaning of words for the sake of analysis (comparing Gellner to Wittgenstein). On the other hand, if the inertness of the book-word is forgotten, we risk speaking the language of things, or worse, the brick language of lager jargon, a slab language disguised by an elite vocabulary.*

Notes

1 For keyword searching, I used Swift 1810.

2 Downloaded from EEBO, Early English Books Online, 8 July 2012.

3 Johns 2003. Ezell's work, however, is especially good at not assigning one overarching reason for choosing to circulate a manuscript but showing instead that then, as now, choices about media for communication are made for myriad reasons.

4 Schwenger (2001) also discusses this passage (http://www.jstor.org/stable/1344262), found in a special issue of *Critical Inquiry* edited by Bill Brown called "Things."

5 Although certainly sold in wrappers, in both cases, they were as encased in bindings as any other book during the era. An email from Rupert Baker, Library Manager of the Royal Society, answers my question about how the original publications were bound:

> I've been asking around my colleagues, and the consensus is that people would have acquired (by individual purchase or subscription) each 'number' as it came out, then taken them at the end of each volume to their bookbinders to be bound as (e.g.) "volume 1, 1665–1666" etc. We suppose that the overall volume 1 title page would have been issued with the last 'number' of volume 1, much as these days you get the title page and contents list of an annual volume with the December issue, but I have to admit this is speculation rather than based on any hard evidence I've been able to find (from Rupert.Baker@royalsociety.org, 3 August 2012).

Stuart Bennet's *Trade Bookbinding* proves, as David Pearson puts it, that "a significant proportion of books were normally stocked and sold ready bound" during the hand press era (Bennet 2004; Pearson 2005: 8). Even the "fine" binding made to order for a particular customer resembled the ready-bound versions (Pearson 2004: xi). Thus, Elizabeth Eisenstein argues in *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* that "opposing books to journals" when discussing the impact of print on the scientific revolution 'not only fails to clarify any issues but also makes many things unnecessarily obscure … To insist that one must distinguish more sharply between a system of 'written' and one of 'printed' interchange, to insist that this difference is more important than that which separates a 'printed' book from a 'published' article is

not to quibble over fine distinctions … Every step of the remarkable adventure in ideas which took educated Europeans from the *Almagest* to the *Principia* in less than two centuries was marked by putting manuscripts into print (1979: 462–3).

6 A. C. Howells discusses the latter three as well as the passage quoted here from Swift (1946: 131–42).

7 http://rstl.royalsocietypublishing.org/. In chapter 7 of *The Nature of the Book*, Johns describes the complicated interplay between manuscript "registers" and printed books as well as the printed *Philosophical Transactions* that in fact shaped the work of the new science as undertaken by the Royal Society (1998: 444–504; McKitterick 2003: 206, 296 n. 4).

8 Originally from Seneca, the figure of the bee appears in Erasmus's *Ciceronianus*, ed. Pierre Mesnard, *Opera Omnia* (Amsterdam: 1971), I.2.706–7, qtd. in Moss 1996: 105; Swift 1704a: 365–8; see also Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sweetness_and_light, accessed 24 July 2012.

9 *De Copia*, p. 117, qtd. Moss 1996: 111.

10 *De Copia*, p. 117, qtd. Moss 1996: 111.

11 *Discours sur la méthod pour bien conduire sa raison et chercher la vérité dans les sciences* (Descartes 1637), qtd. in Moss 1996: n. 32, pp. 272–3, my translation.

12 Elizabeth Eisenstein ranks print distinctively higher in this infrastructure: "When set beside the consequences of the new mode of book production, moreover, the results of improvements in the postal service or overland transport appear trivial indeed. Letters exchanged by Europeans in the early-modern era did not travel much more rapidly than had letters sent out in ancient Rome, but the information flow had nevertheless been transformed [via] the replacement of scribe by printer …" (1979: 462).

13 In the U.S., the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act, 1965, as amended, defines the Humanities to include law, archeology, and social sciences using qualitative methods, but those are usually not included. http://www.neh.gov/about

14 True to the spirit of DH, the symposium was streamed live which is how I attended it. Julia Flanders made this comment 14 March 2012.

15 Laurence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*, Gutenburg.org, second hit in find "Locke", http://www.gutenberg.org/files/

1079/1079-h/1079-h.htm, accessed 24 July 2012. Before checking the exact wording of the quotation, I wrote, Sterne called it a history of the workings of Locke's own mind. Is there a difference? What value does the precision of checking and noting have?

16 Johns describes the disputes over authorship by some who entered experiments in the register and then had those experiments published by Robert Boyle or some other Royal Society luminary: in a sense, the manuscript registers can be seen as the foul papers used by Boyle and Henry Oldenberg, the first editor of the *Philosophical Transactions*, which nearly ceased publication at his death but was resumed after a short hiatus (Johns 1998: 479–504).

17 Francis Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*, 1605, I.iv.3, p. 30, qtd. in Pooley 1992: 219; Pooley also quotes Howells 1946: 133.

18 Trumpener 2009: 160. Trumpener is responding to Franco Moretti, "Style, Inc." (2009b)—obviously his version of Derrida's "Limited, Inc." Moretti then responds to her critique with some justifiable, in my view, irritation (2009a).

19 The example of this commonplace given in the OED is from Dryden's *Indian Emperour* of 1667: "In weak complaints you vainly wast your breath," III.ii.74.

20 On the history of that development during the eighteenth century, see Valenza 2009, which I rely upon here.

21 Recent work by Ted Underwood, presented at the Digital Humanities 2012 Conference in Hamburg, Germany, demonstrates the simultaneous rise of plainness, simplicity, and clarity in poetry with its own specialized discourse. For me, clarity and commonness—availability to all readers—*intuitively* go together: his findings contradicting that intuition were rather a shock.

22 Locke 1700: 7, cited hereafter by book, chapter, and section.

23 Burke 1757: 164, 167; see also Land 1974: 164, 42, 46.

24 Sir John Davies, Preface to the *Irish Reports*, 1612, quoted in Pocock 1987: 33.

25 Valenza 2009: 174–5, quoting Berkeley 1713: 89–90.

26 McLaughlin focuses his argument upon institutional and human relationships based upon the rejection and acceptance of ideas, not on medium. The argument that Micki McGee derives from this article is really her own, based on the evidence given by McLaughlin,

but it is a good one: "McLaughlin observes that writing a book that becomes a popular success, along with working in a cross-disciplinary fashion, all but ensures that one's work will lose its long-term legitimacy," 2005: 245 n. 6.

27 Adrian Johns uses the term "piracy" in his chapter on the Royal Society that describes some of the "disputes" over priority—who made a discovery first, as evidenced by the Royal Society's Register and subsequent publication in the *Philosophical Transactions* (1998: 504), but Margaret Ezell points out that applying the term "piracy" in a culture of manuscript circulation is really anachronistic (1999: 59).

28 Levine describes the battle between Pope and Theobald fully here, mentioning that Theobald's "several hundred emendations" to *Hamlet* are still used today (1991: 230).

29 Molyneux 1702–3: 1268–71. Molyneux quotes the Latin version in his paper; I have quoted the Latin translation by Watson 1741, available open access in the HathiTrust: http://hdl.handle.net/2027/hvd.hw3q1n.

30 Nor, apparently, as Chomskyian linguistics predict, do we know how the structure of languages evolve (Dunn et al., 2011).

31 Baldick is talking about academics here, not ordinary people – I think he wouldn't dare say such things about people, only about foes in an academic contest of considerable importance, but I think in this passage that it is ordinary people who these critics are standing in for.

32 Even when discussing "ethos" in her discussions of Habermas, Amanda Anderson sticks primarily to discussions of communication within institutions that have political effects, to contests between "philosophical positions," "disciplinary struggles," and "deliberative debates"—to the contribution that ethos makes to "polemic" involved in "emerging democratic culture"; see "Argument and Ethos" (Anderson 2006: 134–60).

33 Ong 2002: 119 (reification), 126 (duplication), 118 (the sentence quoted here).

34 My interpretation here is based upon Stanley Cavell's seminar at the School of Criticism and Theory at Dartmouth during summer 1991; any mistakes arise from my own misunderstandings.

35 Augustine, *Confessions*, I.8, quoted in Wittgenstein 1958: 2e, translation provided note 1, of "Cum ipsi (majores homines) appellabant

rem aliquam, et cum secundum eam vocem corpus ad aliquid movebant, videbam, et tenebam hoc ab eis vocari rem illam, quod sonabant, cum eam vellent ostendere."

36 Wittgenstein is doing something similar in his discussion of "red."

37 Ferguson 1992: 119, 122; this essay deserves much more attention as innovative thinking than it has so far received, in my opinion, because inappropriately placed—or because as a discipline literary and cultural studies still does not seem to recognize how caught up we are in a theoretical Romantic dilemma. On that issue in particular, see Liu 2003.

38 Moss 1996: 107–9, 111, quoting Desiderius Erasmus, *De Duplici Copia Verborum ac Rerum*, in *Opera Omnia* (Amsterdam, 1991–4), I, 6, p. 117.

39 Edwin Hutchins summarizes his 1996 book in a newer essay. He discusses its shortcomings in terms of not thinking hard enough about speech as "multimodal behavior," as "embodied activity" (2010: 91).

PART II

Bound

2

Print Subjectivity, or the Case History

Was what we know as "the unconscious mind" invented during the eighteenth-century, and if so, in response to print culture? One reason I ask is that so many of the early eighteenth-century writers look insane to me, suggesting that there is something I'm repressing which they are not. Moreover, the writers of the 1720s are conscious, maybe even hyperconscious, of the structuring of mind articulated by Sigmund Freud, the main codifier if not inventor of the modern unconscious. In *Tale of a Tub*, Jonathan Swift argues that some of our highest ideals are distinguished from what we find most abject by only minimal differences:

> And whereas the mind of Man, when he gives the spur and bridle to his thoughts, doth never stop, but naturally sallies out into both extremes of high and low, of good and evil; his first flight of fancy commonly transports him to ideas of what is most perfect, finished, and exalted; till having soared out of his own reach and sight, not well perceiving how near the frontiers of height and depth border upon each other; with the same course and wing, he falls down plumb into the lowest bottom of things, like one who travels the east into the west, or like a straight line drawn by its own length into a circle. (Swift 1704b: 324–5)

Breaking the Book: Print Humanities in the Digital Age, First Edition. Laura Mandell.

According to Freud, writing over two centuries later, the mechanism that creates an absolute out of a minimal distinction is repression. From his discussion of repression as a mechanism, Freud says,

> we can understand how it is that the objects to which men give most preference, their ideals, proceed from the same perceptions and experiences as the objects which they most abhor, and that they were originally distinguished from one another through slight modifications.

Through distinguishing the abhorrent from the ideal, repression differentiates the conscious from the unconscious mind. Jokes according to Freud offer a temporary lifting of such repression (Freud 1953–74: 14.150, 148, 151), and so the comedy *Caddyshack* (1980) amply illustrates Swift and Freud's point: swimmers screech and flee from a country-club swimming pool as a bowel movement appears in the water. The pool is drained, at which point Bill Murray picks up the offending creature from the drain and takes a bite out of it. Here an ideal, a Baby Ruth bar, differs minimally from our most abject wastes.

Early-modern bathers would not have laughed. Norbert Elias's *History of Manners* quotes a conduct manual that suggests a much different structure of repressions. In telling people what not to do, it presumes that they will openly admit to a desire that we repress. Of course the people whom this conduct manual addressed were walking through city streets in which human and animal excrement freely flowed:

> [I]t is not a refined habit, when coming across something disgusting in the street, as sometimes happens, to turn at once to one's companion and point it out to him. It is far less proper to hold out the stinking thing for the other to smell, as some are wont, who even urge the other to do so, lifting the foul-smelling thing to his nostrils and saying, "I should like to know how much that stinks," when it would be better to say, "Because it stinks do not smell it."[1]

The desire expressed by Bill Murray's joke, to pick up, play with, and even closely smell human excrement, is repressed from twentieth- and twenty-first century consciousness, but expressed through the love of an ideal: chocolate bars. That there is such a repressed desire is indicated by the laughter at the *Caddyshack* joke, laughter indicating a temporary lifting of repression. Would an eighteenth-century audience laugh, given that Mme. du Deffand writes a letter about using a lovely chamber pot in order to serve peas and gravy?[2]

Elias marks the eighteenth century as the civilizing moment, and one can see what he means in a story recounted by psychoanalyst Hans Loewald in his book about the civilizing process of sublimation. The title of Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents* was once given the title (in German) of its ground—translatable as *Uncivilized Contentment*—a text that would recount the pleasures, Loewald says, of screaming, physically fighting, and farting. I present these scatological images of unconscious construction to emphasize how physical a reality "it" [id] actually is, in accounts stretching from Swift in the early eighteenth century to Loewald writing in the late twentieth. We have all noticed that neurotics are highly literate readers of books, disciplined to sit still, book in hand, body obfuscated or even repressed.

In this chapter, I investigate the ways in which the unconscious became during the eighteenth-century structured by the bodily practices involved in manipulating printed texts, just as the unconscious might be structured by stopping in the street to pick up waste—or not. In particular, I wish to look at modes of sympathetic identification that are later best expressed by "the case history" that first emerged as a genre around 1800. Georges Gusdorf successfully argues that the physical page's capacity to create an "inside space" makes autobiography an instrument for creating, living out, and recognizing psychological depth. Until the advent of autobiography, a form unique to Western literature and literatures of those colonized by the West, the subjects of biography were "great personages," "heroes, princes." Suddenly, via this "new spiritual revolution" within the history of humanity, an individual begins

> to conceive of him or herself as a great person, as worthy of being remembered by people … [and,] despite his or mediocrity in the theater of the world, as worthy of being offered as an example. Interest was transferred from public to private history: next to great men who acted out the public history of humanity, there are obscure men who waged war in the heart of spiritual life, leading silent battles of which the means and ways, the triumphs and losses, also deserve to be impressed upon universal memory… . If the space of outside, the theater of the world, is a clear space, where the behavior, motives, and types are grasped well enough upon first sight, inner space is essentially shadowy. (1956: 107–8, my translation)[3]

The authors who write Puritan experience narratives (autobiographical confessions by any other name) as well as their readers feel their spirits spatialized, but only with the emergence of a specific bibliographic practice: silent reading. This "dialogue between the spirit and God in which each gesture, each willed thought or action, can be put into question" (Gusdorf 1956: 107–8). If the eyes are the window of the soul, and the codex page, printed or handwritten, mirrors that soul, then the page gives to the soul multiple, sequentially ordered surfaces. I apply that argument here, adding to it a focus on how physical activities surrounding printed books—their covers and heft, for instance—inflect psychic reality. To put the argument in its strongest form, I would say that those activities foster a distinctively modern mode of internalization. It's only because of the printed book, I would argue, and especially the form of that book as produced by mass print culture, that identification comes to be seen as a means for communication. When that happens, the unconscious mind becomes structured by the desire to be recognized through sympathetic identifications made by others, by imagining oneself the star or author of a printed novel, poem, newspaper, or periodical essay: the repressed is to some extent what cannot be printed in publishable form. To overcome that repression, one must write about oneself getting at the particular in a way that makes it publishable or universal, identifiable. Writing, publishing, and

reading the case history, then, in which humans are portrayed as particular instances that contribute to general theories of psychic functioning precisely through their variances, becomes a mode of cure. Unlike coterie print autobiographies, the mass-printed case history offers everyone down at least to the literate classes the opportunity to be agents in history, to be recognized abroad and at home. Here I wish to examine how the emergence of the case history is tied to the very physical form of the book as it is lived (lived with and lived in), the more that books abound.

The Case History

The term "case" is, as James Chandler points out, connected etymologically to casuistry (1998: 198–9), and for that reason is applied to legal battles.[4] How does the term extend to the medical realm? John Woodward wrote in the 1720s, "it was by the Method of transmitting Cases and Cures, that Physick first began to be formed into a Science" (Woodward 1757: 338). The historical argument made by Woodward, a member of the Royal Society who was one of the virtuosi roundly ridiculed by the Scriblerians, is that medicine moves from being recipes to becoming knowledge via the technology of the case, an emergent form in the *Philosophical Transactions*. That is, this Royal Society journal transmits accounts of cases; it does not (yet) contain what would properly count as published case histories, though the case-lecture begins as a medial, generic form several years before Woodward dies. By the 1730s and 1740s, "case-lectures" were being given by the University of Edinburgh faculty of medicine, newly established in 1726.

Establishing medicine as a discipline with a methodology at home in modern universities takes the whole eighteenth century. Another, equally dramatic transformation is described by Michael Macdonald in *Mystical Bedlam*. Insanity is transferred from the care of religious clerics to medical men, accomplished largely by the end of the seventeenth century but still exerting residual effects in 1800.

For Macdonald, that transfer is politically motivated: "the [Anglican] church's antipathy to religious therapy," he says, of the sort that "had been a popular aspect of pre-Civil War divinity,"

> encouraged the orthodox elite to regard mental disorders from a secular perspective. Scientific theories were the only kind of explanation for mental disturbance entirely free from controversial religious associations; medical treatments were the only methods of healing insanity that did not meet with the disapprobation of the established clergy. (McDonald 1983: 226)

But as Henry Abelove reminds us, part of Jonathan Wesley's popularity arose from the Methodists' use of an early form of electric-shock therapy to treat depression (1990). And of course it was precisely the Quaker York Retreat established in 1796 that became the first madhouse famed for exemplifying the moral treatment of insanity (actually, treatment of insane persons as having moral agency). As Keith Thomas has amply demonstrated, religious practices die hard (1971), and 1700 hardly marks the complete transfer of mental illness to medical professionals. A movement to disenchant mental illness persists even into the early nineteenth century. By 1829, we see the first full-fledged attempt to expunge the term "religious melancholy" from popular parlance, if not nosology itself: Isaac Taylor's *The Natural History of Enthusiasm* goes to such great lengths to avoid using the term that the term constitutes less the disavowed than the elephant in the room (Taylor 1830).

And so the case history must emerge to supplant sermons designed to "cure" religious melancholy. Susan Wells dates the emergence of the psychological case history to the middle of the nineteenth century (2003: 355), but others date it earlier. William Prefect first published in 1777 his "Cases of Madness," although that does not become its title until around 1785. J. Zelmanowits says "It is with [John Haslam's 1809 *Observations on Madness*] that the line of modern psychiatric [case write-up] begins" because he notices, as does Denis Leigh, that Haslam's descriptions found in his case histories are

modern.[5] Haslam's case histories consisted in biographical descriptions of Bedlam inmates juxtaposed with physical descriptions of the brains belonging to these inmates which Haslam dissected after they died. What's especially modern and psychiatric, then, in Haslam's *Observations* is that they express through generic form faith in physical causation. The emergence of the case history requires a model in which psychic events have physical causes. That's new, and the question I now set out to answer is, how did this model come into existence? How does Haslam's faith that brain lesions produce feelings come to seem both plausible and natural?

One word that almost always accompanies the word "case" in medical treatises of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is "remarkable." That apparent continuity masks what was a seismic shift in cultural attitudes toward the "marvelous," documented assiduously by Lorraine Daston: the marvelous was interesting first because supernatural, an indication of God's direct intervention in human affairs; second, because preternatural, testifying to the existence of the divine; and finally, because natural (1991). George Starr tracks a similar trajectory from spiritual autobiography to the novel: devout attention to circumstantial detail in the daily events of one's life (for the sake of determining one's election) persists as scientific, realistic devotion to detail for its own sake (1965). According to J. Paul Hunter,

> The late seventeenth century marks the start of the modern dependence on data … , the strong bias we have toward excessive information for its own sake… [A] new era of trust in records—that is, a world of archival information—had begun. (Hunter 1990: 306)

Along with Starr, Hunter connects the novel to Puritan autobiography, also called "the experience": to quote Hunter again,

> In a world thought to be sacramental, hieroglyphic, and often cryptic, finding the meaning of God's mysterious ways was not easy, and any detail could provide a clue to a pattern … [The diaries

> recording these details offer] a comprehensive record of the self as experiencer and observer. Science and theology … both blessed the process; diaries recorded what the culture valued, the attempt to make facts instrumental to larger quests for meaning. (307–8)

Novels abounding in detail, in contrast to older fictional forms like the romance, testify to what Hunter calls "the cultural urge to circumstantiality" (310).

Hunter joins "science and theology" in one sentence: both "bless" the detail. But it is precisely the shift in the significance of details, from theological to scientific, that has been the focus of historians of science such as Daston and Peter Galison (2007). Historians usually mark this shift by pointing to David Hume's "Essay on Miracles" first written in 1737 but removed from Hume's *Treatise* and published as part of the *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* in 1748. The essay marks a shift documented by Ian Hacking in his book on "probability" from trust in testimony by witnesses to trust only in first-hand experience (1975). The essay explains that miracles are a patent impossibility, a "delusion" Hume calls them (1772: 126, 132):

> A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is … entire …. (1772: 130)

When you encounter an anomaly, in other words, you cannot logically answer the question, "Why did it happen?" with "It's a miracle." Instead, some explanation must be generated that is in keeping with the laws of nature. Hume uses the language of "case" in this essay: "other" – a.k.a. "remarkable" – "cases" must be compared to "all cases" (1772: 127) and the most often repeated case taken as reality. The question then arises, what do you do with an anomaly if you don't call it a miracle? And how does one reconcile two of Hume's claims, that experience is "infallible," providing "full proof" (1772: 127), if one or two instances belie it? To

disregard any hallowed detail is out of the question—but if you cannot call it a miracle, what can you call it? The answer comes—where else?—in a description of "the Indian" who has never experienced frost (1772: 130, and note): an anomaly indicates not that nature's laws have been violated but that circumstances in which those laws operate are so far unknown, just as Indians—by which term Hume seems to mean anyone native to and immured in a warm climate—do not know about frost: that remarkable case is "not *miraculous*, nor contrary to the uniform experience of the course of nature in cases where all the circumstances are the same" (1772: 485, n. I). To understand how an anomalous case preserves the laws of nature that it seems to controvert, one must completely understand the circumstances under which 1) the laws are formed, and 2) the laws operate differently. Here is the crux, and here is precisely why "the remarkable case" is an epithet repeated throughout titles of medical treatises published throughout the late seventeenth and eighteenth-centuries. If you know normal circumstances, and you know the circumstances surrounded an anomaly, you can determine the natural law causing specific results in both cases. Or if, like the Indian, you do not know some particular natural law, the alleged anomaly provides a clue to it. It is for precisely this reason that "the remarkable case" acquired scientific as opposed to divine value.

Cases of anomalous brain functioning become interesting because of the laws of normal functioning that they might reveal—either by contrast, or by secretly sharing properties with the normal via laws as yet undiscovered. Fear and excitement over one's own relationship to a particular case motivates readers' fascination with case histories. The production of case histories begins in the late eighteenth century along with the mass print runs (discussed via the work of William St. Clair, in Chapter 3, pp. 103–4). The mass-printed book is, in other words, the physical substrate of the case history: coterie publishing gives printed texts that impart information about someone whom one knows, or aspires or pretends to know, whereas the novels and case histories produced en masse offer psychological forms of identification. Any tale of

eighteenth-century notions of identification, even one most interested in the case history and the physical mass-printed book as its material substrate, must begin with sympathy.

Identification and Sympathy

Frances Hutcheson's 1728 essay on "The Nature and the Conduct of the Passions" says that sympathy comes from a "Publick Sense": we are each given the capacity to see feelingly, as Gloucester puts it to Lear. Anthony Ashley Cooper, third earl of Shaftesbury is a member of this "moral sense school"; in his 1711 compilation of essays, *Characteristicks*, he details what he calls "the case of authors" who are attempting to transmit ideas and feelings to a readership. Because he believes along with Hutchinson in this sixth sense, this moral sensorium according to which humans "desire the Happiness of others" (Hutcheson 1728, http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/885#Hutcheson_0150_110), Shaftesbury has no need to predicate sympathy on the process of identification. But then the universal significance of an author's particular feelings needs to be explained. People who take up authorship, Shaftesbury says, insist upon themselves as "professed masters of understanding to the age" (1711: 1.104). They presume to give advice to others in the same way as physicians or surgeons who dissect in order to fully recognize themselves. Dialogue is the best genre for performing this task: Shaftesbury wants authors to split themselves in two in order to become spectators, critics, and judges of themselves. An author who can hold up a mirror to himself simultaneously holds up a mirror to his readers: the general applicability of his own private thoughts and feelings, his own case, in other words, emerges from his readers' analytic capacity. An adequate literary anatomist holds up a mirror to himself and to his readers.

While one might imagine that this desire for authors who perform self-analysis would predispose Shaftesbury to condone the

authors of spiritual autobiographies, the first case histories to appear on the literary scene so beautifully analyzed by Starr, it is precisely the opposite. Shaftesbury abhors what he calls "the imaginary saint," the author of the Puritan experience (1.116), because he or she eludes the practice of self-confrontation that Shaftesbury recommends, instead projecting the mysteries of his or her own nature out onto the mystery of a deity. The Puritan autobiographer is guilty of "taking his physic in public": "I hold it very indecent for any one to publish meditations, occasional reflections, solitary thoughts, … Such exercises as come under the notion of this self-discoursing practice." The "wits who conceive suddenly" and deliver to the public their productions without first reviewing them while alone are in fact, no matter what they believe, merely promoting themselves: "For so public-spirited they are, that they can never afford themselves the least time to think in private for their own particular benefit and use… . The world is ever of the party. They have their author-character [perpetually] in view … " (1711: 1.109). All authors who simply dump their thoughts and feelings onto a page do not shape themselves, and, contrary to what one would expect, it is this refinement, this educated capacity for shaping oneself, that removes rather than introduces self-delusion:

> One would think there was nothing easier for us than to know our own minds, and understand what our main scope was; what we plainly drove at, and what we proposed to ourselves … But our thoughts have generally such an obscure implicit language, that 'tis the hardest thing in the world to make them speak out distinctly. (1711: 1.113)
>
> [T]he chief interest of ambition, avarice, corruption, and every sly insinuating vice is to prevent this interview and familiarity of discourse which is consequent upon close retirement and inward recess. (1711: 1.115)

Untrammeled self-expression is self-promoting rather than self-anatomizing. The problem of the unshaped character—the

self-celebrating person's account which whitewashes truth rather than exposing it—is that no mirror for self-recognition is provided. It is immoral to tout oneself—aggressive in fact, an attempt to seduce and usurp readers rather than give them agency. If one can cut through one's own desire to think well of oneself, then an author can communicate thoughts recognizably human rather than personal.

I cannot emphasize enough the foreignness of Shaftesbury's idea to modern psychology and indeed its antipathy to the workings of the case history. Up to the middle of the eighteenth century, "remarkable cases," to speak in the locution most typically used to name the case, told us something about the marvelous or preternatural. Shaftesbury operates under this dispensation: for him remarkable feelings and thoughts are unnatural ones, unsharable. An author needs to purge or "evacuate" his own "frothy distemper" (1711: 1.108) in order to cure himself of the desire to cut a remarkable figure.

"Recognise yourself; which [is] as much as to say, divide yourself, or be two," viz. self and critic of self (1711: 1.113): Shaftesbury wants "erected in ourselves" "a court" for "disciplin[ing] the fancies"; thereby "our patient" (reader and author) "endures in this operation" some pain that is worth it because it will "ensure him a certain resolution, by which he shall know where to find himself; be sure of his own meaning and design; and as to all his desires, opinions, and inclinations, be warranted one and the same person to-day as yesterday, and to-morrow as to-day" (1711: 1.123). Making oneself self-identical is an achievement antithetical to being a remarkable personality. Shaftesbury recommends writing dialogue as opposed to speaking in propria persona:

> An author who writes in his own person has the advantage of being who or what he pleases. He is no certain man, nor has any certain or genuine character; but suits himself on every occasion to the fancy of his reader, whom, as the fashion is nowadays, he constantly caresses and cajoles. All turns upon their two persons. And as in an amour or commerce of love-letters, so here the author has the privilege of talking eternally of himself, dressing and sprucing

> himself up, whilst he is making diligent court, and working upon the humour of the party to whom he addresses. This is the coquetry of the modern author whose [printed writings] draw the attention from the subject towards himself, and make it be generally observed, not so much what he says, as what he appears, or is, and what figure he already makes, or hopes to make, in the fashionable world. (1711: 1.131)

For Shaftesbury, the individual "I," the "remarkable author," has no personality or coherent self with which to identify as a reader: "I" is anybody and everybody, shifting who and what it is in order to seduce readers into admiration. Being a remarkable individual means being someone who is ambitious to be worthy of remark; it means NOT being a "certain or genuine character" with whom readers would wish to identify. In fact, as we have seen above, an author serves readers by skillfully crafting opportunities for self-anatomy, not through self-expression, which for Shaftesbury has everything to do with self-promotion, seduction, and not identification.

"The remarkable" in the modern view – that is, after Shaftesbury – is indeed usable by an audience through a distinctively modern reading operation unavailable to Shaftesbury: sympathetic identification. One can see this new dispensation at work in Adam Smith's notion of sympathy as articulated in his 1758 treatise *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*.

Smith begins the essay by insisting that, "with our brother on the rack," "our senses will never inform us of what he suffers" (1853: 3). "[O]ur senses," Smith says, "never did, and never can, carry us beyond our own person, and it is by the imagination only that we can form any conception of [another's] sensations." Thus, being "inform[ed] of what [another person] suffers" means feeling precisely the same thing as they feel. I want to pause here to notice how improbable is this claim: it is *only* by imaginative identification that we can form *any* conception of what another feels? This person can't tell us what he feels, in language, and give us some idea? I am not the only one to notice how odd it is to think that one can only sense the feelings of another through

identification; Smith's contemporaries noticed it as well. Thus, Lord Kames says of the passage,

> If the torments of a man on the rack be not obvious to my sight from his violent perturbation, nor to my hearing from dismal screams and groans, what can I learn from imagining myself to be in his place? (1779: 110)

Because we are so accustomed to thinking that sympathy comes from identification, it is a bit hard to defamiliarize Smith's passages enough to make them seem as strange as they actually are. But we are accustomed to it for the same reason that Smith came up with the idea in the first place, its origins in the habitual practices of print culture made salient in the *way* that Smith speaks about sympathetic identification:

> Neither can that faculty [of imagination] help us to this [knowledge of his feelings], [in any other way] than by representing to us what would be our own, if we were in his case. (1853: 3–4)

Being "in his case" means, Smith says, imagining "ourselves in his situation" (1853: 4). Such imaginings spring not from anything our brother says or does—not from witnessing his passion—but rather from "a view … of the situation which excites" the passion. Absorption in the sufferer's situation allows identification to take place which is to say [and here are a series of phrases Smith uses to describe it] "changing places in fancy with the sufferer" (1853: 4), "putting ourselves in his case" (1853: 7), "lodging … our own souls in their … bodies, and thus conceiving what would be our own emotions in this case" (1853: 9), "bringing the case home to ourselves" (1853: 13, rptd. 14, http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2620#Smith_1648_175). Obviously "case" is repeated over and over again here in Smith's explanation of sympathetic identification. A "case" is not just a generic form but also a material thing. We speak of upper and lower case letters because of the

printer's case in which were placed the type matrices aligned on a compositor's stick. One can buy a book. It is full of case-imprints, and during the eighteenth century, one calls the bookbinding, the boards and back, cloth-covered or otherwise, a book's "case." Whenever you buy a book, then, you in effect bring the case home to yourself: as upper- and lower-case letters are imprinted on the book's paper and cased in its covers, you can imprint the tale they tell on your mind by reading. In fact, Smith's whole notion as to how feelings are communicated from one person to another does not represent real interaction as it takes place in overwrought situations—I wouldn't take the time to imagine how I would feel if I saw a person on fire; I'd throw water on him/her or roll him/her on the ground, or laugh if I were a sadist. Instead of describing interactions sympathetic or unsympathetic, Smith's description of what occurs to communicate feelings resembles nothing so much as a scene of reading, when one has brought a book describing someone's feelings home to read, when one has brought his or her case home to oneself. For Smith, the remarkable individual described in a novel is absorbed by readers who identify with that person as if it were themselves.

But aren't I here mistaking what is just a way of speaking for a generic paradigm? I don't think so. Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* is the forerunner of Isaac Disraeli's *Calamities of Authors* insofar as it discusses how social circumstances (i.e., specific cases) produce what Disraeli calls "literary" or "poetical feelings" (63, 331). Disraeli wants to "paint … the psychological character" of authors (11).[6] That project involves representing, he says, "casualties to which all men [and not just authors] are liable" (9): these particular cases can be identified with; they are what one would feel if in the author's situation, if one had brought the author's case home to oneself.

Smith and Disraeli want readers to be absorbed by individuals with whom they identify and thereby sympathize. In contrast, Shaftesbury prefers critical distance to absorption and so advises writers to impart general characteristics through skilled representations rather than celebrations of the individual self. He offers a cure for writing the remarkable, odd self, a cure that involves remediating

print, that is, putting back into the process of representation the sound that is necessarily eliminated from printed texts once they are distributed—sent home. Before publishing thoughts and feelings, Shaftesbury says, an author needs to perform self-dissection through what he calls "articulate sound," through a soliloquy delivered aloud, "spoke[n] to ourselves *viva voce* when alone" (1711: 1.106). An author's "thoughts can never appear very correct, unless they have been used to sound correction by themselves" (1711: 1.111–12). Shaftesbury means "sound" literally here: "sound correction" means "correction by sound," *vive voce*. He really is thinking about how to get writers off the printed page of their imaginations, as is obvious when he admonishes those who are "great talkers" at public gatherings and so imagine that they can simply transfer talk to print: "Their page can carry none of the advantages of their person. They can no way bring into paper those airs they give themselves in discourse. The turns of voice and action with which they help out many a lame thought and incoherent sentence must here be laid aside" (1711: 1.111). Sounding out those same turns of voice and action *while alone*, "in this home-dialect of soliloquy," makes purely personal airs fall flat as mere bids for recognition, notoriety, remarkableness, so that the author can see them for what they are and then keep the writing that went with those personal airs (and was carried by them) off the printed page. When self-presence is directed to no one, it becomes strange, just as it will be estranged by print—as should be the writing that betokens unique self-presence rather than reasoned discourse. Whereas for Samuel Johnson writing almost half a century later, "familiar histories" or novels grab the reader's imagination "by a kind of violence" (1752: 1.31), no matter how they are written, for Shaftesbury readers only respond to the genuine character that writers achieve by leaving the purely personal behind. For Johnson as for Smith, the unique case of the remarkable individual can inspire identification, whereas for Shaftesbury it cannot.

Also for Smith, this un-remediated form of print in which remarkable characters display themselves to a reader's absorbed attention, has moved into the world. He isn't talking about how to

write well in the *Theory of Moral Sentiments*; he is talking about how humans communicate to each other, and he is imagining this kind of communication based upon the model of the novel, the absorbing printed book. Fully understanding the situation of a sufferer is as Smith defines it nothing more nor less than absorption by the diegesis of a novel. This sympathetic identifier is primarily a reader, as is belied by Smith's oft repeated phrase, "bringing the case home to oneself."

Both the reach and the look of the physical book evolved during the eighteenth century: the anonymity achieved both by more abstract typefaces that were no longer imitating handwriting and by the extension of a reading public beyond those whom one knows—these two features of the physical book as published later in the century abet the process of readerly absorption through identification that Shaftesbury can't imagine, that so terrifies Johnson, that provides Smith with a model for human interaction, and that fosters the case history as it comes into full-fledged existence during the era of mass print.

Arthur Marrotti describes the circulation of manuscript poems during and well into the late seventeenth century (1995: 145–6). Groups within a court-centered culture determine their members by who is giving poetry to whom, so that Thomas Churchyard, for instance, advertises in print his participation in, to quote Marrotti, "the more socially prestigious environment of manuscript transmission." Marrotti points out that, though we associate print with textual preservation and longevity, early modern writers trusted more their hand-to-hand connections (227). Early eighteenth-century print culture imitates hand-to-hand manuscript transmission even in the practice of publishing by booksellers. During the eighteenth century, the business of bookselling passed from father to son, sometimes to wife. The bookseller's copyrights having been given to him or her by the hand of an author is passed by hand through family businesses. The family-owned-and-run publishing business changes, book historians say, with the house of Longman, the first family business to re-make itself at the beginning of the nineteenth century as a more

impersonal business venture, bringing in non-family members as partners (Rees and Orme, among others; see Briggs 1974). Also, the tables of contents of disciplinary collections of poetry—that is, collections pretending to represent great literature—change radically over the course of the eighteenth century. While the names of each poet are given in the tables of contents of the early nineteenth century anthologies, in the Dryden-Tonson miscellanies printed a century earlier, often only the initials of authors' names are given, and sometimes only dashes: you would know who these poets are if the printed book were circulating among friends, passed from hand to hand. Phrases in the table of contents of the 1694 *Annual Miscellany*, for instance, suggest intimacy: several poems are designated as written by "my Lord R." Only the informed would know whom was meant: if readers were not informed by being part of the group but in some other way, having the knowledge felt like membership—knowing that "R" refers to "Rochester" is close to knowing Rochester himself, to having obtained his poems at his hand. Moreover, the miscellanies organized and printed by John Dryden and Jacob Tonson are often marked up, the poems in them revised, as would happen when manuscripts circulate. Early modern manuscripts and early eighteenth-century printed texts are thus passed hand-to-hand, or imagined as passed that way, as if circulating among friends. As Neil Saccamano has argued, it is really later, with Pope and Swift, that authors begin to wish for and worry about having a wider reading public than their peers (1984).

In "Sensations of the Page," Michael Camille argues that Christian metaphors about Christ as the word and text were only persuasive because readers of medieval illuminated manuscripts felt "intimacy … with the flesh of pages and parchment," a fact to which we are blind only "after centuries of idealist incorporeal aesthetics that denied the body in favor a myth of pure mind" (Camille 1998: 42). The early eighteenth-century compositors too saw their texts as bodies: in *Mechanick Exercise: Or, the Doctrine of Handy-Works Applied to the Compositors Trade*, published in 1683, Joseph Moxon speaks not just of "ordering" but of "humouring … a Title Page" (212)—that is, giving it a bodily humour as part of its mental

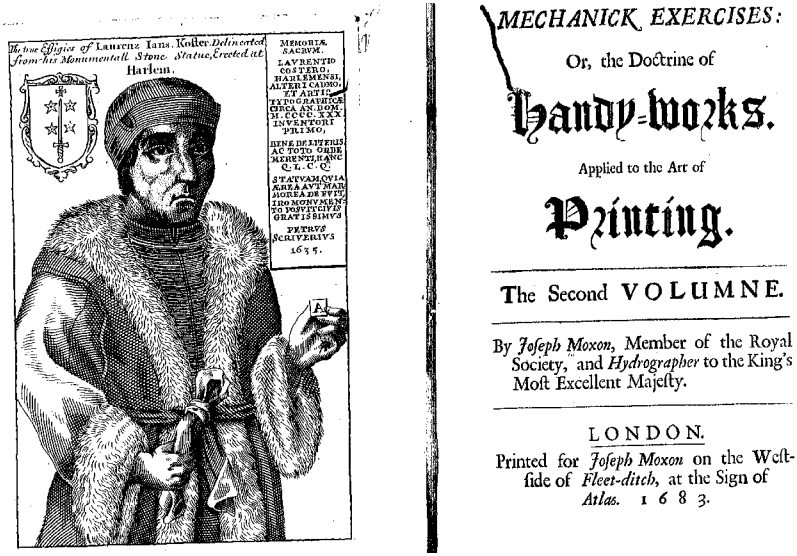


Figure 2.1 Title Page of Moxon's *Mechanick Exercises*: http://gateway.proquest.com.lib-ezproxy.tamu.edu:2048/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:64157:155

character. For Moxon one does so by figuring out where to put emphasis and then choosing "Body" size, selecting a number of lines, using indentations, and then setting any of these bodies in "Capitals, Roman, Italick, or English" (212).

You can see (in Figure 2.1) that his own compositor follows his advice, including a hodgepodge of types and typesizes on his title page. Each title page would be uniquely its compositor's. But, just as authors fought to reduce compositors' interventions in creating the meaning of their texts, the title page became, progressively during the course of the eighteenth-century, more and more disembodied. As S. H. Steinberg tells us in *Five Hundred Years of Printing*, the Foulis brothers, printers in Glasgow, changed people's taste for humorous title pages.

Evolving between 1740 and 1775, "The Foulis title-page, with no lower case, nor italics, nor two sizes of capitals in the same

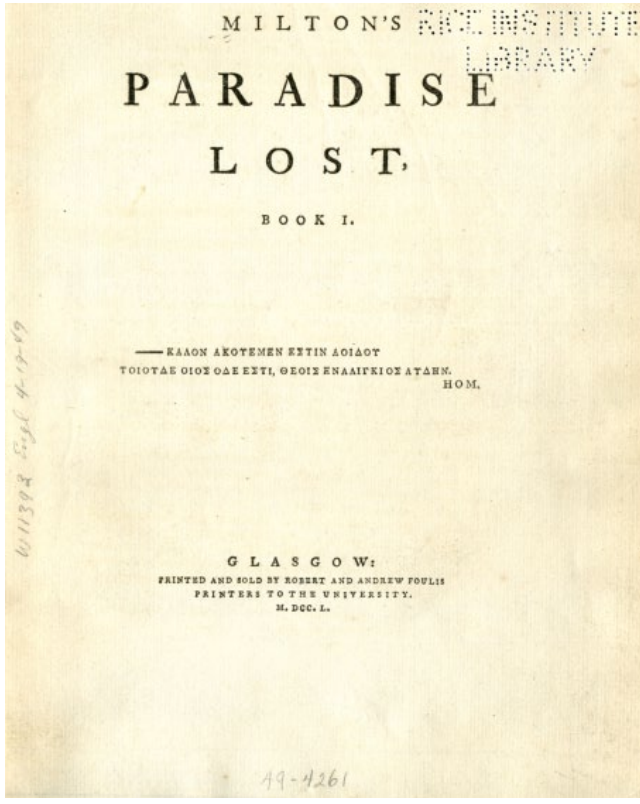


Figure 2.2 Foulis title page. Source: Used by permission of the Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.

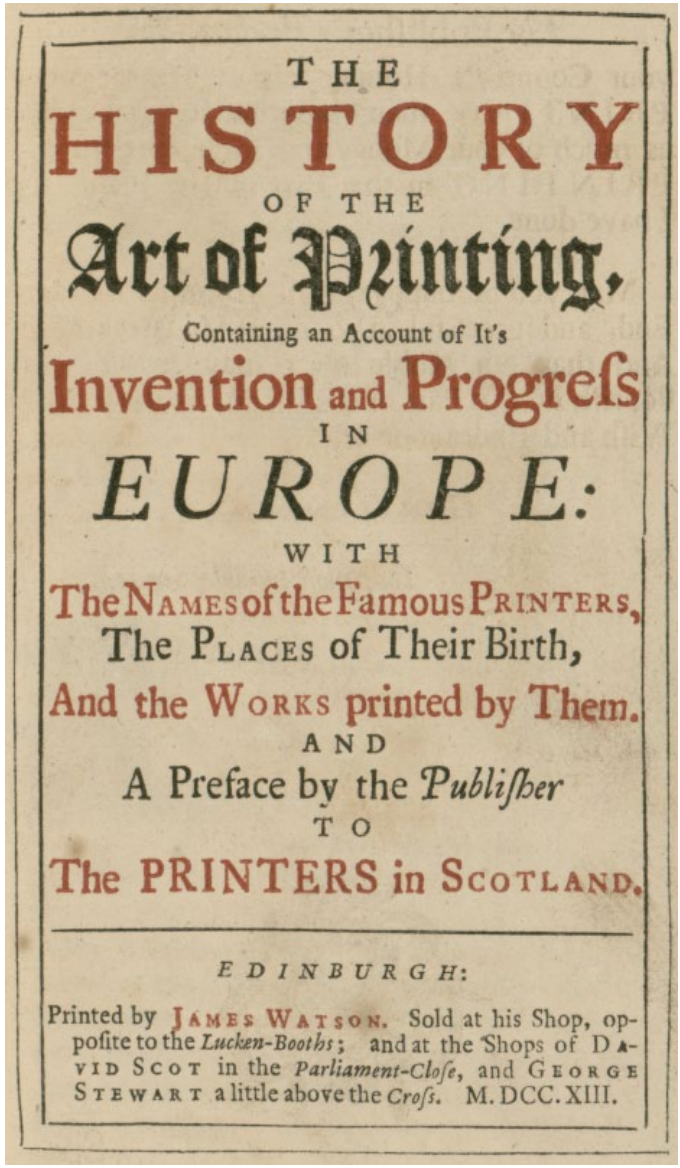
line, constituted a veritable table revolution" (1974: 100–1) (see Figure 2.2), Steinberg says.

The more abstract the printed text becomes, the less it looks as if it had passed through human hands, and consequently, as Scott McCloud argues about abstract drawings, the more available it becomes as a vehicle for identification (1998: 38–41). Physically, it comes to seem only the brainchild of a disembodied author, and, as the century wears on, it becomes even more physically detached from the author as well whose textual voice then seems to come

from no particular person located nowhere. No one nowhere is eminently appropriable, usable for readers as another "I." One can see the process of disembodiment under way. We begin with the highly personalized title page.

Below, in an early eighteenth-century title page (Figure 2.3), you can see the mixing of capital sizes in one line that Steinberg deplores. Later one finds highly standardized title pages as in Figure 2.4.

Moreover, one can see the process of abstraction through which an author and his works become more attached to a canon of classics than to the author or author's heirs. I here list the older metonymies: 1) manuscript transmission in which texts were passed from hand of writer to hand of writer/reader; 2) early eighteenth-century print practices in which printed texts were exchanged within a coterie, signaled visually by the blanks in names appearing in tables of contents of poetry miscellanies that only those in the know could fill in, and by handwritten marks that revise the printed texts; 3) the visual and verbal signs of compositors' participation in authorship which signal a text's passage through his particular hands; 4) mid-century practices up to 1774 in which one could imagine generations of hands passing texts to a bookseller whose firm had perpetual copyright. With the advent of national collections such as the 1779 *Works of the English Poets* for which Johnson wrote his prefaces, publication of textual material in sets substitutes another metonymy, this time at the reception end, for those older ones at the end of production. After the lifting of perpetual copyright,[7] canons of authors are published in series of English classics beyond Johnson's, a literary tradition made incarnate. While at the beginning of the eighteenth century Swift's *Battle of the Books* was able to make conscious calling a book by the name of an author, forging it into an ingenious conceit, by the end of the century and the beginning of the nineteenth, people begin to speak habitually of books by calling them the name of the author whose text is imprinted inside. Thus in discussing his purchase of Cooke's Edition of British poets, Leigh Hunt is typical: "I had got an odd volume of Spenser; and I fell passionately in love with Collins and Gray"

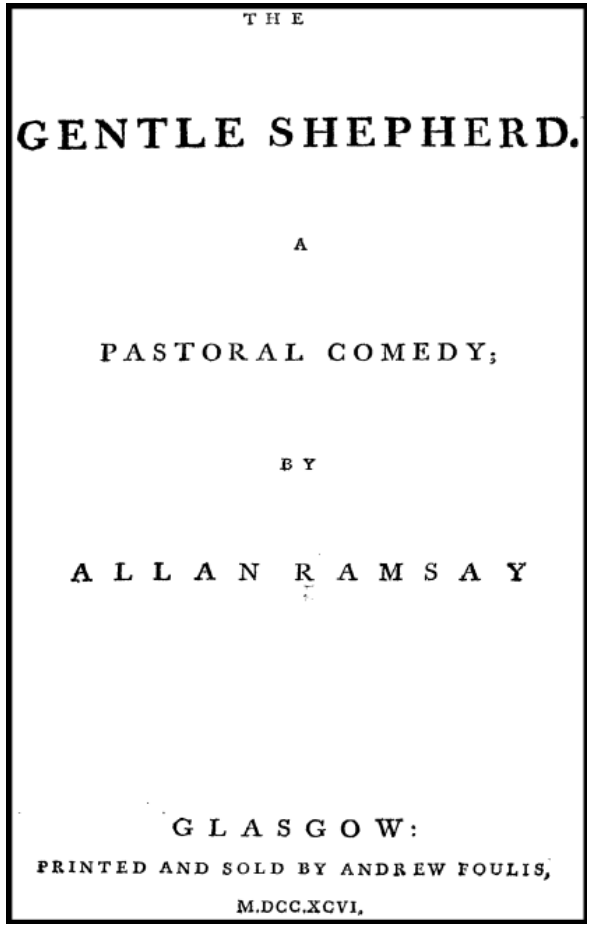


THE
HISTORY
OF THE
Art of Printing,
Containing an Account of It's
Invention and Progreſs
IN
EUROPE:
WITH
The NAMES of the Famous PRINTERS,
The PLACES of Their Birth,
And the WORKS printed by Them.
AND
A Preface by the *Publiſher*
TO
The PRINTERS in SCOTLAND.

EDINBURGH:

Printed by JAMES WATSON. Sold at his Shop, oppoſite to the *Lucken-Booths*; and at the Shops of DAVID SCOT in the *Parliament-Cloſe*, and GEORGE STEWART a little above the *Croſs*. M. DCC. XIII.

Figure 2.3 James Watson's *Art of Printing*. Source: Used by permission of the Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin.


THE

GENTLE SHEPHERD.

A

PASTORAL COMEDY;

BY

ALLAN RAMSAY

GLASGOW:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY ANDREW FOULIS,

M.DCC.XCVI.

Figure 2.4 Another Foulis title page.

(Hunt, *Autobiography* 1859, qtd. by George 2009: 250). Here Collins and Gray are indiscernibly a "volume" like "Spenser" and two people. Hunt indicates something else as well, something known to psychoanalysts: that "passionate" love can take the form of identification, or really, always involves it in some degree.

Am I arguing here that the advent of mass-printed books created a new form of internalization, that identification-love didn't exist beforehand? No. Simply that, as books became more and

more anonymously produced, more and more alienated from specific human hands, what was inside them became more and more available for identification, less bound to the processes of social interaction in which only a few people are loved and identified with, more and more available for love unhampered by the irritations and subsequent disidentifications besetting habitual interactions with real persons. There are many many modes of internalization, of carving out inner worlds, identification being only one of them (Loewald 1973: 72), and perhaps as many forms of the process of identification fostered by mass-printed books. But what makes book publishing so desirable to all the people who have ever dreamed of being a published-and-printed author—and there are many more who dream of *publishing* than those who really wish to *write* books (Lamott 1995: 13)—is the prospect of presenting oneself in one's own singularity and then being identified with by the masses, which is to say, abstracted into a form that thereby can have historical impact.

Paradoxically, the mass-printed book, like psychoanalysis itself, fosters both the opportunity for and "antidote to the typecasting of everyday modern life" (Phillips 2003: 15)—the very terms "typecasting" and "stereotyping" pointing to the origins of this modern tendency in mass print culture. Earlier, all the publishers of spiritual autobiographies hoped that their texts would save their progeny and some others from making the same mistakes as they had made; with mass publishing, those "saved" through identification could be the world, and of course the person whom one is really trying to save is oneself: whatever you think will happen when you publish, Ann Lamott says to would-be writers, it won't (1995: 14). She is addressing would-be creative writers who also would turn whatever they write into a case history of themselves, a case in both senses, legalistic and psychological: they wish to publish a self-justification of their own singularities. To hearken back to Chapter 1 (pp. 50–52) and to foreshadow this book's conclusion (pp. 158–9), these singularities fall outside the agreements obtained and secured by ordinary language about what counts as normal, and so they need to be justified.

Some early nineteenth-century literary critics are able to make explicit what may be implicit much of the time: they saw themselves as reading case histories of authors or their characters, as Freud would do a century later. One such is Isaac Disraeli who combined literary with psychological analysis in his *Calamities of Authors, Including Some Inquiries Concerning their Moral and Literary Characters* (1812). If the distinguishing feature of the case history is its "vertiginous openness to subsequent interpretation" (Wells 2003: 354), then great literature[8] provides the case history just as the case history in the hands of Freud became great literature (Forrester 1997: 244) or "applied literature" (Phillips 2003: 14).

Championing and enacting literature's "vertiginous openness to subsequent interpretation" are the literary and cultural critics populating English departments in the academy, of whom the popular, early nineteenth-century literary critic Francis Jeffrey is a progenitor, as I argue fully in Chapter 3. Jeffrey's sustained and repeated attacks on William Wordsworth were designed to "cure" him of his disease, Jeffrey says, in one among the last of his reviews of Wordsworth's works[9]:

> The case of Mr Wordsworth, we perceive, is now manifestly hopeless; and we give him up as altogether incurable, and beyond power of criticism. We cannot indeed altogether omit taking precautions now and then against the spreading of the malady;—but for himself, though we shall watch the progress of his symptoms as a matter of professional curiosity and instruction, we really think it right not to harass him any longer with nauseous remedies;—but rather to throw in cordials and lenitives, and wait in patience for the natural termination of the disorder. In order to justify this desertion of our patient, however, it is proper to state why we despair of the success of a more active practice. (Jeffrey 1814: 2; Reiman 1972: 49)

Jeffrey's vituperative treatment of Wordsworth in his reviews was belied by his personal love of Wordsworth's poetry. Walter Scott writes to George Ellis in 1810, "I'[ve] seen him weep warm tears

over Wordsworth's poetry and you know how he treats the poor Balladmaker when he is mounted into the Scorner's chair" (qtd. in Clive 157). Jeffrey's desire to identify with Wordsworth (book or person) was as powerful as was his satiric scorn. As will be argued in the next chapter, Jeffrey longed to be higher class (Clive 1957: 146)[10] as well as metropolitan in ways that Wordsworth seemed to be—Wordsworth was a gentleman of leisure observing northern primitives, whom the Scottish were sometimes imagined to be among, despite the intellectual sway of Edinburgh (Crawford 1992). Insofar as Jeffrey is entranced with Wordsworth's works—to which multiple witnesses besides Scott testified (Daniel 1942: 196; Clive 1957: 156–7)—insofar as Jeffrey is absorbed via identification, to that extent must his published disidentification from Wordsworth be violent, and we can see this interplay of identificatory love and disidentifcatory hate in much of the published literary criticism and cultural studies of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

By the time Smith writes his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, by the time Hume publishes his "Of Miracles," generations of book buyers have been bringing printed cases home to themselves. The writer of these printed cases states his or her case: though remarkable as a psychiatric case, the singularity can be justified and abstracted through readerly identification. The printed page, the copy of the case, gives readers the opportunity to identify with the sufferers of exclusion whom publishing will cure through identificatory inclusion and historical impact. To quote Smith, "we [readers] enter as it were into his [the writer's] body and become in some measure the same person with him" (1853: 4). The "as it were" of another person's body is the body of the book, of the case, of printed characters. This book body, as we have seen, has become more abstract and so more inhabitable by everyone. Printing and reading practices inflect the word "case" in a way that makes possible the modern notion of identification, understanding it as we do; they make most likely for book readers (not everyone) that certain kinds of identification will be privileged in their lives, whether among books or people.

Although creating a case history out of what one reads for purposes of identification and disidentification à la Jeffrey may not be the best way to read literature, the form of attention given to particularity via bookwork by authors and literary critics, and the bookwork done in criticism that involves thinking about the relationship between the particular and the universal, needs to be preserved. Will the literary-critical habit of focusing on the particular case that is susceptible of being universalizable be continued in the digital realm?

At first glance, it seems to be the case that quantitative literary analysis cares only to abstract general trends, and that the quantitative view of literature offers us only empirical facts, not opportunities for interpretation. That is precisely what many who work in the field of quantitative analysis believe themselves to be doing. Statistical arguments that insist upon their results as facts are deeply flawed, as Stanley Fish amply demonstrated in his attack on stylometrics over 30 years ago (1980). In an article that presumes itself to be the definitive answer to Fish's attack, J. F. Burrows, a computational linguist, quantifies literary style in a corpus of digitized novels (1992). Burrows shows us two graphs:

The first (Figure 2.5) is a graph of word frequency counts in the works of 40 novelists.

The second graph maps uses of those words by specific authors (Figure 2.6).

He points out that, if you overlay the second graph onto the first, you will find that chronologically earlier authors use the words that are less frequently found in the corpus. Burrows marks his graph with cut-off points between groups of early and late authors, and then proclaims, "My marking of the boundaries at 1760 and 1850 is neither arbitrary nor premeditated but an empirical response to the evidence as it emerged" (Burrows 1992: 191). First, as of course Fish argued earlier, Burrows's graph does not mark an "empirical response to the evidence as it emerged." The argument made by the overlay of graphs would have to be something like, relative

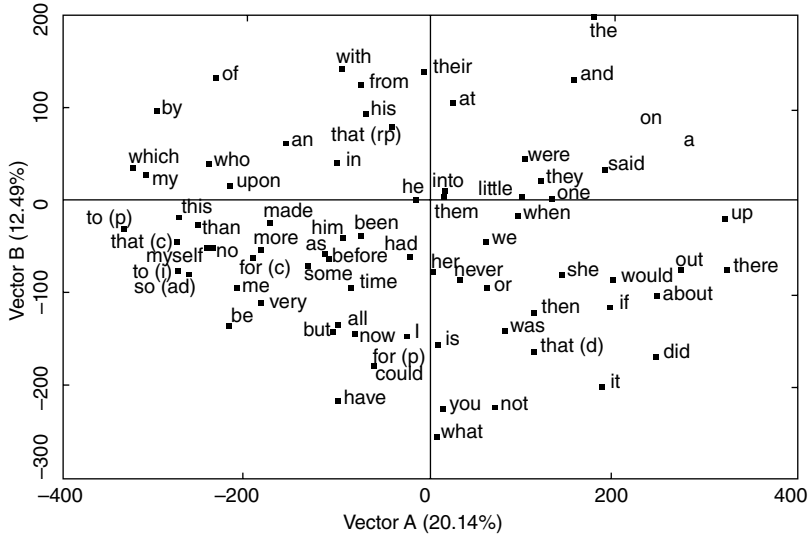


Figure 2.5 Word frequency counts, Burrows.

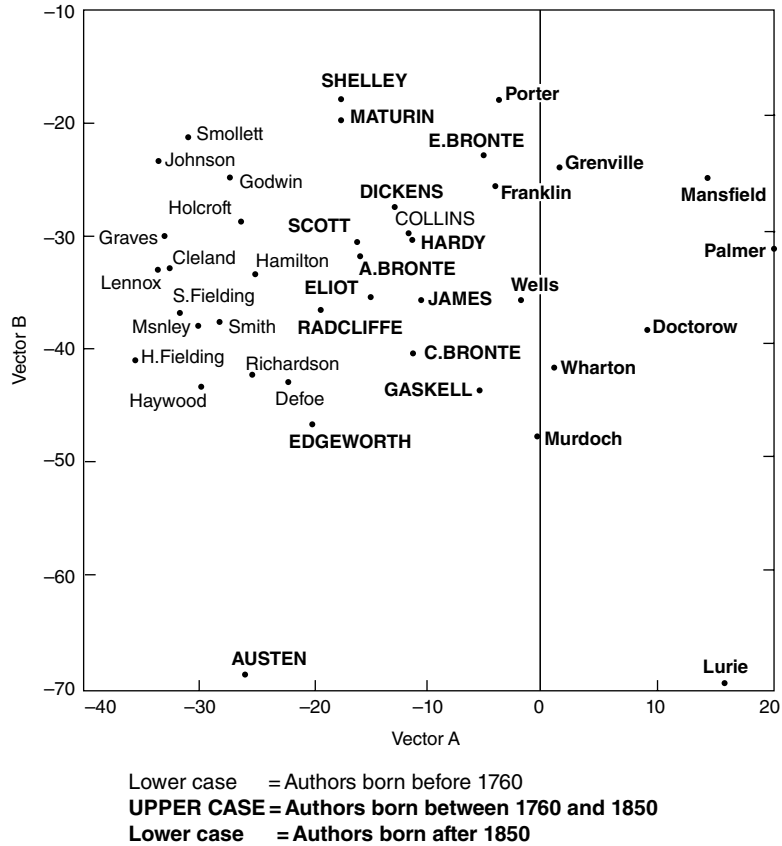


Figure 2.6 Author's uses of typical words, Burrows.

clauses are used more often early in the eighteenth century, and the words "a," "the," and "of" are used more frequently as time progresses. That fact seems plausible to me only insofar as it corroborates a truism that circulates among eighteenth-century literary scholars—of which Burrows is one. Literary critics have long talked about "a Johnsonian style" that is highly Latinate. Early eighteenth-century schooling, of which Samuel Johnson was a victim, taught Latin, not English, composition, and so when reading Johnson's essays, one often has the impression of reading a translation into English of something originally written in Latin. His early immersion in Latin made his sentences very heavy in clauses. Burrows notes some outliers in his graph: "Among the few noteworthy anachronisms, Defoe, Richardson, and Mrs. Gaskell are all 'ahead of their time'" insofar as their sentences are less clause-laden. If I were to add Mary Wollstonecraft to these graphs, she would be, in Burrows's idiom, "behind her time" because she wrote in a Johnsonian style. Defoe appears to be "ahead of his time" because he does not write in a particularly Johnsonian style, and his educational background differs from Johnson's.

There is a problem with big data as exemplified by Burrows's graphs. In order for us to determine whether the algorithms designed by computer scientists are working, these algorithms would have to return results congruent with what an expert would expect. If the results are only what is expected, then the algorithm is useless, only telling us what we already know. But there are outliers: if outliers deviate from expected knowledge, then they are potentially wrong. For instance, Defoe does not appear on the graph where he should appear, in his own time period: it might be that the number of texts written by Defoe was larger or smaller than the others, or it might be that OCR problems have skewed the results. But sometimes, just sometimes, outliers are extremely interesting. It IS interesting, isn't it, that Gaskell and Defoe appear so close together on Burrows's graph?

Outliers on graphs of big data are interesting to humanists in the way that anecdotes and cases are interesting: we care about the deviant insofar as the rules that it breaks make those rules visible. We can still care about that as long as we accept that outliers may point to skewed data, broken algorithms, or something interesting—or worse, all three at the same time. What does that mean? It means that, as Humanists, we will have to understand data structures, techniques of data massaging, and algorithms themselves in order to understand when we are seeing in our graphs, maps, and trees computer glitches and when we are seeing an individual case rearing its head majestically out of masses of data.

Notes

1 *Galateo*, by Della Casa, 1609, quoted in Elias 1978: 131.
2 Elias 1978: 133–4, quoting a letter of 1768.
3 I was led to this article by Trilling 1972: 24.
4 For an overview of the scholarship about and an analysis of the case history, see Lauren Berlant's introduction to a special issue of *Critical Inquiry* devoted to "the case" (Berlant 2007).
5 Zelmanowits 1953 refers to John Haslam's *Observations on Madness* (1798, 1809): 931–3, quoted in Leigh 1961: 96; Leigh's view is expressed on 118. For a contrary view of that assessment, see Porter, Introduction to Haslam's *Illustrations* xxvii.
6 Christopher Fox notes that Samuel Johnson is the first to speak of the psychological character (1987: 1).
7 In the case of Johnson's *Works*, changes in the law actually did more to make this project imaginable than to actually inform the contractual agreements of participating publishers. John Bell's *Poets of Great Britain* (1777) did make use of the law, printing classics no longer protected by copyright, and the *Works* of 1779–81 were partly printed in order to undermine that set (Bonnell 2008: 128).
8 By "great literature," I mean to designate the infinitely interpretable rather than the canon.

9 Jeffrey added a lengthy footnote discussing his treatment of Wordsworth to William Hazlitt's review of Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* (1817; Reiman 1972: 492–4).

10 See also the discussion of Jeffrey's relation to class on NASSR-L, the thread begun by Judith Thompson's "query re Francis Jeffrey," 19 February 2014.

3

Distributed Reading, or the Critic Filter

Around 1840, case bindings appeared on the scene, fit for mass-binding the mass print-runs produced no longer by hand-press but by steam-press: cases were fit for mechanized binding at large scale. Between 1790 and 1840, during a 50-year period, booksellers sold book blocks (journals, long pamphlets, and books) bound in paper-covered boards, usually blue or gray in color. Sometimes these bindings were meant to be temporary, but sometimes they were clearly meant to be permanent, and often the line between the two is rather blurry (Pearson 2005: 159–61). When first published in 1791, Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man*, both parts, were printed (in Paine's words) "in the modern style of printing pamphlets so that they might be bound up with Mr. Burke's Reflections on the French Revolution" (qtd. St. Clair 2004: 624). That seems to mean that the book blocks making up the *Rights of Man*, Parts I and II, were sold unbound. However, instances of J. S. Jordan's first edition of Paine's pamphlet can be found in gray paper boards with printed spines, such printing being one sign that the binding was meant to be permanent (J. E. Hill 1999). Additionally, some instances of the "very numerous" "cheap edition" printed subsequently contain evidence of having been quarter-leather bound, that is, bound with paper-covered boards and a printed calf spine (St. Clair 2004: 624;

Breaking the Book: Print Humanities in the Digital Age, First Edition. Laura Mandell.

Pearson 2005: 159, 163), this latter kind of binding, meant to be cheap and permanent.

William St. Clair has exploded the fantasy that Paine's pamphlet was printed in hundreds of thousands of copies, but, in the case of both Paine's *Rights of Man* and Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution*, to which it provided an answer, 20,000 or more copies were produced, the price falling as production escalated (St. Clair 2005: 257). What we have before us, in the argument between Burke and Paine, is, I would like to suggest, the first mass-print phenomenon.[1] It is roughly co-terminous with the advent of the quarterlies, beginning with the *Edinburgh Review* in 1802 which came to everyone bound in distinctive blue papers (Reiman, ed., 1972: A.I.56). It too was an unexpected publishing phenomenon. First published on October 10, 1802, in an edition of 750, it soon sold out and a second printing of 750 immediately followed; demand increased until over the course of its first year, 2,150 copies were printed (Clive 1957: 30–1). By 1810, the *Edinburgh Review*'s publisher Archibald Constable

> set the circulation of the *[Edinburgh] Review* at 12,000. And in September, 1814, Jeffrey wrote to Thomas Moore that "it is something to think that at least fifty thousand people read what you write in less than a month. We print now nearly 13,000 copies and may reckon, I suppose, modestly on three or four readers [per copy] of the popular articles." (Jeffrey qtd. in Clive 1957: 134)

This journal was the first mass-printed journal, as well as the first instance of modern literary criticism.

The quarterlies were distinct from the earlier magazines in content as well as binding. Earlier, the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1731 provides the first recorded instance of the use of "magazine" in its modern sense—the first appropriation of the term for "storehouse" to a periodical publication. The *Gentleman's Magazine* and others that followed it merely repackaged items printed elsewhere. The magazines were thus "'storehouses' of previously printed materials,"

until they evolved later in the century into providing not just reprintings but a "combination of summary and evaluation" (Siskin and Warner 2010: 15). The early nineteenth-century quarterlies, in contrast, advertised themselves as writing much longer articles about literary works and consequently being "selective" in their choice of books to review. Before the advent of the quarterlies, many of the later eighteenth-century magazines provided reviews that were more puffery than thoughtful analysis, each one serving the interests of a publisher who produced both the magazine and the books reviewed in it. In contrast, the quarterlies took up the position of an educated consumer, disdainfully judging what he or she reads (Ferris 1991: 20–3). The motto of the *Edinburgh Review* was *Judex damnatur cum nocens absolvitur* ("the judge is condemned when the guilty go free"; Clive 1957: 26; translated by Ferris).

Robert Crawford has argued that the Scottish cultural scene at the turn of the nineteenth century "moulded" "the university teaching of English Literature": the *Edinburgh Review* under the editorship of Francis Jeffrey, Crawford argues, had a "cultural power" in America comparable to that of the *Spectator* in Scotland (Crawford 1992: 9, 39, 198). "[T]he space of criticism," Ina Ferris says, "became less the social space of conversation and exchange among equals (its ideal figuration in the early eighteenth century) than a juridical space of judgment and discipline" (Ferris 1991: 23), hence forming, I would add, the academic space of English Literature. Ferris quotes the editorial statement included in the first issue to demonstrate the selectivity of the *Edinburgh Review*:

> [T]he editors … declined "any attempt at exhibiting a complete view of modern literature," proposing instead "to confine their notice … to works that either have attained, or deserve, a certain portion of celebrity." (Ferris 1991: 25)

Thus the "bloody reviews," Jeffrey called his own work, told consumers of cultural capital what to "buy," intellectually speaking—that is, what to valorize as good and as meriting attention and

time, precisely the program of academic English studies until the late twentieth century.

Like the school syllabi and anthologies that informed the teaching of English from the eighteenth century on (Guillory 1995), the quarterlies provided a way of filtering through massive amounts of printed material, even if they also inadvertently encouraged its production.[2] Criticism in the form of essays and anthologies, from its inception until now, filters out of the mass of literature a mere 1% of the works that have been published (Moretti 2005: 4) to serve as a canon of knowledge for the "man of erudition." The quarterlies helped to bring into existence a discipline of English literature (Crawford 1992) and its custodian critics, the "priests of high culture" (Bloom 1994). By 1828, the first English professor had been hired at University College, London (Court 1992: 53), and Margaret Fuller could say, "this age [is] emphatically critical" (1840: 5).

But given the uncertainty over the actual amount of literacy during this time (Cressy 1993), and given the reductions in numbers of printed materials adumbrated by St. Clair in the most recent comprehensive archival survey of printing records, do we really believe that there was an information explosion at this time of a magnitude that made filtering it necessary? Those living during the time certainly experienced an information explosion (Piper 2009: 1—5).

Whereas in the 1780s, collections of poetry were being produced in accordance with a fantasy of saving every bit of ephemeral publication for posterity, even as early as the 1820s, readers had been feeling the pressure of too much. The narrator Geoffrey Crayon, Gent, of Washington Irving's "Mutability of Literature: A Colloquy in Westminster Abbey," laments:

> Formerly there were restraints on [the] excessive multiplication [of literary texts]. Works had to be transcribed by hand, which was a slow and laborious operation: they were written either on parchment, which was expensive, so that one work was often erased to

> make way for another; or on papyrus, which was fragile and extremely perishable. Authorship was a limited and unprofitable craft, and pursued chiefly by monks in the leisure and solitude of their cloisters. The accumulation of manuscripts was slow and costly, and confined almost entirely to monasteries. To these circumstances it may, in some measure, be owing that we have not been inundated by the intellect of antiquity; that the fountains of thought have not been broken up, and modern genius drowned in the deluge. But the inventions of paper and the press have put an end to all these restraints. They have made every one a writer, and enabled every mind to pour itself into print, and diffuse itself over the whole intellectual world. The consequences are alarming. The stream of literature has swoln into a torrent—augmented into a river—expanded into a sea. A few centuries since, five or six hundred manuscripts constituted a great library; but what would you say to libraries, such as actually exist, containing three and four hundred thousand volumes; legions of authors at the same time busy; and the press going on with fearfully increasing activity, to double and quadruple the number? … Criticism may do much. It increases with the increase of literature, and resembles one of those salutary checks on population spoken of by economists. All possible encouragement, therefore, should be given to the growth of critics, good or bad. But I fear all will be in vain; let criticism do what it may, writers will write, printers will print, and the world will inevitably be overstocked with good books. It will soon be the employment of a life time merely to learn their names. Many a man of passable information, at the present day, reads scarcely any thing but reviews; and before long a man of erudition will be little better than a mere walking catalogue. (Irving 1820: 276–8)

Irving speaking as Crayon is overwhelmed by the "deluge" of literature, but sees criticism as a filter for "a man of information." "Men of erudition" such as English professors, who were indeed for a long time mostly men, spend a "life time" learning the names of literary texts and reading them, albeit under threat of becoming "a mere walking catalogue." Similarly, periodicals were seen as flooding the world with information. The writer of a pamphlet called *Reviewers Reviewed* (1811), Josiah Conder, lamented that yet a new

generation of periodical reviews were "pouring from the Press" (qtd. in Ferris 1991: 45; Klancher 1987: 73): "The extent of the sale of the more popular is astonishing, and their very number renders them a formidable body" (Conder 1811: 36).

Fears of deluge inspired the need for criticism, even if it added its own materials to "the stream" (Conder 1811: 36). Margaret Fuller insists that critics should function as filters, that they should be "sieves" rather than "stamps":

> [T]he critic must not be an infallible adviser to his reader. He must not tell him what books are not worth reading, or what must be thought of them when read, but what he read in them. Wo to that coterie where some critic sits despotic, intrenched behind the infallible 'We.' (Fuller 1840: 8)

Unfortunately, most reviewers did sit despotic, operating in the eyes of Conder with "shameless virulence" (Conder 1811: 3) and propagating a "reign of terror," to quote Fuller (1840: 32). These critics were able to be tyrants precisely because "intrenched behind the infallible 'We,'" as Fuller puts it, by wielding what Conder, Ferris, and Klancher have analyzed as "anonymous power" (Ferris 1991: 27; Klancher 1987: 51; Conder 1811: 69; Clive 1957: 34). That the original founders of the *Edinburgh Review* met in a printer's office to prevent their identities from being discovered (Clive 1957: 29) allegorizes the anonymity that is made possible by mass print. The position taken up by the reviewers, beginning significantly with Francis Jeffrey's review of Southey's *Thalaba* in the first issue of the *Edinburgh Review* (1802), was a position of print authority that is taken up by every literary critic who writes articles and monographs today (including this one). I will analyze this position as it emerged not from Jeffrey but from the interaction between Jeffrey and the Lake Poets. The Lake Poets were the first avant garde, as analyzed by Pierre Bourdieu in his essay "The Market in Symbolic Goods" (1971). Jeffrey built the first group that rejects the avant garde, preferring classical education, rejecting art

that will ultimately, later, be appreciated not despite but because of the critical attention it was given, no matter how negative.

It is the precise character of a critique made possible by print anonymity that I want to analyze here.[3] *I will do so by telling a story. Stories provide filters, too. In this case, mine is a filter for history, bringing into relief salient facts while ignoring others. The story I tell may be less interesting as a story than it is effective as a way of organizing large amounts of information. Although I will cite all kinds of facts, and although I believe that my own story works, it is just a story, one possible story among many that need to be told. You already knew that; I'm just making it explicit for us and wish, if possible, to prevent us from pretending otherwise, which we sometimes do in the "as if" space of literary criticism. New printed forms enabled the position of print authority; the battle between the Lake School and Scottish cosmopolitan writers perfected it; and this untrammeled and uncritical assumption of print authority will drive the discipline of English literature into the ground if we let it, the tale I will now tell.*

The *Edinburgh Review* came to its readership, predominantly middle-class, in distinctively blue paper covers (Reiman, ed., 1972: A.I.56) which could have been rebound but also themselves served as a mark of distinction: one could see it immediately on the shelf or in the hand of the reader. Rebinding didn't indicate class in ways that have previously been thought: that is, even "bespoke" bindings as opposed to the trade bindings provided by booksellers at point of sale were more determined by the binding fashions of the day than by any customer's class or status. Currently also on the shelves of readers were the similarly bound books of Bell's and the similarly wrapped books of Cook's classics (George 2009: 250). Bell's *The Poets of Great Britain*, serialized and low cost, were bound by Bell who was an innovator in binding, having in the 1780s "devised a small pallet to hold the type used for lettering spines" which made that lettering regular and evenly lined (Bonnell 2008: 128). By the end of the eighteenth century, bindings no longer provided a clue to the time of a book's purchase via binding fashions or of a book's owner, as when an entire library was rebound for uniformity. Instead, the classics were bound similarly; they

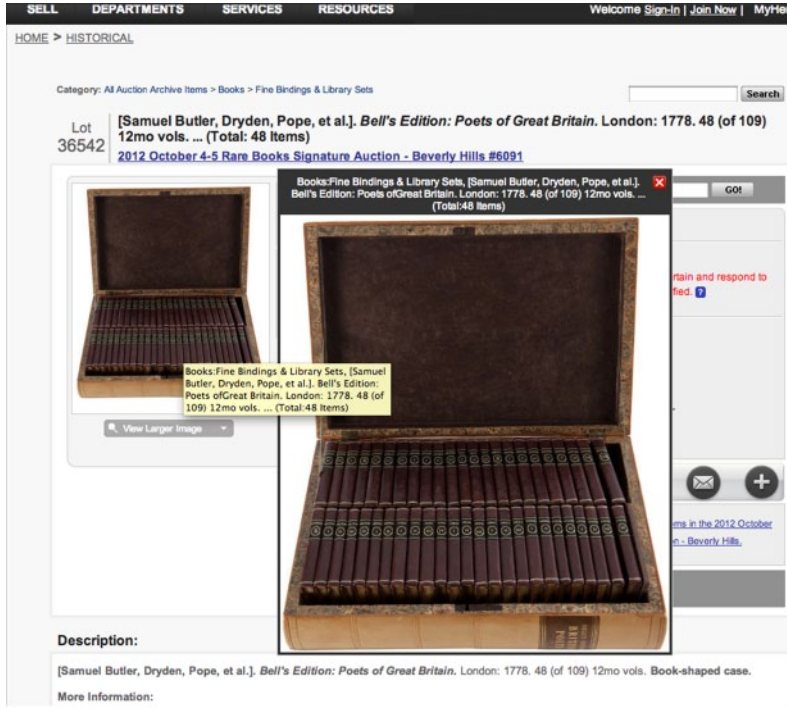


Figure 3.1 Bell's book box, for traveling.

looked the same and contained on their spines even and uniform lettering that stated an author's surname or a short title. In this way, the English "classics" which were being sold already bound at a prodigious rate in the early nineteenth century (Condor 1811: 9) were tactilely and visually de-contextualized from a specific historical moment and re-contextualized as tradition.

The blue-covered *Edinburgh Review* provided a guide to these uniformly bound and lettered collections, sometimes even boxed (Figure 3.1), as well as an indication of the next great poets that would be forthcoming in the series. The *Edinburgh Review*'s anonymous and highly paid contributors formed a class of professional commentators virtually directing canon creation. What sold them so well, and the classics along with and because of them, if Conder

is to be believed, was that each article was written from a position of the anonymous and implicit "we," a position that I will call one of print authority. This position was forged not out of the voice of the critics, nor the eloquence of one great man such as Francis Jeffrey, but out of the antagonism between the new and traditional classics that Jeffrey, John Wilson, and the Lake School (Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge) collectively forged.

Bound, book blocks became more like bricks; mass-printed, they were lobbed at people by hands unknown. They were ideal weapons in class warfare because of that anonymity. The quarterlies, whose critics were the first professionals at criticism, paid as such, were able to hollow out a new intellectual class serving and educating the middle class and possessing cultural capital as allegedly immaterial wealth. One can see how and why, personally, Jeffrey in particular and the Scottish intellectuals writing for the quarterlies in general, bore particular class and nationalistic animus for William Wordsworth, the central "Laker." As Clive tells us, Jeffrey was a poor lawyer locked out of political power and consequently impoverished:

> The legal profession at the turn of the century no longer constituted enough of a source of income or advancement for able and ambitious men on the wrong side of the political fence … [*The Edinburgh Review*] might never have been begun had its projectors not shared a feeling of discontent with their professional life in Edinburgh. (Clive 1957: 27)

In contrast to impoverished professionals, Wordsworth was aristocratic in style if not exactly in means. But his style is what mattered more to Jeffrey and later John Wilson because it included in it an implicit assertion of national as well as class superiority. Wordsworth exiled himself from the metropole to live in the north, and Jeffrey—like Lewis Carroll later, as evinced by his parody of Wordsworth's "Resolution and Independence," Carroll's "The White Knight's Song"—sensed the condescension in that move that has been best articulated by David Simpson. If Wordsworth didn't quite say that

he moved to the Lakes to mingle with the primitives, he objectified the United Kingdom's northern inhabitants: as Simpson puts it, the "physical and emotional freedom" championed by Wordsworth "is at a maximum for the beholder [i.e., Wordsworth] in possession of a trust fund, not for the rural owner-occupier," the object of Wordsworth's poetry (Simpson 1999: 260). Here Wordsworth exemplifies both class and interior colonial bias: one can see Jeffrey bristling at the implication of Wordsworth's observations of "the rustics" of the Lakes, the implication that northerners are primarily rural, just at the moment when the highly sophisticated literati of Edinburgh were engaged in developing a notion of British literature, in refusing to allow the subsumption of literature per se under the banner of Englishness (Crawford 1992: 9). One can almost hear Jeffrey cackling as he wrote his reviews of Wordsworth's work: you think that the Scottish could not be cosmopolitan? I'll show you who is erudite, and enjoy the pleasure of humiliating you in the process. A parodist of the ER, John Ring, confirms my suspicion of nationalist animus, and himself provokes it, in his pamphlet *The Beauties of the Edingburgh Review, alias the Stinkpot of Literature* where he compares less successful English to the more successful Scottish reviewers:

> Our English reviewers are rather shortsighted when they cannot discover the reason why their northern brethren make war upon the whole tribe of authors, and mangle them for the amusement of the public. They are not so stupid, but they know, that authors in general have *more wit* than money; and that the readers of *their Review* have in general *more money than wit*. (Ring 1807: 4, qtd. in Clive 1957: 52)

The joke plays on the stereotype of Scottish over-concern with money, but also gives a backhanded compliment insofar as it acknowledges the immense popularity of the ER: it was selling to the mercantile and middling classes: "No genteel family *can* pretend to be without it," wrote Walter Scott of the *Edinburgh Review* in a letter dated 1808 (qtd. in Clive 1957: 135).

Demonstrating the possibility that Francis Jeffrey was indeed reacting against the Lake Poets for the interior colonialism of their style and subject, Jeffrey says in a letter to Francis Horner written on May 11, 1803: "The main object of every one of us [in producing the ER], I understand to be, our own amusement and improvement—joined with the gratification of some personal, and some national, vanity" (qtd. in Clive 1957: 43). Class played into the personal. John Clive notices that Jeffrey attacks "country gentlemen" for not reading, the upper classes for their "despotic tendencies," and even the "middling or humbler classes of the community" for their vulgarity and ambition to rise in status, despite the fact that Jeffrey believed them to be "that great portion of [the ER's] readers" (Jeffrey 1812: 279; qtd. in Clive 1957: 142). Clive notices "a curious ambivalence" in Jeffrey's attitude toward class: "I have associated, too, a good deal of late with men of high rank, prospects, and pretensions, and feel myself quite upon a level with them, in everything intrinsic and material," Jeffrey writes to his brother in 1800 (qtd. in Clive 1957: 146). Clive offers an American visitor's letter as evidence of Jeffrey's "excessively destructive proclivities to social"—and we might add, national—"insecurity." Henry Brevoort writes to Washington Irving in 1813,

> [Jeffrey's] foible is an unceasing effort to act the high finished gentleman, consequently he is blessed with such an immaculate degree of taste as to contemn every thing in the whole world both moral and physical. (qtd. in Clive 1957: 146, n. 2)

This letter might hint at its author's own foible, a highly colonialist sense of mimicry, as well as his highly tuned sense of status: Jeffrey "acts" but is not a gentleman.

Although I imagine Jeffrey's class and anti-colonialist animus for Wordsworth and the Lake School, John Wilson's anonymous attack on Wordsworth leaves nothing to the imagination. Wilson reviews Wordsworth's letter to Scottish intellectual James Gray that

Wordsworth published in 1816 as *Letter to a Friend of Robert Burns* (Owen and Smyser 1974: 3.111–36). Wordsworth wrote a letter to Gray who had come to visit him in the Lakes and described the attempts of Robert Burns's brother, Gilbert, to write a memoir of his deceased famous sibling. Wordsworth's letter advised Gilbert Burns concerning how to defend his brother's reputation, and, in the process, Wordsworth attacked Robert Burns's biographer James Currie for injuring Burns's reputation and Francis Jeffrey ostensibly for the same. Wordsworth published the letter, and it struck John Wilson and presumably the Scottish literati as so "pompous" (Wilson 1817: 262) as to itself require an anonymous review in one of the new generation of quarterlies, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Review*.

Wilson tries valiantly to expose and thus unseat Wordsworth's "presumption" of cultural superiority: Wordsworth advises the Scottish publishers to do what they had already decided to do, telling them that Gilbert Burns was qualified to write the memoir, as if they might be waiting for an act of approbation from an English writer:

> What was Mr Wordsworth dreaming about? All this [Gilbert's writing of the memoir] was fixed long ago;—there was no need of any recommendation from [Wordsworth]. What would he think of the understanding of a correspondent who should recommend *to him to go on with his Poem, the Recluse,* and who at the same time gave him advice how to write it.

Wordsworth's assumption of cultural superiority in advising the Scottish in how to defend a poet of national importance is an example of Lyotard's notion of the differend: the position of speaking is what speaks volumes and what cannot easily be addressed, though Wilson does a good job of it here. That Wilson senses the positioning to be one of distinctively *cultural* superiority is laid out at the beginning of Wilson's response:

> [W]hat peculiarly fits Mr Wordsworth to give advice on the subject? He has never lived in Scotland,—he very imperfectly

> undersands the language in which Burns writes, —he has not even read those publications which are supposed to be unjust to [Burns's] memory;—yet, in the midst of all this portentous ignorance,—and in the face of these manifest disqualifications,—he has the effrontery to offer advice to Gilbert Burns … . (Wilson 1817: 262)

Wilson lays bare Wordsworth's colonialist assumptions in writing the letter: I, the English writer, know better than you provincials, despite insuperable distance from your context.

Wilson then responds to what he calls Wordsworth's "philippic against the Edinburgh Review" (Wilson 1817: 263):

> Mr Wordsworth … , with the voice and countenance of a maniac, fixes his teeth in the blue cover of the Edinburgh. He growls over it—shakes it violently to and fro—and at last … leaves it covered over with the driveling slaver of his impotent rage. (Wilson 1817: 265)

Wilson defends the ER on class grounds, again, hollowing out in the process a place for an intellectual class in which the quarterlies in general and the ER and its editor Jeffrey in particular would be superior to any leader of an upstart poetic school:

> We shall not disgrace our pages with any portion of the low and vulgar abuse which the enraged poet heaps upon the Editor of the Edinburgh Review … [W]ith the exception of some poetical genius, he is, in all respects, immeasurably inferior, as an intellectual being, to the distinguished person whom he so foolishly libels. We wish to have done with this lyrical ballad-monger. (Wilson 1817: 265–6)

Notice Wilson pointing out Wordsworth's "poetical genius" in a passage designed to denigrate him in relation to Jeffrey: the Lake School was, perhaps, the first avant garde school properly speaking in the history of literature. It is one of the functions of wielders and custodians of cultural capital, especially the professoriate, to

pronounce upon what counts as avant garde and to themselves guard tradition against upstart incursions that could be mistaken for true art. Critics have noticed how odd was the unwillingness of the ER to legitimate the Lake School, despite the "genuine admiration" for them that Jeffrey revealed privately (Daniel 1942: 200). I'm suggesting here that the motive was not personal but class-based, nationalistic, and anti-colonialist.

Whatever the motive, Jeffrey's first attack on the Lake School in his review of Robert Southey's *Thalaba* was instantly popular, successful beyond his or his collaborator's hopes and imaginings. Why would readers of the middling classes so appreciate the ER staking out a superior, intellectual class in order to outclass the Lakers?

Wordsworth and we also have been misled slightly by his own insistence the poetry is "a man speaking to men" insofar as we together imagine that to be a democratic move. At this moment, members of the emerging middle class and even literate members of the serving classes were becoming authors. The wildly popular Della Cruscan movement (McGann 1996) illustrates that the poetic diction that the Lake School wished to eradicate was very popular. Highly wrought poetry is in fact easy for those who are not well read to imitate. Susannah Hawkins, for instance, the "wandering" Scottish "poetess" who sold her poetry door to door, found high poetic diction to be a medium most congenial: "When nature openeth her arms, / And smiling shews her beauteous charms," etc. She wrote not as a rustic but as a poet because stylistically the poetic diction that Wordsworth condemns is easy to absorb and learn without requiring the large amounts of reading and study unavailable to those of the laboring classes—quickly reading anthologies would do. In terms of class, then, Wordsworth and the Lake School changed the rules about how to write as a poet during the very moment when, with the spread of literacy, writing poetry was becoming easier for people of all classes to do.

Readers of the *Edinburgh Review* could have identified with Jeffrey's attack on the Lake School insofar as Southey, Wordsworth, and

Coleridge were perceived to be high culture and elitist. And again, Wordsworth's position in relation to the "occupier-owners" of the Lake country he observed was one of the material superiority of one with a trust fund, his rhetorical self-positioning resembling that which Wilson calls him out for in relation to Scotland. Whatever the public opinion of Wordsworth, the particular enjoyment that middle-class readers received in reading "the consummate satirist," as Wilson dubs Jeffrey (Wilson 1817: 265), definitely involved watching him take the Lake School down a notch by proclaiming superior that middle-class knowledge of the classics learned in school (and being imparted by Jeffrey in the very process of his attacks). Jeffrey's contemporary Josiah Conder, bookseller and later editor of the *Eclectic Review* (Ferris 1991: 26; Boase 2004), analyzed the relationship between Jeffrey and his readers:

> The talents of a Critic soon came to be estimated by his severity, and the popularity of a Review to depend on its shameless virulence. Month after month the priests of Criticism amused the enlightened public with their Mexican sacrifices. Piety and worthlessness, dullness and genius were alike attacked; and nobody enquired who it was that they were hurrying away to premature oblivion. The public laughed and purchased; and the Reviewer enjoyed his triumph and his gains. (Conder 1811: 3–4)

High-culture priests distribute readerly attention, acting as a filter for them by "hurrying [literary works] away to premature oblivion." The public's "laugh" accompanies the critic's "triumph" over the writer reviewed. The "purpose" of Conder's pamphlet *Reviewer's Reviewed* is

> to remark the fondness which readers discover for these *public games*. "Only make us laugh," is the tacit compact which is made with the Critic; "we will not then oppose your decisions, we will wink at your principles, and credit your assertions." (Conder 1811: 23)

As a participant in games of humiliation, the reader identified with the critic and laughed at his prey, adopting and legitimating in the process the education in taste offered by the quarterlies.

These jousts in humiliation, in Conder's analysis, have a leveling effect:

> [T]he manner in which [the Reviews] exhibit the imperfections and failures of the most eminent talents, has the effect of lowering them (as it were) to the same level of faultiness, on which lesser minds may take their stand.

Conder blames the critics for the "increasing number of worthless publications" as a direct effect of this leveling:

> By destroying that feeling of deference which is due to mental superiority, they have removed a wholesome check in the presumption of literary pretenders. (Conder 1811: 32)

Whether Conder's contention is true, whether the quarterlies did encourage a stream of publications of "incorrigible … dullness," his fantasy is that the quarterlies enable its readers to become writers like the critics themselves. This fantasy reveals the object of readers' identification: it is not with the authors who are being attacked, but with the attacker whom they are led to believe is a) culturally better than elite writers, and b) a stand-in for themselves, a middle-class David taking aim at a Goliath elite.

In "A Short Essay on Critics," Margaret Fuller fully captures the attractions of identifying with such a position. These critics who "state their impressions as they rise, of other men's spoken, written, or acted thoughts"

> never dream that there are statures which cannot be measured from their point of view … [T]he book is detestable, immoral, absurd, or admirable, noble, of a most approved scope; —these statements they make with authority … To them it seems that their present position commands the universe. (Fuller 1840: 5)

The critic's stance is one of omniscient authority; in fact, it is the stance of objectivity claimed by science, which is, as John Forrester puts it, "one of the most seductive and persuasive ideals of our

time" (Forrester 1997: 246). And in fact, colonialist superiority aside, Wordsworth's point in writing and publishing the *Letter to a Friend of Robert Burns* is to declare unhealthy for readers their identification with critics of writers who are

> eager to sit in judgment, and pronounce *decidedly* upon the guilt or innocence of Burns … [T]here were multitudes whose main interest in the allegations would be derived from the incitements which they found therein to undertake this presumptuous office [of omniscient Judge]. And where lies the collateral beneft … to counteract the injury that the many are thus tempted to do to their own minds …. (Wordsworth 1816: 119)

Judging people as opposed to reading their works gratifies according to Conder "the envious and malevolent passions" typifying "the spirit of the day," but it does real "injury" to one's own mind, in Wordsworth's view.

This criticism in which the reader identifies with the "presumptuous office" of the judge has a generic precedent: satire (Conder 1811: 3): although the *Edinburgh Review*, Conder says, owes "its ascendancy" to talent, it also rose to the top because of "the boldness and bitterness of its satire" (23). However, there is a profound and disturbing difference between the satiric persona of Augustan, coterie print satire and the satire of the mass-printed codex, with bindings that though ostensibly temporary were strong enough to withstand a dog shaking the book "violently to and fro" and still leaving the book unbroken, in tact, albeit covered all over with the "driveling slaver of impotent rage" (Wilson 1817: 265, quoted above).

In the preceding chapter, I discussed the book becoming more and more abstract—less like handiwork—via the modernizing of title pages beginning with the Foulis brothers, as well as the book's progressively larger alienation from the hand of the author as the century progressed. Paradoxically, such alienation *diminishes* critical distance for both reader and writer, and I will now explain why. As book historians have long noticed, print did not replace

manuscripts during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries so much as there was a meeting between print and scribal culture. The practices of Alexander Pope are illustrative of the interacting media. If one reads carefully David Foxon's book *Pope and the Early Eighteenth-Century Book Trade*, one notices that Pope treated printed copy as just another set of foul papers, correcting it and demanding even major changes: printers begged him, Foxon tells us, to stop using their print runs that way (Foxon 1991: 22). An interesting fact is related by Foxon that I will interpret: Pope's editions of his own translations of Homer's *Iliad* were less correct in the expensive, ornamented edition, designed for Pope's aristocratic audience, because run first and corrected, than they were in the cheaper editions (154). Clearly Pope didn't expect his middling or professional readers to be able to make corrections, but he did believe that his aristocratic audience would and should hand-correct the text, that it didn't decrease the value of these more luxurious editions in any way, but added to it if changes were made in the printed volumes *by hand* (64–7). He presumed, I would argue, that spelling and other kinds of mechanical errors were less important to readers of higher status because they would be making changes in his translation anyway. All readers of a certain class, for Pope, are potential editors, correctors, which is why Pope applied himself to "edit" Shakespeare by changing Shakespeare's texts. As Lewis Theobald pointed out, Pope "improved" these texts: he 1) improved the versification ("too nice a Regard must not be had to the Numbers of Shakespeare," Theobald writes, admonishing Pope for his changes, and 2) replaced obsolete words (Pope's text "is a Reading adopted, [...] either from a Want of Understanding of the Poet's genuine Words, or on a Supposition of their being too stiff and obsolete," Theobald 1726: 7). Pope's expectations, whether he circulated his works in manuscript or print, is that the gentlemen readers would provide what Margaret Ezell calls a "critical readership": Pope corrected and changed his texts throughout his career, both his manuscript and printed texts (Ezell 1999: 66, 81), imagining print to be as malleable as were manuscripts.

In the era of coterie printing with small print runs, then, printed books were circulated with the same expectation as manuscripts: educated, elite readers would write in them, correct them, modify them. Such practices instilled a critical distance from the writer of satire, let alone the satiric persona. Adding to that distance, the satirist was deliberately crafted by Swift and Pope to be humorously satirizable itself (Bogel 2001). Maynard Mack has analyzed the satiric persona in small print-run Augustan satire, one of its personalities being the *vir bonus*, the one good man (Mack: 1951: 87–8). Alvin Kernan points out that the "violent indignation is, of course, somewhat at variance with the pose of the mild, honest man," and in fact, ultimately reveals "a darker side to his nature":

> As a result of his violent attacks on vice he acquires a number of unpleasant characteristics which make suspect his pose of a simple lover of plain truth…. At times the satirist will … appear pathological in his unending revelations of human nastiness and his paraded disgust with the ordure of the world …. [H]e seems always to be seeking out and thoroughly enjoying the kind of filth which he claims to be attacking … [T]he very violence of his denunciations proclaims him equally [as] unreasonable and intemperate

as the vicious person whom he satirizes (Kernan 1959: 14–18). That the satirist himself is being satirized is evident in Swift's Gulliver, but especially so in his dressing-room poems where the "embrown'd" Strephon attacks Celia because she shits. And, in the case of Pope, Katherine Mannheimer discusses the

> phenomenon of the exposer who, in the very act of exposing, leaves himself open to exposure … [The] speaker [of Pope's *Sober Advice from Horace*], after inspecting bared female bodies for line upon line, finds himself reduced to a humiliated "Me, naked me." (2011: 85)

Readers who attempt to take these satiric personae seriously are themselves inadvertently self-satirized. Thus Claude Rawson takes

the moral of *Gulliver's Travels* to be "the yawning failure of men to live like angels" (Rawson 1983: 48), but Swift's actual story forces upon this moral substituting "horses" for "angels," changing it into "the yawning failure of men to live like horses"—hardly fodder for serious lament. Rawson, like Gulliver at the end of *Gulliver's Travels*, is being satirized. The critical distance of readers to the texts they received in order to correct, be it in print or manuscript, is mirrored in the distance between the author of satire and his satiric persona.

The quarterlies revitalized satiric pleasures, but, in criticism, any notion of a satiric persona, of critical distance for both reader and writer, is foreclosed in two ways: first, in content, and second, in media. Jeffrey set the style and manner of this new vituperative, shaming kind of review, deliberately collapsing the distance between himself and his readers by inviting identification with the speaker of each review, the satirist, imagined to be "the journal" with cultural authority. I am here disagreeing with Jon Klancher, who sees the quarterlies' anonymous author "institutionally set apart" from its readers (Klancher 1987: 48): Klancher is right in my view, and the view of Ina Ferris, to say that "the journal represented itself as an institution blending writers, editor, and publisher in what could only appear to be an essentially authorless text" (51; qtd. in Ferris 1991: 27; Conder 1811: 36, 69). However, I argue that readers closely identified with that anonymous, objective subject position occupied seemingly by the journal itself. Conder describes Jeffrey's effects on readers:

> It is by the powerful magic of [Jeffrey's] words, … that the reader is impelled to yield up his opinions and his feelings; and for a while to identify himself with another mind by submissive sympathy. (Conder 1811: 63)

Readers identified even more completely with anonymous authors. That "powerful magic" inducing "submissive sympathy" was not due, as Conder imagines, to Jeffrey's "eloquence" alone: rather it came from his capacity to assume a position at this very moment

coming to seem "objective" (Daston and Galison 2007) in the modern sense—again, Forrester, the most persuasive and seductive position of our time—through both content and medium, which I shall discuss in turn.

Content

As satirist, Jeffrey assumed the stance of an anatomist seeking a cure for the body's ills. Jeffrey was seen as a "literary anatomist" (Conder 1811: 5), and indeed he saw himself as seeking a "cure" for *class* ills, aristocrats who didn't read, middle-class readers who didn't understand, and neither therefore being "corrected" by literature as they should (ER 28 [July 1809], 7, qtd. in Clive 1957: 145). "Anatomy" is in the seventeenth century another name for satire, and the trope involves anatomizing an ailing social body; but at a moment when mental illness was becoming scientized—the birth of psychiatry as a discipline often marked by John Haslam's *Observations on Madness* of 1798, 1809, which includes descriptions of anatomized brains—it also names a "stance of implicit knowingness" (Klancher 1987: 69). The anatomist is Fuller's commandeer of the universe. Moreover, Jeffrey is usefully contrasted with what F.V. Bogel calls the narrator of Samuel Johnson's *Lives of the English Poets* published a generation earlier. One can see in Johnson's *Life of Savage*, Bogel says, "the narrator's refusal to distinguish himself categorically from his subject":

> Johnson was alert to the ways in which the act of quotation may compromise the quoter, or, to put it more generally, to the possibility that a conventional sign like quotation marks may only imperfectly inhibit a leakage between categories such as utterance and quotation, use and mention. (Bogel 1990: 18–19)

"Johnson refuses," Bogel insists, precisely "the stance of univocal authority" that Jeffrey and the quarterlies in general took up: as

Klancher puts it, "the quarterly review at every point situates its reader"—along with itself!—atop a simulacrum of social order, turning nearly any subject into an intellectual surveryor's social map" (Klancher 1987: 69). It is precisely because it positioned itself at the apogee of class warfare that the periodical narrator was able to avoid the satirist persona's self-satirizing, Johnson's leakage: that is, it was thanks to its capacity to completely passivate the impoverished wit—the readers' willingness to jeer at the utter humiliation of the avant garde—that Jeffrey and the quarterlies could adopt universal, univocal authority.

The most notorious and exemplary instance of Jeffrey setting himself up as objective speaker in whose objectivity a reader might trust occurs in his review of Wordsworth's *Excursion* (quoted above in discussing case histories):

> The case of Mr. Wordsworth, we perceive, is now manifestly hopeless; and we give him up as altogether incurable, and beyond the power of criticism. We cannot indeed altogether omit taking precautions now and then against the spreading of the malady;—but for himself, though we shall watch the progress of his symptoms as a matter of professional curiosity and instruction, we really think it right not to harass him any longer with nauseous remedies,—but rather to throw in cordials and lenitives, and wait in patience for the natural termination of the disorder. In order to justify this desertion of our patient, however, it is proper to state why we despair of the success of a more active practice. (Jeffrey 1814: 2)

Jeffrey takes the stance of a doctor to a patient: the disease informing the case will take its course; the understanding of such-and-such a work will out, for any intelligent person; literary value objectively exists and will be seen, eventually. While objectivity is itself "seductive," as Forrester insists, what causes readerly identification with this position?

The first literary review that took the world of early nineteenth-century British culture by storm was Jeffrey's review of Southey's *Thalaba*, in which he attacks Southey and Wordsworth, and it is

very subtly constructed: Jeffrey begins writing *to* readers and then slides imperceptibly into speaking *as* them. In the opening line of this review, Jeffrey issues an edict: "Poetry has this much, at least, in common with religion, that its standards were fixed long ago, by certain inspired writers, whose authority it is no longer lawful to call into question; and that many profess to be devoted to it, who have no *good works* to produce in support of their profession" (Jeffrey 1802: 63). Jane Austen issues edicts like critics, in that same authoritative tone, but she wraps them in irony in order to give her readers some of the critical distance that I have been pointing to in satire, where the psychology of the speaker of the truth is called into question: "It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife" (*Pride and Prejudice* 1813, opening line); the content of this pronouncement highlights its faux-universality. Not so Jeffrey, though clearly he is uttering a truth that, as he will go on to show, is inimical to the "*sect* of poets" whose works he reviews. Part of what makes his edict so welcome is that he is countering an almost moralistic imperative issued by Southey himself concerning his own poem, which Jeffrey quotes and then comments upon: "the dullest reader," Southey says, "cannot distort [*Thalaba*] into discord: he may read it with a *prose mouth*, but its flow and fall will still be perceptible." Jeffrey answers by offering some passages from *Thalaba* by way of experiment, which he introduces by saying, "We are afraid, there are duller readers in the world than Mr. Southey is aware of" (Jeffrey 1802: 73). Here, finally, is irony, brought home by full-blown satiric attack at the end of the quoted passages: "Mr. Southey must excuse us for doubting, whether even a *poet's mouth* could turn these passages into good verse; and we are afraid, the greater part of his readers will participate in our skepticism." The reader's investment in being part of Jeffrey's "our" is fueled by the play of seriousness and irony: the reader is flattered as intelligent by being able to tell when Jeffrey is being serious and when snide. As Conder says about passages such as these, "The reader laughed, and purchased": Conder means purchased the journal, but they are of

course buying into the legitimacy of Jeffrey's stance as well. That is, they identify with Jeffrey whether they agree with his criticism or not—and there is plenty of evidence that they did not agree by and large, from Jeffrey himself, who laments that he had warned readers against *Lyrical Ballads* which nonetheless sold well (Jeffrey 1807: 214–15).

There is another way that Jeffrey accomplishes his imperceptible slide between talking to the reader and uttering the reader's own sentiments: his sentences are of the same sort as Austen's when she slides into free indirect discourse. Jeffrey says, "Every combination of different measures [in Southey's stanzas] is apt to perplex and disturb the reader who is not familiar with it; and we are never reconciled to a stanza of new structure, till we have accustomed our ear to it by two or three repetitions" (1802: 72). "The reader" in the first part of the sentence becomes "we" in the second. There are innumerable instances of this version of free indirect discourse—it might be called "freely all-encompassing discourse"—in his criticism, a practice establishing and shoring up readerly identification with a satirist whose own position remains thereby uncontaminated by the process of attack, unlike the Augustan satiric persona. That is, no one notices that Jeffrey's opening sentence, "the standards of poetry were fixed long ago," is said by a person who could be wrong and who is telling us something about himself (self-ironizing) in the process of making the statement. The voice of this statement seems to be of everyone from everywhere.

Medium

It seems as if Jeffrey is failing at a genre, the genre of satire—failing to understand how satire works in the way that Pope and Swift understood it. And yet this failure is precisely afforded by mass print. The mass-printed word is anonymous, detached from any merely mortal hand and context, mass distributed and so now living a life of its own completely independently of its origins.

Because the reader does not know them personally, critics need not fear being scrutinized as similar to what they attack. Anonymous writers need have no ironic distance from themselves. When Jeffrey intones, "This will never do," no particular persona speaks; the objective stance of the printed book itself speaks, its tones echoing in eternity because physically unheard and distributed far and wide enough that no mere accident to matter will erase its edicts. The mass-printed book is virtually immaterial and practically speaking immortal. The reader is persuaded and seduced, per Forrester, into identifying with an unassailable objectivity, seduced by the sadistic pleasure of attacking others who are made to look small in comparison.

I move now to contemporary literary criticism, to examining the alleged disembodiedness of the critic's voice from everywhere, as if speaking for everyone, as it occurs in what I have called, in a letter to the *London Review of Books*, the criticism of moral one-upmanship and rename here "the criticism of moral condescension."

There is a form of the review essay as exemplified by Hal Foster's "Slumming with Rappers at the Roxy" in the *London Review of Books* (2000). This kind of essay pretends to politicize academic discourse by exposing those scholars who have equated their own little academic world, the study of literature and culture, with "the Universe" (as Foster puts it). In politically charged moments, the review-essay critics believe themselves to be sanitizing academic discourse by recognizing its political limits. Although it may ultimately derive from some other sources, the "politicizing" exposure of scholarly limitations as enacted in the newer review essays was a staple of New Historicist criticism written in the field of Romantic Studies during the 1980s and early 1990s. Romantic New Historicists typically attacked other literary scholars for aestheticizing and thereby ideologically whitewashing the real problems of real people in real history. The legacy of that kind of criticism is problematic.

Writing a review of John Seabrook's *Nobrow*, Foster says, "Seabrook needs to get around more; his fieldwork doesn't take

him far enough from home … Yes, there are now ten million households with $100,000-plus incomes in the US alone, but half of the people on this planet have never used a telephone." One gets the sense that this charge might be a generic element rather than a point about a specific book upon noticing its appearance in other recent review essays that invoke a forgotten political reality — for instance, in two reviews in *The London Review of Books* by Terry Eagleton (2000). According to Eagleton, Stanley Fish's book *The Trouble with Principle* has "hijack[ed] an apparently radical epistemology [viz., anti-foundationalism] for tamely conservative ends." Fish's alleged faux radicalism leaves untouched the academic institutions that reward him. Moreover, Fish "is silent about famine, forced migration, revolutionary nationalism, military aggression, the depredations of capital, the inequities of world trade, [and] the disintegration of whole communities" for which the United States is responsible. Because Fish is oblivious to the "unmetaphysical outside" of the U.S. (by which Eagleton may mean the Majority World or whatever is "abroad" for the U.S.), Fish "champions the social and economic order which helps to breed the effects he deplores."

In Eagleton's view, another metaphysico dressed up in politico clothing who affirms the systems she attacks is Gayatri Spivak. She is "rather more audacious about epistemology than she is about social reconstruction" according to Eagleton:

> Post-colonial theory makes heavy weather of a respect for the Other, but its most immediate Other, the reader, is apparently dispensed from this sensitivity … [T]he heavy-handed jargon, the cavalier assumption that you know what she means, or that if you don't she doesn't much care, are as much the overcodings of an academic coterie as a smack in the face for conventional scholarship. (Eagleton 1999)

Spivak fails to systematically critique "her own compromised condition, as an academic superstar who speaks of caste and clitoridectomy" (Eagleton 1999).

As personal as it sounds, this attack is produced by generic considerations rather than actual readings of Spivak's *Critique of Post-Colonial Reason*, as is suggested by the fact that, to quote a letter to the *London Review* about Eagleton's essay, "an article strikingly similar to Eagleton's review of … Spivak's *Critique* … appeared under Terry Eagleton's name in the inaugural issue of the journal *Interventions*, published a good six months before even the galleys of Spivak's book became available" (Andrew Rubin, *LRB* Letters, 21.3 [1 July 1999]).

There are two important features of this element in the review-essay form. First, the forgotten victim is brought in: the phoneless millions, those who live on the "unmetaphysical outside" of the U.S., and the Othered readers. Second, the academic and/or intellectual is accused of forgetting his or her class (and, in Eagleton's handling of this generic element, his or her national) position. To begin with the second feature: if it really is the case that one cannot launch adequate political assessments from the study, what does that suggest about the adequacy of the reviewers' own attacks? To put it in more concrete (but unfortunately misleading) terms: Foster attacks Seabrook for mistaking the *New Yorker's* readership with the Universe, but to whom is Foster himself speaking — the *wider*, *less elitist* readership of the *London Review of Books*? Eagleton attacks Fish and Spivak for speaking as academic superstars ("[Fish] is the Donald Trump of American academia"), but what exactly is Eagleton if not an academic superstar? He attacks them for living comfortably in the economy of an exploitative first-world power, but where exactly does he live, and who pays him?

These are misleading ways of characterizing the problematic nature of this generic feature not only because they look like *ad hominem* attacks but for a much more important reason: it seems to countenance as an antidote the declaration of one's own position as a thinker. Yet this antidote is as conceptually bankrupt as the problem it allegedly addresses. Reciting a detailed description of the position from which one speaks has become a new "critical piety," Spivak has famously said. For instance, Eagleton does

indirectly at least own up to his own position in his review of Spivak's book: "If complicity means living in capitalist society, then just about everyone but Fidel Castro stands accused of it …" He does so at a softer moment in his review: "The political good Spivak has done far outweighs the fact that she leads a well-heeled life in the States" (Eagleton 1999). But the logic of his indirect self-recognition, and the recognition of Spivak's "goodness," appears in the second-to-last paragraph of the essay, never entering logically into the critique of Spivak's alleged "obscurantism" that has been trumpeted in the second paragraph, at the review-essay's outset, and examined in detail throughout. The logic of the essay should be revised—we should reconsider the idea that academic jargon can do political good. But a still deeper problem lurks in Eagleton's use of the words "political good," a problem implicit in Foster's review of Seabrook.

The implicit claim in Eagleton and Foster consists in reminding academics and intellectuals of the suffering they have neglected; it is a claim of moral superiority. No matter what the reviewers' personal styles of interaction (about which I know and mean to suggest nothing), the rhetorical effect of measuring another scholar's political goodness or badness is moral condescension.

This element of the new review essay harkens back to the "*vir bonus*" of eighteenth-century satire, the satiric persona's pose of being the one good man left to castigate social vice, adumbrated as described above by Mack and Kernan. But, in contrast to contemporary postmodern reviewers, eighteenth-century satirists were really good at recognizing the formal conundrum of satiric attack, the fact that the satiric persona who exposes the instruments of social decline often repeats the very vice he attacks at the very moment of attacking it. Notice the snide comments of "The Friend" in Pope's *Dialogue II* who points out that the rhetoric of "P." is just as vile as the rhetoric used by the Grub-street hacks whom "P." attacks (Pope 1738: 292, lines 181–2): Pope, of course, wrote both parts, the Friend's and P.'s. The first part of the generic element of the politicized review essay I'm examining here is,

again, the charge that the academic or intellectual ignores and therefore colludes with and countenances certain forms of oppression. But insofar as this rhetorical maneuver is being used in an act of academic condescension—to establish the superiority of the reviewer over the reviewed—victimization is being exploited rather than given a "voice." This would be true no matter what the position of the reviewer. Say, for example, that Hal Foster grew up in Appalachia, without a phone. Though the events of his childhood would then render him a member of the group whom Seabrook has forgotten in writing his book, Foster nonetheless exploits that group insofar as he uses them to establish his superiority over Seabrook—the only difference is that now, as a once-phoneless person, he exploits (an aspect of) himself. (Such rhetorical strategies have their psychological costs.)

David Simpson's review essay of Geoffrey Hartman's *The Fateful Question of Culture*, a text also reviewed by Eagleton in the *Times Literary Supplement*, provides one more important example of the rhetorical problem. Although he elsewhere provides a complex analysis of Hartman's work, Simpson here responds unthinkingly—that is, unconsciously using the generic elements of the genre of moral condescension—to a passage from the book in which Hartman approvingly shows Wordsworth championing "the contemplative life." I have quoted Simpson's response to Hartman above, and quote it here again: "Physical and emotional freedom," Simpson says in thoughtless response, "is at its maximum for the beholder in possession of the trust fund, not for the rural owner-occupier" (Simpson 1999: 259). The statement is in my view rightly analyzing Wordsworth's interior colonialism. However, the rhetorical punch of "trust fund" is, in my view, just that: a punch, and it is a punch taken at both Wordsworth and Hartman. Simpson doesn't speak *for* those rural owner-occupiers of the land who are working too hard to survive to be able to enjoy a contemplative life. It is tempting to say that his academic life is just as distant from the "real history of real lives" which, Simpson claims, Hartman and Wordsworth ignore (Simpson 1999: 260), but that is to cede to precisely the temptations

of the form of the politicized review essay to which Simpson, at this thoughtless moment, is ceding. Say that Simpson *is* closer to that real history than anyone now living: he is still, at this moment in this essay, exploiting that real history as much as ever did Wordsworth or Hartman because he is using it to punch them.

The gambit of the review essay of moral condescension is: you intellectuals aren't doing any political good by writing your books. But the critique, the review essay itself, does no good, even if the *London Review of Books* and Foster's essay are in fact read by people who don't, by and large, have phones. What is the political good whose loss is being mourned and simultaneously enacted? Is it really that aestheticians, academics, and the intelligentsia misuse their power by refusing to wield it politically, or has the form of campaigning for oneself invaded even our discussions of the politics of art in a way that is completely debilitating to them? The review essay itself provides an instance of inattention to one's own medium, as one "speaks," having the political effects of promoting Foster, Eagleton, and Simpson rather than bettering anybody's lot.

Certainly this rhetorical feature is one instance of a performative/constative contradiction of the type so well analyzed by Paul de Man. What Simpson performs, the exploitation of victims for the sake of achieving academic prowess, defeats what he says, which is that academics with trust funds should not exploit poor people by asserting that the world benefits from the thought-work paid for, in part, by their poverty. But it is crucial that we do not nihilistically throw up our deconstructive hands to say that one always repeats what one critiques. Instead, we need to begin thinking hard about the meaning of this particular split. We need to ask about the contemplative life, very much *including* all the review essays in *LRB*, *TLS*, and *MLQ*: what does its inability to perform certain kinds of political acts mean about its politics?

The problem of failing to take one's own print position into account can result in the criticism of moral condescension seeming to be legitimate or in the erroneous belief in one's own exemption from what one attacks—the belief avoided by Augustan satirists

who put their manuscripts in each other's hands, or handed them to the printer and bookseller, who handed them out in small distribution. Those coterie-print satirists could imagine their readers looking back at them with the penetrating gaze of a friend, whereas we mass-print thinkers can forget ourselves. I want to give two examples in two recent attacks on the digital humanities in the Dark Side debate.

Richard Grusin organized a panel at the Modern Language Association called "The Dark Side of the Digital Humanities." The phrase is repeated in his own essay recounting the panel and its context, repeated with a difference that for him is no difference: "the dark side of information capitalism" (Grusin 2014: 87). Grusin's essay appears in a special issue of *differences*, bound together with essays by other panelists into a solid brick book. Another essay appearing in this binding is Rita Raley's "Digital Humanities for the Next Five Minutes." Raley attacks as a sweeping generalization an important point made in the new *Digital_Humanities* book. Their "dismissive generalization," Raley says, is that those "who … express skepticism about the digital humanities are 'uni-medium scholars (most likely of print) who have been lulled into centuries of somnolence'" (Raley 2014: 29). The authors of *Digital_Humanities* are here actually alluding to a crucial argument put forth in *Writing Machines* by N. Katherine Hayles, her book less brick-like in its attempt to both mimic and use screens: "Lulled into somnolence by five hundred years of print," Hayles says, "literary studies have been slow to wake up to the importance of MSA," Media Specific Analysis. At the same time that Hayles and her book designer Anne Burdick, one of the co-authors of *Digital_Humanities*, seriously call attention to the medium of *Writing Machines*, they insist upon the necessity of MSA, "a kind of criticism that pays attention to the material apparatus producing the literary work as physical artifact" (Hayles 2002: 29): they seem to be practicing what they preach. However, the fact is that books do not force us to use them as bricks in critical discourse, but they do afford it: they predispose their authors to lob an anonymous block of brick, unlike the

Augustan satirists who, because placed by their medium (coterie-printed malleable book) within a process of production that could not ignore them as persons, were more attuned to their own implication in what they attacked.

My temptation here is to attack Grusin—I have counterviews, and this kind of back and forth is a good way to hone argumentative claims into truth, as Raley recognizes:

> New fields, particularly those that challenge existing paradigms and introduce 'alien change,' will inevitable meet with resistance both thoughtful and intransigent (Liu, "Digital" 31). This is expected and even welcome to the extent that opposition tends to clarify one's arguments. (Raley 2014: 28)

I have attacked Grusin publicly for confusing the #alt-ac or "alternate academic" community of digital humanists with adjunctification, however, and want to stress that the problem of universities using adjuncts began in the 1970s and was an epidemic constituting 40 percent of the professoriate according to the MLA by 1993 (Newfield 2008: 142). Digital humanities can hardly be blamed for installing or even much increasing a precarious workforce in the university since 1993 marked the beginning of the Internet's usage by humanities professors. The year 1993 was a full 10 years before the term digital humanities was coined as it emerged out of humanities computing, a very specialized and different field (Unsworth, Schreibman, and Siemens 2004).

But instead of proposing responses to various kinds of criticism of digital humanities launched by Grusin, I wish to adumbrate various blindnesses in his essay. I do think that Hayles's insistence upon MSA is right, that there are claims made by Grusin that participate in the print-instilled somnolence which, because we are all sleepwalkers here, run the risk of looking unassailable rather than grounded in the words of persons who are implicated in what they describe—Grusin participates in "information capitalism" as much as I do. The danger of failing to recognize the fallibility of

the satiric persona here threatens not digital humanities but rather what Grusin calls "mainstream humanities." That is, there are some practices that are driving humanities disciplines into the ground, the somnolent critique characterized by moral condescension being one of them. MSA is not just a good idea, it is requisite for disciplinary sustenance. Let's not let the print humanities go down with the book.

In his argument, Grusin is worried primarily about the advent of the Massive Online Open Courseware (the MOOC) increasing "the precaritization of labor," given that MOOC courses can presumably be developed by lecturers and also presumably promise to make greater profits for university corporations than to do classes taught in person by faculty. There is no doubt that MOOCs can be horrendous: I once heard David Wiley give a talk in which he not only spoke of distance education as being created by "content providers," troublesome in itself, but also about "shooting" content at target-students. Still, the evidence so far suggests that MOOCs lose money—and in some cases tremendous amounts of money—for universities who are for the moment writing them off as marketing and branding (Yuan and Powell 2013: 10, 15). Moreover, a MOOC in the hands of a critical thinker such as Cathy Davidson will function much differently than it would in the hands of a David Wiley: she is using them to exploit the potential for English professors becoming public intellectuals. Nonetheless, Grusin's worries are founded: we should all be discussing MOOCs, not just digital humanists who, Davidson aside, are not their primary users or promoters. That is all to the good. But the essay has a problem and is consequently misleading.

Appearing in the mass-printed (at least in the literary and cultural studies imaginary) and bound issue of *differences* enables Grusin to attack DH as participating in "information capital" and "neoliberal market logics" while imagining that he himself does not: the book comes from nowhere; it is cultureless. Except that it isn't.

Let me be fair, if I can, while nonetheless demonstrating the print somnolence at work in Grusin's essay. Grusin argumentatively

recognizes that he participates in the system he attacks by making a silent nod to Christopher Newfield's book *Unmaking the Public University*:

> At the same time that the market logic of neoliberalism has been used to decimate the mainstream humanities from within and without, this same logic has encouraged foundations, corporations, and university administrations to devote new resources to the digital humanities and, beginning this past year, to the development of MOOCs and other online forms of "content delivery." (Grusin 2014: 87)

The silent nod I'm pointing to here comes in the phrase "from within and without": I'm imagining that Grusin here acknowledges Newfield's argument that "the market decline" of English departments was "related" to the "advanced LCS [Literary and Cultural Studies] thinking" such as is found in the work of New Historicists (Newfield 2008: 158). In dissuading humanities departments from actively marketing themselves "as selling out to for-profit market forces," Newfield argues, LCS work "robbed the humanities of an opportunity for redirection or resistance" (Newfield 2008: 152). The same is recurring in "mainstream" attacks on digital humanities: I have heard a Berkeley professor, himself funded by a robber-baron whose fortune was made during the era before anti-trust laws, derail a meeting in which we tried to get corporate support for digital humanities projects, on Marxist grounds. If corporations give the humanities money, they are philanthropic and good; if we ask them for it, they aren't and we collude? Applications to Mellon or Guggenheim foundations are good, but those made to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation are bad? The only substantive difference is the amount of time that the foundation's money has appeared to be separated from its corporate source. What is wrong with asking for corporate support for the humanities, for marketing them so as to be attractive to investors? That is not a rhetorical question

but ideally it would inaugurate, if anyone is listening, discussions about what precisely is wrong with marketing, not simply knee-jerk criticism (Marxist or traditional humanist) that superficially denigrate business per se while itself relying on such corporate gains, either through sponsoring philanthropic organizations built out of fortunes or through getting paid by the corporate university itself. Also, relatedly, who among us in the Professoriate is not middle class, except the humanist adjuncts who work at poverty levels—unlike #alt–Ac laborers, M.A.s and Ph.D.s in digital humanities who are in fact getting a living wage. We must listen to Newfield and think about what works as opposed to using critique ostensibly to stand on higher moral ground. Really, and not just ostensibly, we are maintaining an aristocratic class system in the professoriate, as I will now demonstrate by analyzing the *differences* book.

Differences allows, affords, for Grusin a rhetorical position contradicting his nod to Newfield, his implicit recognition of our own complicity in neoliberal market logics as professors, period, whether we are working in digital humanities or "mainstream" humanities. The DH emphasis on making things, Grusin says, "echo[es] the instrumentalism of neoliberal administrators and politicians in devaluing critique (or by extension any other humanistic inquiry that doesn't make things) for being an end in itself as opposed to the more valuable and useful act 'of making stuff work'" (Grusin 2014: 86–7). The argument that critique is an "end in itself" is repeated later in the essay where he argues that the "distinction between critique and production" is in fact a distinction between "academic work pursued for its own ends and academic work that is instrumental" (Grusin 2014: 89). Grusin is perhaps picking up on Tara McPherson's criticism of "theory / cult[ural] studies tend[ing] towards critique as an end in itself" (McPherson's Twitter stream qtd. in Grusin 2014: 86), which she opposes (in my view, rightly) to critique that is helpful in some way, but Grusin is contesting her lament by calling the critique that is an end in itself "good." Since when have we ever thought

that academic work in the humanities was an "end in itself"? Since when were we able to buy the Kantian claim that art is disinterested? Since Arnold? Since Leavis? If we perform a media analysis, a material analysis, of critique, including or especially the critique that is being launched by Grusin as he promotes critique as an end in itself, we see that critique is very useful: instrumental in getting people published in venues like *differences*, which is instrumental in promotions, new jobs, chair-ships. Ted Underwood repeatedly points out that adding critique of gender, race, class, and sexuality to digital work will, if anything, make it more valuable, more sought after, more read, more publishable: performing critique is an incentive to DHers, not anathema.[4] The article and its critique are, no matter what Grusin himself personally wishes, chips in the game of prestige engaged in by "Homo Academicus," to quote the title of an important sociology of the humanities and social sciences by Pierre Bourdieu (1988). To say that students can perform critique as an end in itself even if we as professors cannot is to ignore the pressures of grades and accreditation generally. Every "end" has its mediations: there is no "end in itself." It is only a dying discipline that equates what works—viz., promoting digital scholarship—with an instrumentalism that it eschews: it is difficult not to see in Grusin's moral outrage (and my own) the very very bourgeois outrage over the professoriate's own unacknowledged, intrinsic aristocracy, the last gasp of a class about to be dispossessed. Scorn is the last bastion of despair. I might imagine myself separate from this moral outrage as I peer out at you from behind the curtain of this mass-printed page, but I am plainly outraged by the outrage.

Grusin's moral indignation at an "instrumental DH" which participates in neoliberal market logics is enabled by the fact that he hails from nowhere as a print author, and certainly not from another instrumentalism—his work to accrue cultural capital for prestige, which can be cashed in at many corporate universities. The printed and bound issue of *differences* serves instrumentally to promote Grusin's cultural capital, its codes and typefaces including "d i f f e

r e n c e *s*" in the top left corner of every page, stylistically insisting that its contributors and readers are cool, in Alan Liu's understanding of the term (2004).

In analyzing current methods of critique, Alan Liu argues that "new media studies often seem oblivious to the complex nature of the higher-education institutions in which they are embedded …" (Liu 2012: 30). I would argue that understanding the academic book's imbrication in the culture of prestige is even more important. Despite having written the major book on the institution of higher education, Christopher Newfield responds to John Guillory in *Critical Inquiry* (2002, 2003) with the same kind of book blindness found in Grusin. Guillory argues—in relation to the Sokal Hoax to which it seems unrelated—that the humanities need to say that we offer positive knowledge, historical knowledge, rather than simply a methodology (critique). Newfield's response discusses (as does his book) the failure of the humanities discipline to effectively market "critique," and then, in the last paragraph of the essay, reverts to discussing "critique" as Truth of precisely the sort that Foucault tried to avoid invoking via analyzing power (as opposed to "ideology"; Newfield 2003: 525). I suspect, though, that the supremacy of critique as Truth is in fact a hidden, undefended norm or value animating a lot of critical theory, in just the way that in business discourse no one ever discusses whether more profit is good: it just seems to be obviously true. But rather than seeing the critical methodology in the way that Guillory does, as the "spontaneous philosophy" of postmodernist literature and cultural studies (Guillory 2002), I want to see its originary relationship to media affordances offered by the mass-printed codex's power to decontextualize the critic: critique seems to be Truth with a capital 'T' because the mass-printed codex makes it likely that the satiric author of criticism will deny the satirist's implication in what he or she attacks.

In 1828, William Pickering printed two copies of a poem called "Work without Hope" by Coleridge, one in Coleridge's own *The Poetical Works of S. T. Coleridge* and one in the literary annual called

The Bijou edited by William Fraser (Coleridge 1828: ii.81; Fraser, ed., 1828: 28). Literary annuals paid their authors tremendously well, and they reached a larger audience than would Coleridge's works. Katherine Harris quotes work by Richard Daniel Altick: "By 1828, 100,000 copies of fifteen separate annuals earned an aggregate retail value of over 70,000 pounds" (Harris 2007; Altick 1998: 362). Coleridge's poem on work without hope was work that participated in the culture of hope offered by capitalist literary production. While he received what he wanted—mass-printed literature can get good money—we too in writing critique participate in a culture of hope without getting good money for the published works themselves—that is, without reaching a mass audience anywhere other than in our own imaginary. We participate in vying for cultural capital in a culture of prestige, and we have to know that this is precisely what gives us hope as we write about the hopelessness of being outside ideology or of ever escaping power relations.

I can hear you, dear Reader, saying to me: no self-respecting critic ever purported to be outside ideology or power. Yet we literary critics all know that the position from which the critic speaks as he or she demonstrates the containment of subversion by inescapable, despair-inducing forces (Cohen 1987; Cvetkovich 2012) is an impossible one: how would one be able to identify ideology / power as an object if there were no outside? Rudi Visker notices a similar problem in Foucault. On the one hand, Foucault sees power as constitutive of knowledge, and vice versa, but, on the other hand, his critical practice involves demystifying knowledge as produced by power, producing a *frisson* over his discovery that the sciences have had "a *liaison dangereuse* with power" (Visker 1995: 58). The problem confronting Foucault, Visker argues, is that

> either one sees power as an obstacle to knowledge … or (with Foucault) one ascribes a constitutive significance to the connection between knowledge and power and refrains from a critique based on the fact of that link. (Visker 1995: 62)

Figure 3.2 The Stacks, photograph by Laura Mandell.

But Foucault and his practitioners do not refrain from demystifying the power relations lurking behind various knowledge formations and therefore do not refrain from "combining a particular type of critique with an incompatible conceptual apparatus" (Visker 1995: 63). Amanda Anderson similarly recognizes the contradiction, via Habermas, and sees the critique as sustained by an "ethos" (Anderson 2005). While acknowledging that sustenance, I would like to argue that the outside to power-knowledge upon which critiquing knowledge as power depends comes from the deracination of mass-printed book culture, from the medium of mass print.

Our understanding stands upon the brick book which appears to be a voice from nowhere and everywhere (Figure 3.2). Claims are falsified insofar as books of literary criticism participate in a culture of prestige, garnering gains via exerting power in a neoliberal market society, while pretending not to. Bruno Latour has analyzed the power relations intrinsic to producing publications of

laboratory results: it would be a mistake to take his point to be that lab results are consequently false. All truth claims participate in a system of production and dissemination, and yet literary critics in particular deny their own imbrication in a system of academic publishing in some of their most stringent claims.

So, for instance, Peter Stallybrass published in *PMLA* an essay called "Against Thinking" in which he discusses his pedagogy for graduate students. His goal is to overturn for them "the tyranny of proprietary authors, solitary thinkers who produce knowledge out of their own minds … and the model of thinking that supports it" (2007: 1583). Instead of "thinking" they should engage in sheer work, a process of amalgamating all the influences upon their thinking as if they were a host of collaborators: "You are not, nor should you be, the origin of your own thoughts (any more than you are the origin of your own voice)" (2007: 1584). This is a beautiful view of what academic work would be were it not that his graduate students had to compete in a job market. Stallybrass denies that his own work, which has been valued despite his habitual collaboration with others from Allon White to Marguerita de Grazia, in fact depends upon the prestige of the authors including himself. His collaborative work is selected for reading because of his name. The culture of prestige in which Stallybrass participates—again, whether he wants to or not—is made visible by the footnotes to this essay which attribute originality to the critics whom he cites: he repeats twice that he is "deeply indebted" to this or that critic (2007: note 2, 1585–6; note 5, 1586). If all work is indebted to others, it would not be exceptional that a thought comes from this or that other critic to whom one is deeply indebted. The deep indebtedness reflects a kind of feudal homage endemic to "the aristocratic spirit which lurks in scholarship" (Jones 1950 qtd. in Baron 1969, 288), the aristocracy of culture in which the allegedly neutral life of the mind has been embedded (Bourdieu 1984).

Alan Liu recently issued a state-of-the-field report in the February 2012 issue of the *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education* journal, via the title implicitly comparing his own essay which

might be called "the postindustrial condition" to Jean-Francois Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition: a Report on Knowledge* (1984). Here Liu reiterates themes he has chimed before: the need for the "'text-based' digital humanities" to take up the cultural criticism that informs the "new media studies side" of the field (Liu 2012: 12), and the need for the digital humanities in general (now including public humanities as well) to save the humanities—he doesn't quite put it that way, but instead says that, without taking up cultural critique,

> The digital humanities are not yet prepared to accept their likely future responsibility to represent—both by critiquing and by advocating—the state of the humanities at large in their changing relation to higher education and the postindustrial state. (Liu 2012: 28)

Many of us will remember Liu's impassioned plea to advocate for the humanities, delivered before this essay was written, at the Centernet Luncheon of the Digital Humanities Conference, 2011, which was hosted by Stanford University. But there is a new theme here in the state-of-the-field essay as well: Liu admonishes the more theoretical side of DH, media studies, for not paying sufficient attention to the condition of their own possibility, viz. the academy as it now stands, before any "strategic" restructuring which will surely be designed to take away the little that theory now has. The high theory people will tell you that the university wants to shut it down because it is politically left-leaning, and that may be true. But cultural criticism, the very theory that fostered new media studies in its current assault on empire and global imperialism—that's broken. Julia Flanders asked an excellent question after Liu's luncheon talk: we don't want to save the humanities as they are now constructed, do we? In my interpretation and elaboration of this comment: how do we defend teaching cultural history in a way that works (Mandell 2012; Nowviskie 2011), that is, not as cultural critics currently do by purveying it as an exercise in

moral condescension, but also without recidivism into Priesthood, as the Harold Blooms would like us to do?

Whenever I hear a colleague defending the old humanities dispensation that produced cultural studies based upon the fact that they inspire critical thinking, I remember Blake's poem, "The Little Vagabond." In it a little boy is admonished to go to church instead of the pub, and he answers, "I know where I'm treated well." Critical thinking means, in ordinary language, being unnecessarily negative: it is a PR failure, as well as an intellectual failure to not take into account the reaction to it of people outside the academy (During 2014; see also Conclusion, p. 162).

How precisely are the print humanities grounded in critique "broken"? They are broken insofar as we literary critics write from a culture of despair but participate in a very capitalist culture of hope. Again, we must not throw up our hands by calling this contradiction a deconstructive problem of the performative / constative split: this is a problem we can handle, but we have to handle it by changing the nature of critique that is so well-afforded by the mass-print medium. Threatened by digital humanities and by defunding, the critique of moral condescension takes the form of returning to Arnoldian notions of the Truth of criticism that imagine themselves to be disembodied, to be not participating in any culture of prestige such as the academy where prestige is more important than ever as funds decrease.

Am I advocating that literary criticism abandon its fundamentally "social mission" (Baldick 1987)? No: instead, I am arguing that it's social mission has to be enacted knowing that we are not outsiders preaching to benighted objects—perhaps even asking living beings how we can help with social problems via humanities market research, public fora, and other modes of actually addressing the mass audience that we only imagine we have via print. We are all in the boat of neoliberal market logics, all enacting our own best interests that convert into financial gain and thereby partake of streams of capital, however small, flowing from the global information economy.

I hope it will make a difference to control disciplinary information via mechanical filters instead of the criticism of moral condescension, which currently serves to filter out too much insofar as morally outraged critics deny the imbrication of the critic, the satirist, in the object of his or her own critique. But can literary critics bear to attend to even more information than we already manage, reading high and low alike, all as if we were reading Kant (à la Cavell; see p. 39 above)? Right now, in dealing with a data deluge such as EEBO and ECCO, we have metadata and keyword searching available to us which still, unfortunately, can yield thousands upon thousands of search results. But new kinds of semantic searching and topic modeling are emerging: these will enable searching for concepts, not words—you won't get a return for "that's a beauty of a mistake" when you search for beauty, but will get passages saying things like "her golden hair hung on velvet robes, shining as brightly as the sun," simply because "golden," "shining," and "sun" are so often mentioned in connection with beauty that the machine can see its relevance. Our beauty-finding filter will return (though not itself recognize) ironic instances such as "My mistress's eyes are nothing like the sun," precisely because the sonnet's irony works by mentioning all the conventional terms for beauty: even though Shakespeare embeds them in syntactic negation, the repetition of all of them alerts us to the topic.

Moreover, there are visualizations that will filter search returns for us, visualizations that "amplify cognition" (Ware 2004) by making us able to see myriads of dismissible returns in a single glance to get to the oddities, the particular cases, that we wish to investigate. If machines can filter for us, what becomes of literary criticism with its army of critic-filters? What happens to the discipline of English when both the texts that we investigate and the filters we use allow us to range widely over what is really, this time, the whole field of literature, including ephemera and the allegedly nonliterary? We are looking forward to an era of reading that is evenly distributed.

Notes

1 According to St. Clair's data, even though his estimates reduce the number of pamphlets printed, this event is the first mass-printing, and it occurred before the steam-powered press began producing books in the 1820s and 1830s: the technological changes, the evidence suggests, came after the expansion of reading was already well under way, and were more a result than a cause. It takes conceptual changes, the desire for books, to produce material ones. In the case of the pamphlet wars, intellectual and political needs led to the "mechanization of book production" (St. Clair 2005: 87), even though socially-inflected material circumstance—in this case, growing literacy—entered into all people's thoughts and desires.

2 Conder's contention.

3 It is the critique of literary critics, not of philosophers, that interests me here, though the critical position enacted by empirical philosophers in Britain resembles current literary criticism much more than does the Kantian notion of critique as uncovering the limits of human understanding.

4 See the discussion at http://dhpoco.org/blog/2013/05/10/open-thread-the-digital-humanities-as-a-historical-refuge-from-raceclassgendersexualitydisability/

PART III

Unbound

Conclusion

Discipline and Error: Now is not the worst …

In the foregoing chapters, I have been writing about two transformations, from manuscript to print culture, and from coterie to mass printing. The point was to better figure out what is happening now as the humanities in general, and literary criticism in particular, move from book-based to a grounding in digital media. Jerome McGann has repeated many times in many venues the opening line of his newest book: "Here is surely a truth now universally acknowledged: that the whole or our cultural inheritance has to be recurated and reedited in digital forms and institutional structures" (2014: 1). He is being as ironic as Jane Austen, whose opening line from *Pride and Prejudice* he parodies, in his use of the word "universal," though she was making fun of those who saw it that way, while McGann is not; he sees the failure of such universality as a kind of denial. "But will we be assimilated? Is resistance futile?" he imagines his readers of "Visible and Invisible Books" asking, and then answers:

> There are no aliens here, no struggle between books and computers. From now on scholarship will have both, willy-nilly. The

Breaking the Book: Print Humanities in the Digital Age, First Edition. Laura Mandell.

> question is—the choice is—whether those with an intimate appreciation of literary works will become actively involved in designing new sets of tools for studying them. (2001: 299–300)

I agree with McGann, but worry, and want to conclude this book in an attempt to stave off, via raising awareness, a possibility: that we'll import the worst of book culture into the use and abuse of digital archives of our cultural heritage, just as books and articles have become rather unusable pdfs on screens of all sorts, unsusceptible of being marked by reading hands.

Worse than importing the worst would be forgoing the best. In a recent article, Geoffrey C. Bowker argues that, at least in the sciences, the system of peer-reviewed articles is "broken": "Peer review broke down as a system about forty or fifty years ago," he says, insofar as it doesn't catch errors. (The Sokal Hoax might presage a similar breakdown in the humanities.) One reason Bowker sees for abandoning the scientific article as a mode of disciplinary expression is that, he says, "complexity can never be represented in [the] linear form" of text (Bowker 2014: 102). For us in the humanities, that's not true; in fact, we might be able to argue the opposite: no computer language of any sort matches the complexity and rich ambiguity of natural language syntax and semantics, and so surely no produce of computer language can be as complex as a novel, for example, or a poem. And Lucy Suchman adds that we need the forms of scholarship endemic to print humanities because they offer "a form of resistance to the imperative of collaboration that characterizes certain forms of contemporary life" and that prevents us from ever being alone, reflecting. The academic article, she says, is not a set thing—it can be fixed if broken because we can transform it while "preserving the distinctive and generative capacities that it offers as a medium" (2014: 132). Even more so the academic book.

If we break open the book to look at the machinery operating inside, as I have done in the preceding chapters and intend to do a bit more here while summarizing the preceding, we can find in

the spirit of Bowker's argument an amazing amount of dysfunction that we have been tolerating for some time in academic articles and books, a dysfunction made more visible by digital means. I will discuss four kinds of book failure that needs to end: uncontestable error; pathologizing opponents into case histories; unself-critical critique; and publishing for immortality. I will demonstrate ways that digital humanities can cure the print humanities, but also ways in which they might perpetuate the same errors unless we take action by working on projects that would counteract them.

Uncontestable error

I here use digital means to break open a book by Paul de Man (Figures C.1 and C.2) that was a collection of previously published articles, his *Blindness and Insight*.

Much has been in the news, again, about Paul de Man, because of Evelyn Barish's new book *The Double Life of Paul de Man* (2014) and the reviews and counterattacks it has stimulated (Brooks 2014; Lehman 2014). But my goal here is to discuss a deliberately crafted misquotation—a glaring and deliberate error—in de Man's essay "The Rhetoric of Temporality" which in fact constitutes a kind of throwing down of the gauntlet by de Man to fellow critic M. H. Abrams, whom he addresses in the passage, but also, to anyone who reads literary criticism. I will demonstrate this misquotation by using a digital tool launched in 2013, JuXta Commons, developed by Jerome McGann, Andrew Stauffer, and NINES.

To contextualize the misquoted passage, de Man is arguing that Wordsworth could not sustain his faith in the symbol, that he realized that even the specific names of rivers ultimately had no material referent and thus distantly allegorized the reality that they purported to symbolize (to partake of while describing). The passage he picks from Wordsworth to cite actually is not discussing the names of rivers but is answering a child who, in looking at the River Duddon, at first wonders what could be its source, and then

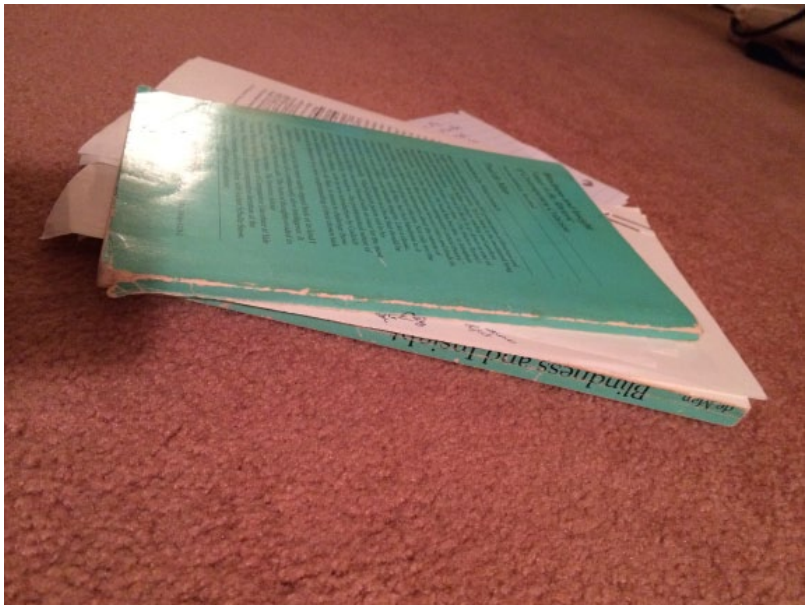


Figure C.1 Broken book, *Blindness and Insight*.

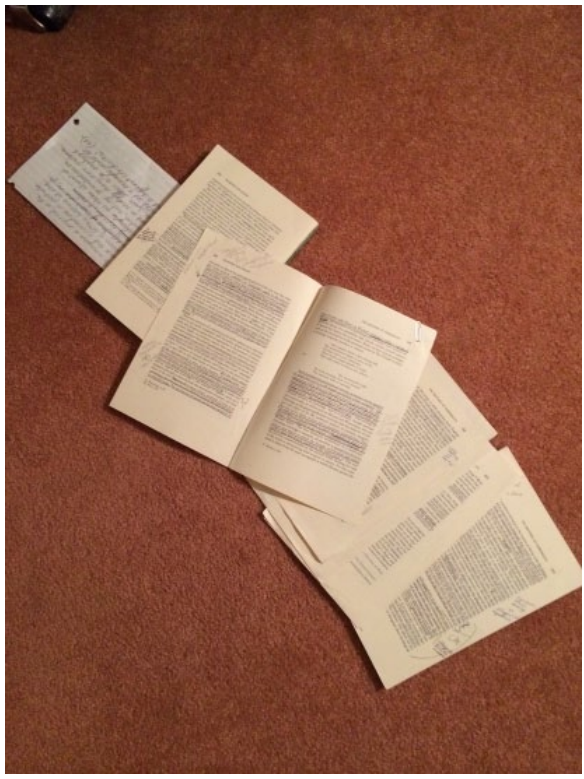


Figure C.2 Broken book, *Blindness and Insight*.

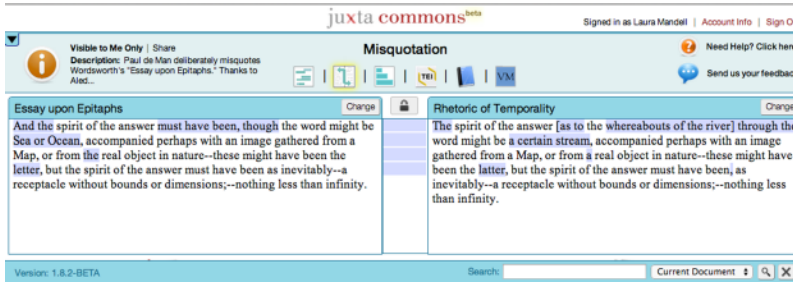


Figure C.3 Wordsworth and de Man's quotation of Wordsworth, compared in JuXta.

asks, where does all this roiling, surging water ultimately go? Here are the two passages set side by side in JuXta (Figure C.3).

De Man interpolates the question Wordsworth answers, saying that it is a question "as to the whereabouts of the river," which it is not—Wordsworth's child has actually asked where the surging waters go. Additionally, de Man changes "though the word" to "through the word" and "Sea or Ocean" in Wordsworth to "a certain stream," without any indication that he has changed those words at all—no square brackets marking interpolation, brackets which he has previously used. Wordsworth is saying, "although the word Sea or the word Ocean" can be given to the child, the child will imagine something as vast as infinity; he is not talking at all about the name of a stream. Notice also the change of "letter" in Wordsworth to "latter" in de Man: it is a virtuousic fraud indeed, and a challenge, a dare. Do something about my misquotation, de Man says. What do we do when we find false quotations and false footnotes, which I have found in reading respectable monographs? If you are not asked to write a book review, all that is left is sending something in to *Notes and Queries*. Surely de Man's misquotation has been spotted by others besides Aled Ganobcsik-Williams, the graduate student who first pointed out the error to me. What could anyone do?

If an article such as "The Rhetoric of Temporality" were not embedded in a book but rather were fully digital—not simply

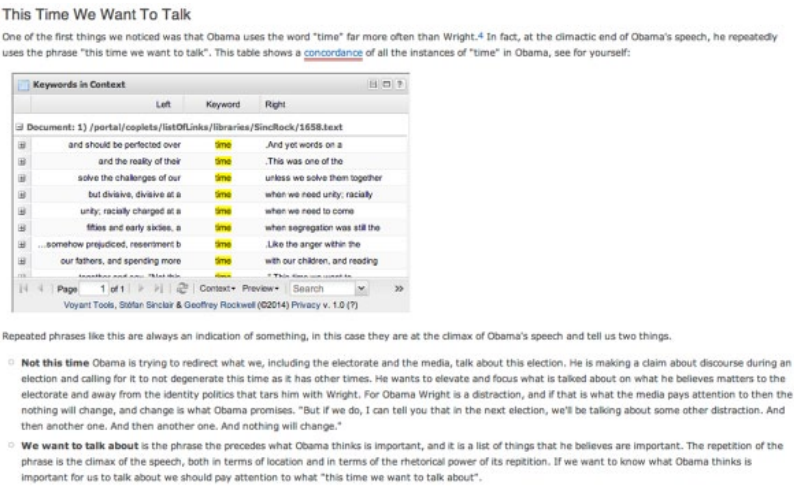


Figure C.4 A live database window in "Now Analyze That."

pdfs, poor substitutes for print—we might have recourse. So, for instance, an essay such as that written by Geoffrey Rockwell and Stéfan Sinclair, called "Now Analyze That," (see Figure C.4) in their fully digital book, incorporates data from the President's campaign speeches in *live* windows, so that the reader can manipulate the tools they have used to analyze these speeches to see their own results, the context, etc. (http://hermeneuti.ca/rhetoric/now-analyze-that).

What if every digital book had live windows of quotations, links to the texts from which any quotation or piece of information came, so that the evidence could be checked? What if there were also, accompanying these live windows, annotation capacities, as there are in the publishing platform Comment Press that runs MLA's new Media Commons? Then someone could point out a misquotation or misinformation in the body of the book itself. An author could argue back, explaining his or her interpretation—nothing in this digital realm *has* to imply that data are self-evident. We could fix a major problem besetting the print humanities, evident in de Man's gleeful challenge here: it is very, very difficult to

in any prominent way falsify what is published in a book, unless the book presents us with a scandal (and even then …).

So for example, a recent article attacks the digital by David Golumbria which appears between covers in an issue of *differences* and may also reappear in a subsequent book that he publishes. The article contains a wealth of statements about the digital that are untrue. Can I review an article in a way that will cause it to be changed before it becomes part of a book? What would this book that you are reading now look like if I stopped here to enumerate all the errors in Golumbria's essay? And if I did, or if I wrote a letter to the journal appearing in a later issue, would this exposé here or that letter there prevent anyone from quoting the statements made in Golumbria's essay as evidence in the future? But what if demands by me and others for evidence or retraction could form a piece of the essay itself, and what if the essay itself, with all the contestation encompassing it, were available to readers immediately, through a live window, in any future citations of it? More than catching out-and-out deceit, we could preserve what we as humanists care about it: that data are always contested, not straightforward facts about the world as it is (Drucker 2011).

Pathologizing opponents into case histories

Most critics do not deliberately, consciously lie—de Man is a "strange case," to quote the title of Brooks's review. Ever since the misty beginnings of modern, mass-published literary criticism when Francis Jeffrey argued that "the case of Mr Wordsworth" was "altogether incurable, and beyond the power of criticism" (1814: 2), critics have pathologized and made into a case whatever they wished to controvert. Jeffrey took his own sense of shame, a stigma he was trying to occlude, for being non-metropolitan and non-aristocratic, and turned it into an attack on Wordsworth with his tourist's sensibility for the rough North and his trust fund. Jeffrey's readers brought the case of Jeffrey home to themselves, laughed, and purchased more (see Chapters 2 and 3, pp. 85–7, 126). I will

now show an instance of pathologizing what one contests in the so-called "Distant Reading Debates."

The term "distant reading" comes of course from Franco Moretti's *Graphs, Maps, and Trees*, and it sometimes seems to oppose the methodology most highly valued in the discipline of English literature, criticism, and theory, as well as cultural studies: viz., close reading. There have been debates staged in journals over whether to value close or distant reading, debates between John Guillory and N. Katherine Hayles in *Profession* and, in *Critical Inquiry*, Moretti and Katie Trumpener, all of these debates revealing a humanistic aversion to big data.[1] In the latter interchange, Trumpener differentiates Moretti's practice of "counting" with her own more "random and unsystematic" practice of reading, implying that the latter is what really counts. What Moretti does is "good," she says, after an article discussing all the ways in which his arguments are wrong, and then concludes, "Yet it is equally important that most of us forego counting to stay in the library (and the well-stocked bookstore, if we can still find one)" (2009: 171). This statement is poignant (Borders has closed its doors, after all) but also passively aggressive. "Equally important" functions satirically here—she doesn't see the two things as equal at all, as is evinced by her distinction between the "most of us" who should be doing what Trumpener does and the "some of us" who should be doing what Moretti does. Trumpener pathologizes his work as an unusual case: this concession to "equal importance" that on the surface makes room for data analysis in the discipline of literary and cultural studies actually upon closer examination reveals itself to be a patent refusal to let Moretti's work into the mainstream of the field. In her article, she describes wishing to "complicate" Moretti's view. Her worry is that we create databases, generate graphs, and then draw conclusions from the graphs too quickly, as she says in an interview: "If the whole field did [what Moretti does], that would be a disaster," she says, one that could yield a slew of insignificant numbers with "jumped-up claims about what they mean" (Marc Parry 2010).

I want to put a little pressure upon Trumpener's defense of the discipline against quantitative analysis. She contests Moretti's conclusions drawn from creating a huge database of the titles of novels, finding important counter-examples to his argument. Counter-examples, anecdotes, individual texts: these are the mainstays of our disciplinary practices, of close reading. Moretti searched a database of title pages, Trumpener says, while all she could do in order to find title pages that gainsaid his argument, was work from her own expertise:

> I come to this provisional conclusion, after a somewhat frustrating afternoon googling facsimile title pages from France and Germany. This exercise left me, paradoxically, with a new appreciation for Moretti's large-scale databases. He can potentially see or find a pattern that held true for the "typical" novel, encompassing now-unknown novels as well as those now canonized. I, on the other hand, could google only what I had read, heard of, or could think of. Yet even my small, perhaps unrepresentative sample potentially complicates Moretti's picture. (Trumpener 2009: 168)

The pathos of this statement is evident: it enacts the mythic encounter between John Henry, the man who drove steel pegs into railroad ties with a sledge hammer, and the steam-powered hammer, dying after beating the machine. While Moretti's title pages come from "large-scale databases" (he is the steam hammer) while hers come from "what I had read, heard of, or could think of" (she is John Henry). The human is better, she insists.

But Trumpener's statement is also highly disingenuous. For one thing, anyone who has read her first book *Bardic Nationalism* knows that Katie Trumpener has a database mind—she resembles Northrop Frye in this. All that she has read, heard of, or could think of is bigger, I'm willing to bet, than a database I recently created of works on melancholy. And then of course the kicker is in her text more explicitly than that: Trumpener didn't use a large-scale database, she only Googled what she could remember. Google is of course the largest-scale database ever made. If Moretti's database is steam-powered,

Google is nuclear-powered. Trumpener's counter-argument to Moretti draws on returns, graphs, dots just as much as his argument does. The fact is that, because we live in this world, we are all already digital humanists (Terras 2014). "Most of us," to quote Trumpener, use Google.

I have already discussed that portion of Trumpener's response to Franco Moretti as symptomatic of book culture, the sense of language that bound books impart as primarily referential. We read a book alone in a quiet room (Calvino 1979), our line of vision spilling off the pages of it if at all to a room full of still objects. Words name objects and can be pinned to them, the way that Trumpener's mother pinned German words to objects in the house before they moved to Germany. Trumpener shares this picture with St. Augustine, a picture contested by Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*.

One of the most important documents in what has come to be called Ordinary Language Philosophy is J. L. Austin's essay, "A Plea for Excuses" (1956–7). The essay makes a plea for analyzing the philosophical assumptions embedded in ordinary language by showing us how important it is to examine the excuses people make. He offers a parable of the two donkeys. Someone, an "I" in the essay, presumably Austin himself, sees two donkeys in a field and shoots one of them. The donkey that falls turns out to be your donkey. In one case, he thought he was shooting his own donkey but shot yours instead. In the other case, he was aiming for his own donkey but missed and shot yours instead. He goes to your door and says, "I say, old sport, I'm awfully sorry, &c., I've shot your donkey *by* …" (1956–7: 185 n. 1). And then Austin gives us two choices: by mistake or by accident? Austin's point is that, as speakers of British or North American English, we know exactly which word to choose in each instance.

Let's imagine a scene of instruction instead: a mother sits with her 6-year-old boy. He says, "I ate that cookie by accident." She says, "No honey, if you had stepped on the cookie, that would have been an accident, but you picked it up and ate it, deliberately." "But

Mommy, it was a mistake." "No," she replies, "you knew that cookie was your sister's because you already ate yours—it was not a mistake." We must wonder why Austin is out shooting donkeys, but leaving that aside, the parable is grounded in a very modern insight—Freud's fundamentally—that it is when things break, when something goes wrong and people are making excuses for it, that's when we can best see how they work. Just from the fallen donkeys and eaten cookies, we know what models of agency, responsibility, subjectivity, and ethics reside in our language itself. Just because you speak the language doesn't mean you have to subscribe to those beliefs, but, especially if you don't, you need to know what these models are. "It was a mistake." "What do you mean it was a mistake? I saw you aim and pull the trigger!" "Well, you see, I was trying to shoot my own donkey—I mistook your donkey for mine." OR "Well, you see, I was trying to shoot my own donkey when yours walked in front of mine—it was an accident." Our shared assumptions are revealed, Austin maintains, by excuses, when something goes wrong, by breakage.

The shared agreements harbored in ordinary language have been called common sense—to Edmund Burke, they proffer up the wisdom of all past generations—and ideology—we live in the "prison house of language" to quote both Fredric Jameson and William Wordsworth à la fois. Wittgenstein's point however is that they are neither wisdom nor mystification but fact: they are the system of agreements shared by people who share a form of life because they share a language (or, given that he was writing in German, share language games).

Unself-critical critique

What enables both Edmund Burke and books of ideology critique[2] to imagine that they "stand" outside of language rather than work within it is the mass-printed book that allows them to reflect upon the world from no context. Edmund Burke wrote a book called *Reflections on the Revolution in France*: the word "reflect"

here retains its satirical force—to reflect upon someone in the eighteenth century was to attack them—but it also means "to think about." The point of that book, however, is to not reflect on things as they are, to just accept them. Yes, reflect on revolution, but not on the current class system: someone has to be rich, Burke says; it might as well be the current aristocracy as they are best fitted to be it (they have "a fortune in character at stake"). We might better call the book *Reflections on Reflections*, or a satire against thinking, and it is fit that this first mass-printed phenomenon could imagine itself as a book having the power to tell people how to be: taking the case home to themselves, they would understand to try not to understand. Worse, Burke's book stages a revolt against revolution. It wants to sermonize against changing the ordinary, but, as a mass-printed book, it steps outside ordinary language, ordinary agreements, and examines them, turns them over, overturns them.

The fantasy of publishing as conducting a revolution is enabled by mass print, even for writers whose books are not in fact printed massively. Revolting books, those that imagine themselves completely outside the masses to whom they deign to speak, participate in the genre moral condescension, and a slew of such books have been published to defend reading and/or the humanities. According to Simon During, the most recent collection of defenses, *The Humanities and Public Life*, engages in indefensible sermonizing, indefensible because the writers, while preaching of public good, completely fail to admit how self-interested their own defense of the humanities actually is, that they live in a "privileged" world, if one that is currently "beleaguered." During notices something "worse still:"

> liberal intellectuals and humanities academics use their privilege in their own interest to promote unworldly politics and tastes that undercut, or lie aslant, values and lifestyles that help sustain many of those with less privilege. Seen like this, the humanities' unpopularity is not irrational, even if from inside the neoliberal university any sense of our effete privilege may seem misguided. (2014)

We expect, nay demand, to be supported by a group of people (primarily middle-class students and their parents) whose world-views we deplore and to which we consider ourselves vastly superior. Notice that this is the direct inverse of Jeffrey's situation as described above (Chapter 3, pp. 109–17): he courted the middle class and attacked the avant garde; we court the avant garde and attack the middle class. Literary critics today, if they want anyone outside the discipline to read their books at all, want them to take the case home to themselves and hate their lives under Capital. Thus Mark Fisher in his book *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative*? fantasizes about a "Marxist Supernanny" who would deal with the masses using tough love:

> We must convert widespread mental health problems from medicalized conditions into effective antagonisms. Affective disorders are forms of captured discontent; this disaffection can and must be channeled outwards, directed toward its real case, Capital. (2009: 80)

Leaving aside the inordinate power he imagines for his book—for book writers? readers?—who *can* convert mental illness into revolt, Fisher articulates a gambit of most leftist criticism since Jacqueline Rose (1986) warned against it in the 1980s: we heroize mental illness as resistance to ideology, imagined to be so pervasive as unassailable in any other way.

Never has cultural criticism been so far away from the people and institutions that sustain it than it is in its unabashed valuing of mental illness (Žižek 2000: 658; Sass 1987). I have questions. Has the person who attacks the neoliberal university engaged in moving to another institution, changing jobs, for higher salary, because the salaries of star critics have escalated off the charts as the university has become more corporatized. Is the new salary good? Is it nice to have more money? Is it nice to be mentally healthy, to feel happy? Only a voice from no-one and nowhere could imagine arguing otherwise. Moreover, it's as if the real "spontaneous philosophy" of cultural criticism, pace Guillory

(2002), is the very contrary of getting people to buy: as a writer of a book, to the degree that you make people uncomfortable—to the degree that you displease the populace—to that very degree are you resisting ideology. As I said earlier in this book, we cannot persist in defending what we do based upon the fact that it inspires critical thinking (Chapter 3, p. 144). Again, the main character in Blake's poem, "The Little Vagabond" responds, when told to go to church instead of the pub, "I know where I'm treated well." To quote During again, "the humanities' unpopularity is not irrational."

Courting popularity, digital humanists have been accused repeatedly of entrepreneurship and salesmanship, of colluding with corporatization in its valuation of technology and creating students with "productive skills" (Kirsch 2014; Grusin 2014). I do feel like an entrepreneur and a salesperson, often, and that gives me pause, about which I'll say more in closing. But first, it seems to me that this book has shown the following: if a book of literary criticism offers no hope based on the same ground upon which the author stands in writing it, it lies, deludes itself about its cost, provenance, and conditions of possibility.

Is the alternative to cultural criticism embracing capitalist enterprise? I attended a NEH-sponsored conference in which those who had been awarded grants under the Digging into Data Challenge (http://www.diggingintodata.org/) gave talks about their projects. One speaker whose name I do not remember was not a grant winner but a Canadian businessman whose company had contributed to the program. The contrast between the way he spoke and the stories told by digital humanists about their projects was quite jarring. The businessman presented the past, items he had culled from history, as self-evidently good and showing us what we should be doing now. It reminded me of a business book mentioned by Alan Liu in his *Laws of Cool* (2004): the book was titled, "Elizabeth I: CEO." Someone has to be in that room with that businessman, saying, without scorn, "there is a really good book about Elizabeth as monarch … " Someone has to be in

conversation with the businessman, saying, "it is a bit more complicated than that," be it digital humanists collaborating with business to develop close-reading tools or students who have been trained in digital humanities courses and are now working in business. Such outreach is precisely the motive behind the relatively new 4Humanities initiative (http://4humanities.org/), behind the work of Cathy Davidson, and behind the focus on collaboration in digital humanities generally (Burdick et al. 2013).

Publishing for immortality

The promise of the mass-printed book, its promise to deliver disciplinary knowledge back to the masses in usable form, has been diverted also by the mass-printed codex medium, by the very promise of immortality that would allow each book to lay a foundation for the future. Let's for a moment take uber-seriously Mary Shelley's comment in her 1831 introduction to *Frankenstein*: the book called *Frankenstein* is "her hideous progeny" which she bids to "go forth"—abandoned by her, because of course she will die and it will live, mass-printed books being even more immortal than those of small print runs. I know, the phrase "more immortal" seems ludicrous, but there you have it: the paradox of being a cyborg of the sort produced by industrialization and post-industrialization is that some prosthetic devices make us more immortal than others, the mass-printed book among them. With that possibility to be more immortal than mere foundation-laying brick came a temptation, a terrible temptation, Victor Frankenstein's desire, against which arguably all high Romantic poetry set its teeth.

In what sense is a book a monster as opposed to a brick? While human communication occurs in the breath that Swift's parody which opens my book so much wanted to save, post-human, cyborg communication is "carved in breath" to use a phrase from Thoreau's *Walden*. A catechresis: breath cannot be carved or not carved,

anymore than mouths can see or not see, to use the canonical example of Milton's "blind mouths," his prelates. A catechresis which points to the immortal book's monstrosity: it is stitched together from living parts that are now dead, its words once animated by an author's living voice. In *Becoming Beside Ourselves*, Brian Rotman discusses the alphabet, writing, as the death of human gesture. He discusses the invention of alphabetic writing as if it were the brainchild of some crazy inventor working feverishly in his lab who suddenly has a moment of Eureka:

> What if one could separate speech from the voice? Eliminate the tone and keep the words? … Writing segments the spoken stream of sounds into words … It cuts speech loose from the voice, substituting for the individual, breathing, here-and-now agency of the one who utters them by an abstract, invisible author, and replacing a unique event which unfolds over time [like a life], by fixed, repeatable, atemporal alphabetic inscriptions, inscriptions which necessarily fall short of representation. (Rotman 2008: 25).

Rotman explains how written inscriptions "fall short of representation" just in the way that the monster falls short of humanity, being too unbearably ugly to be taken into the human community unless we are blind. What's missing from writing, Rotman says, is embodied gesture, and it has been discovered most recently as we try to create computers who can hear us speak that embodied gesture is part of our sign system, a necessary and not epiphenomenal accompaniment of speech:

> We listen, it seems, not speech sounds as such, not, that is, as isolatable sonic entities, but to the movements of the body causing them; we focus on what happens between the sounds, to the dynamics of their prepatory phrases, pauses, holds, accelerations, fallings away, and completions, the very features of gestures we attend when we are perceiving them. In a certain sense, we listen to speech-sounds as signs of their gestural origins, as a physician listens to the sounds a patient's heart makes in order to analyze the movements causing them. (Rotman 2008: 23)

Or, more, we listen to speech as we listened to mother: it is a semiotic chora the heartbeat of which convinces us that it's alive.

How, the writer asks, can we bring the "dead leaves" of books alive, jump up with Dr. Frankenstein as Gene Wilder does in Mel Brooks's *Young Frankenstein* (1974), screaming, "it's alive" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bPmVhyHBRAM)? According to Rotman, writing compensates for the absence of physical gesture through "transduction":

> Prose rejects [the mimetic] sonic recuperation of vocalic gestures [adopted by written poetry through its prosody] in favor of a textual transduction of them. It transposes or transmutes prosodic effects into inscriptional ones through the invention of new, textual forms governed by grammar and syntax rather than sonic values, in the process of distributing (written versions of) affect across the entire lexical and syntactic landscape via the creation of a range of devices—neologisms, phrasal conventions, textual diagrams, rhetorical inversions, figures of 'speech,' letter-forms, and narrative formulas and 'styles.' (Rotman 2008: 28)

Rotman's list here could be better written by all the devices analyzed by the teachers of literature as they track the movement—to use the title of a famous teaching anthology—from sound into sense.

Imagine, if you will for me now please, suspend disbelief and imagine that a mass-printed codex can be envisioned as a patchwork of what was once living but is now decayed flesh. Victor is in his lab inventing the alphabetic writing that takes the discards of mortality, parts of corpses, and stitches them together in order to create something immortal. And more than alphabetic writing, a kind of writing that Rotman does not analyze, in fact completely elides in his media-free account of writing: printed writing, mass-printed writing, the writing produced after the end of the hand-press era.

A mass-printed codex becomes monstrous because made in the way that Victor made his monster. Victor had in his heart something

that, the other Shelley reassures us, the poet in "Alastor" does not, some desire less honorable. Victor is relaying his history to Walton, discussing the moment as he is building the monster or writing his book to be printed:

> No one can conceive the variety of feelings, [he says to Walton,] which bore me onwards, like a hurricane, in the first enthusiasm of success. Life and death appeared to me ideal bounds, which I should first break through, and pour a torrent of light into our dark world. A new species would bless me as its creator and source; many happy and excellent natures would owe their being to me. No father could claim the gratitude of his child so completely as I should deserve their's. (Mary Shelley 1831, in Wolfson, ed., 2007: 34)

No father could claim, no father could be, so perfectly worshipped. That's what some authors of books want to do: they want to alter human interactions, transform them into idol worship: "I worship you author," the authors fantasize their readers saying to them, "creator of me as a new species; you changed my life." Because of the anonymity of mass publishing and reading, the author and reader can escape from the everyday one-on-one messy, dusty, hairy, bubble-gum and ear-bud infested interactions that they have with real, living people. And Victor's desire to extract himself from real relationships, from living with his family, from actually marrying and consummating a marriage with Elizabeth, from "domestic affections," as Percy puts it in his preface, that's what makes printed books, prosthetic devices allowing us to engage in indelible thinking—that's what renders them monstrous. And because we all have that fundamental feeling of misanthropy, as Swift puts it, that fundamental disgust with the embodied human life that, if it is the source of our being is also the reason for our death, we can relate to the production of Mary Shelley's monster—by Victor, by her, by us. The hideous progeny that Mary Shelley invented and bid go forth is her book and her monster, the monster we now call Frankenstein thanks to his continuous remediation and seemingly

interminable reproduction (Frankenstorm, Frankenweenie): the progeny that is and always was a mashup, a meme, not a fixed immutable representation but a game that one could mod, a producible rather than a product. The monster that Victor created was horrible to him in the novel because he, like those literature professors, us, against whom Ian Bogost complains in his blog now printed called "The Turtlenecked Hairshirt," created him to escape relationships: the monster is Henry James's beast in "The Beast in the Jungle," and the beast of refusing to mingle—in Bogost's words—in

> A world of the commonplace. A world that prepares jello salads. A world that litigates, that chews gum, that mixes cement. A world that rusts, that photosynthesizes, that ebbs. (Bogost 2012: 242)

And I agree with Bogost: the beastly desire not just to be immortal but to be immortally known by others who have no hands, no connection with your former body, your corpse, who can imagine in the cult of celebrity first induced by mass-printed books—again to quote Bogost—no "steaming shit" (242); the beastly desire to be worshipped by a new species as a way out of being enmired in our own: that is a temptation afforded by the mass-printed book which in fact leads to filling it with "the thing that is not true," untrue words, words that could not be said by any living human being and therefore don't make sense, words even more monstrous than lies because they seem to make sense, seem to be uttered by a living, gesturing body, when in fact the body is really a dead one patched together out of bits of paper, glue, and spine. The sense that these words really make is: get down on your knees and worship me, the writer of this book; I don't truck with you mere mortals.

But surely some writers give us a sense of the particular, individual, living voices? "The author's voice" has been a term predominating even in historical and sociological bibliographic studies, just as "giving voice to" subalterns has dominated

politicized literary histories ever since the proliferation of the term in anthologies of minority literatures during the 1980s and 1990s, with titles such as *Other Voices*, *Women's Voices*, and so on. An author's voice in bibliographic studies equates roughly with an author's style: it is the "je ne sais quoi" that cannot be duplicated, the quality that makes possible the formal analysis in authorship attribution. An author's style is indeed probably as distinctive as the sound of her voice, but the key word in this statement is "*as*": voice and writing style are comparable via metaphor and simile; they are not and cannot be the same thing simply because one is sonic and the other tactile and visual. Of course writing style is certainly not bound in any way to the print medium: it is discernible in manuscripts as well as via the electronic simulations of printed and chirographic materials used in author attribution studies. But calling an author's style his or her "voice" is in fact part and parcel of print's attempt to deny that the pages of the printed codex cannot actually speak, that they cannot make sound.

At stake, certainly, is the sense of a book's aliveness and deadness, and the degree to which an author can be seen to live or die in reprinted versions of his or her works. I wish to think here about how the literary criticism that arose with mass print technology as a modern discipline is grounded in the "Sound and Sense" of printed pages, to quote the title of an influential poetry textbook printed and reprinted throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, Laurence Perrine and Thomas Arp's *Sound and Sense: an Introduction to Poetry*. The idea that pages make sound, I want to say, is a disciplinary grounding hallucination, a shared madness that is exposed by transforming printed pages into digital surrogates.

The metaphor, "the poetic voice," is an abstraction that enables the perception of literary form, formal history, and historical specificity. Trouble occurs when "the poetic voice" is mistaken for reality. Otherwise, it very productively maps time onto space and vice versa, creating not a confusion so much as an oscillation

between the local, historical readings and those under the sign of eternity that makes literary criticism and theory possible. The most exemplary work of literature, John Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn," a poem that from Cleanth Brooks (1947) to David Ferris (2000) has been used to define "the aesthetic," interrogates the metaphor of "poetic voice" and thereby makes visible a necessary illusion for our discipline, its central reduction or abstraction. Keats had his own reasons for interrogating the page's silence—he didn't do it for us, nor did he somehow predict the advent of digital media in our future. The dying Keats, I argue here, writes a version of William Gibson's *Neuromancer* (1984): faced with a failing body, he would like to upload his consciousness into his printed poems and in that way send some part of himself forward into the future among the "dead leaves" that will spark the discipline of literary studies.[3] When metaphorical sound becomes physical, literal, in any critic's reading of Keats's Ode, he or she disavows the functional limits of the print medium. This disavowal grounds modern literary criticism—it is incredibly productive, in other words, but it is nonetheless delusional.

In 1819, Keats was fascinated with the way that print might connect to a body. "This Living Hand," written in the margins of his unfinished manuscript poem "The Cap and Bells," insists upon the limits of the page medium in the face of Keats's impending death:

> This living hand, now warm and capable
> Of earnest grasping, would, if it were cold
> And in the icy silence of the tomb,
> So haunt thy days and chill thy dreaming nights
> That thou wouldst wish thine own heart dry of blood
> So in my veins red life might stream again,
> And thou be conscience-calm'd—see here it is—
> I hold it towards you.

Keats knows however unconsciously that the proposed possibility will come true sooner rather than later, that his hand will be

"cold / And in the icy silence of the tomb." The last line, "see here it is—I hold it towards you" is directly related to the medium of this manuscript. Were I Catherine Moreland who had found this handwritten manuscript page in an attic trunk, I would drop it quickly and run out of the attic, hoping that someone would later explain it away: a metonymic chain connecting Keats's hand to pen to ink to paper to my hand would make dropping the page absolutely necessary. But printed pages have no connection to the author, metonymic or otherwise, and that a printed page can hold out a hand is a patent lie: it cannot. The printed page is more allied with the frozen silent tomb than with the warm living hand.

Written and printed texts are a reduction for the sake of making something thinkable; they "transduce between material reality and the abstract," as Aden Evens puts it.[4] Putting hand to paper is an act of abstracting. Whatever goes onto that piece of paper is a reduction, in other words, leaving out all the touch, the sound, the surround. Writing does not merely transcribe speech into something silent, it sublimates out of an experiential stream that includes sounds, sights, smells, fleeting and rejected thoughts. Printing takes the abstraction further than writing by hand; mass printing takes it still further insofar as it is the most distant from the author's living hand.

Jerome McGann formulates the drive for immortality promoting the desire to abstract via print publication most succinctly: "Print and manuscript technology represent efforts to mark natural language, which is itself a special-purpose system for coding human communication, so that it can be preserved and transmitted" (2004: 200).[5] The main thing that communication loses as it is written down for posterity is sound.[6] As we know from the study of film, sound temporalizes whatever it accompanies—in the case of film, images (Chion 1990: 13–14). This reduction that is writing transubstantiates one particular human experience, transferring it from the temporal into—yes, yes, into the immortal, or about as immortal as human monuments can be—but especially, in the case of printed writing, into the spatial. Via writing and

printing, elements are superadded to an experience that loses time and gains space, the space of the page.

As we now know from the history of Western literacy as recounted by Paul Saenger and Alberto Manguel (1996), at first writing was sheer transcription of spoken language. We know this because Latin inscriptions represent a continuous stream of letters, not only missing punctuation, but also presenting no spaces between words. The only way to understand the text was to read it aloud, to sound it out (Saenger 1997). With the advent of silent reading, time morphs into space. Now, one can go back and read silently what one has written, now that reading does not take place through time but on the space of the page. Once one's thoughts are transferred from one's body into a permanent inscription or "immutable mobile," as Bruno Latour calls books (1983), the "I" that appears on a printed page, un-enunciated, unheard, has been immortalized. The problem, however, is that the page's discourse has become unmoored from its original physical and temporal location (de Man 1982). Immortality has been achieved by the silently-read text, but the immortal is nobody.

Numerous eighteenth-century elocution manuals written during the time that printed texts and silent reading were moving center in cultural life discuss "the melody of speech," a phrase repeated many times in the opening pages of Joshua Steele's *An Essay Towards Establishing the Melody and Measure of Speech to be Expressed and Perpetuated by Peculiar Symbols* (1775).[7] Steele actually develops a notation system so that people will know how a text sounded when read aloud at any given historical moment. He has worked on "devising a scheme for expressing on paper the musical slides of the voice" (1775: 8), clearly, in response to the threat that that information will be lost, that "paper" operates independently of sound. Steele devises this notational scheme for the musical slide of the voice, remarking that he has unwittingly imitated Greek accents more or less exactly in drawing how the voice should rise and fall (1775: 9), and also for marking cadence (duration in time), accent (he says the latter shouldn't be called "accent" but rather

thesis and arsis), and degree of loudness. His purpose is to transmit his time's way of speaking (he calls it "modern") to posterity.[8]

Both Steele and John Walker, who also uses the phrase "melody of speaking" in his elocution manual, want to transform this melody into "visible signs."[9] Without these visible signs, the printed page that is spiritually apprehended rather than read aloud will have an "unheard melody."[10] And being an unheard melody, being inapprehensible by the sensuous ear, happens, one feels, because this silent cultural object, decorated with these printed signs and leaf-fringes—pages being especially fringy when they must be cut by hand—this book-thing is spirit. The birth-parent of this printed page had breath and noise, but, because it will be read silently, it will commune with spirits as a spirit. It has acquired, as a foster parent, the silence of reading comprehension, and time has been almost completely eradicated, slowed down in inverse proportion to the speed with which the eye sees.

You can see where I'm going here. Keats's urn is the printed page, the silently-read, mass-printed page. For Keats, fantasizing about a mute piper pictured on an urn is one way to ruminate about how his work will fare forward into the future: the unheard nature of reading is a source for both anxiety and hope. He needs to compensate for it, to remediate sound (Bolter and Grusin 1999: 5), but the affordances of this medium make that difficult. His poem "This Living Hand" shows us nothing if not that Keats was able and willing to confront and expose the limits and virtues of the medium for his art. Imagining his own artwork as an urn let's Keats explore precisely what fascinates and terrifies him about its future existence as printed text, even mass-printed text, read silently. And of course as Cleanth Brooks shows, the images surrounding the urn are paradoxical; Keats's feeling about print is ambiguous. Silently-read print achieves immortality once severed from the noisy body of its origin, so play on, ye soft pipes who cannot be heard. But, as Brooks points out, "the beauty portrayed is deathless because it is lifeless," immortal because the necessity of

Keats using his breath (or the surrogate breath of a reader) to utter the words has been removed.

It is definitely true that printed poems can be read aloud, and that the prosodic and "phono-notational"[11] markings constituting poetic form itself give us a lot of information about how to read. But we don't have to read aloud, and we probably spend much more of our lives reading silently than aloud. More than that, it is a catachresis, nay, it is a blatant lie, to say that printed poems "speak": they don't. I do, you do, students do, but pages do not speak. Let me mention a few places in post-1800 literary criticism where the catachretic or hallucinatory hope arises, where we can see the desire to hear a page of literature get up and speak.

In discussing the paradox in "Ode on a Grecian Urn" of "silent speech," Cleanth Brooks discusses, as does Marshall Brown (1992) after him, Keats's insistence that the Urn is silent, and then his injunction to "ye soft pipes" to "play on." Explicating that paradox, Brooks says, "if we listen carefully, we can hear them; their music is just below the threshold of normal sound."[12] Brooks has stepped into this world and is hearing things. Marshall Brown attacks the logic of the line about the soft pipes, even going so far as to correct it: "Keats should have said, 'Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard / Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, shut up'" (Brown 1992: 468). But even Brown claims, and takes his whole essay to justify, that one can "feel the presence of" the unheard but structuring "undertones" of this "tone poem" (473). He does not quite hear those undertones, but he feels them, almost like a deaf child learning to speak by putting his or her hand on the throat of someone talking. While Brooks and Brown's hearing of pages is rather understated and prosaic, Garrett Stewart, who wants to imagine a resounding reader, grounds his work on the phonotext of literary works in a remarkable but logically necessary "fact" about silent reading. He says that people must actively suppress movements in their vocal chords while reading silently:

> The somatic locus of soundless reception includes of course the brain but must be said to encompass as well the organs of vocal production, from diaphragm up through throat to tongue and palate. Silent reading locates itself, that is, in the conjoint cerebral activity and suppressed muscular action of a simultaneously summoned and silenced enunciation. (Stewart 1990: 1)

In my view, Stewart is rather flamboyantly hallucinating suppressed loudness. Print allows us to imagine that we have the authority of anonymity—nothing impugning us as (satiric) authors; we become in readers' minds the anonymous "they" of "they say"—but also as a discipline, literary studies in particular, to imagine ourselves, our voices, as made immortal by the mass-printed page.

Conclusion

My principal arguments in *Breaking the Book* have been these. First, that the authority of print misleads us intellectually into imagining that some deeply and obviously erroneous statements are true. I will give an example that is not print, but rather exemplifies print authority in another medium, as John Berger has shown can be done. I heard a comedian's reaction to early exposure of the Rodney King video: "put down the goddamn video camera and come help me." Who are you behind the writing of the book, and what are you doing RIGHT NOW—because the activity in which you are engaged in the time of producing the writing that is to be printed and the print that is to be mass distributed may implicate you in the very phenomenon which you call, in the name of critical thinking, a crime, a moral outrage. So, to give an example I have already discussed, Terry Eagleton's attack on Gayatri Spivak in the *London Review of Books*: what was he doing in the moment of handwriting, typing, or keying, in the subsequent moments of delegated print production and mass distribution–what was he doing that differed from what he attacked her for doing or really not doing? Nothing.

But the delusion instilled by mass print, as my manifesto has argued, is that critique is a voice from nowhere and that the activity of printing is a voicing, a physical act with political effects like the sound of protest moving in waves through the air to a massive agglomeration of ears connected to minds that, impinged upon by those sound waves, change. That is not a delusion that was shared by participants in early, small-run, coterie print culture: satirists such as Swift and Pope satirized equally the voice and target of critique: Cassinus, you'll remember, who repeats exactly Strephon's iteration of that timeless truth printed in Jonathan Swift's poem called "The Lady's Dressing Room"–Oh, Celia, Celia, Celia shits– is himself "embrowned" because too depressed by his discovery of Celia's digestive functions to bathe himself anymore.

The deliberate ellipses in so much early eighteenth-century printed literature suggests the hyper-awareness of eyes on a page rather than the imaginary belief that we give the concerns of ethnic, racial, and sexual others **a voice** when we critique, as Tara McPherson does in a newly published collection called *Debates in Digital Humanities*, the whiteness of Unix computer systems and their structures. McPherson attacks liberal humanism's failure to impact racism through structural change, as well she should, but she does so while imagining that she is not committing precisely the same failure as she writes, publishes, and mass distributes. Print systems must be as implicated in racism as Unix: how does that fact affect what is said about Unix systems? Insofar as her critique is media blind to its own medium, it fails to be self-critical enough. The alleged voices of subalterns sponsored by cultural critics appear in printed pages. Though the fantasy of mass-print informs critics' sense of what they are doing as they write for publication, the alleged massiveness of the distribution of these pages will likely top 200 libraries (McGann 2006b). The carbon footprint wrought in production will potentially leave more to the future than any critique. The authority of critique based in its implicit claim to not be committing the crime it exposes is based on belief that it always gets out into the world, making itself heard on a mass scale.

If "the author's voice" has been a term dominating even in historical and sociological bibliographic studies, "giving voice to" subalterns has dominated politicized literary histories ever since the proliferation of the term in anthologies of minority literatures during the 1980s and 1990s, with titles such as *Other Voices*, *Women's Voices*, and so on. But printed documents do not actually make sound: it is a catechresis, again, like Milton's "blind mouths" to imagine that flat pages adorned with typographical images make noise.[13] In a collection of essays called *VoiceTextHypertext*, Peter Shillingsburg honestly wonders about the impact or afterlife of his painstaking edition of Thackery apparatus, an edition he says that will be superseded in 50 years, with all his insights buried in its apparatus (Shillingsburg 2004: 412, 422). Shillingsburg is a digital textual editor, and his focus on the materiality of his work, his willingness to perform a media analysis of his own literary criticism while writing it springs from that source. Shillingsburg who is currently working on digital editing after having been a print editor for most of his career discusses truthfully his print edition of Thackery, "of which I imagine about ninety copies will ever be sold … " while "we live on a planet with approximately six billion people" (413). We as a discipline hallucinate our own publications alive because that means that they are out there in that world among those 6 billion people doing something, but they are not: they sit silently, immobile, on shelves, a fact made most poignant to us when we take out an old book from the library noticing that we are checking it out for the first time, or that the pages of an edition in a rare books room remain uncut. That book is truly a bear in the woods. "We mistake," Ian Bogost says, "the tiny pastures of private ideals with the megalopolis of real lives" in critical cultural studies (2012: 241).

I want to be clear here that my claim is about medium rather than epistemology. The specific genre of moral condescension endemic to cultural studies at our moment of systematic defunding depends upon our collective fantasy about what we are doing when we publish an article or a book. Does Grusin's attack on

neoliberalism for doing nothing in contrast to his own article's impact hold any water if it turns out that the covered issue of *differences*, the book, is purchased by four libraries, and in one of them, never checked out? (what about ten libraries? 300?) The literary critic's unimplicated authority depends not simply on our assent to the implicit claim that he or she is a voice from nowhere but more importantly that he or she is a voice reaching everywhere simply via the act of passing off corrected proofs.

The attempt to give voice to subalterns is as problematic as the genre of moral condescension, discussed in Chapter 3. The two kinds of critique, giving voice and moral condescension, are unfairly called critical thinking: the thinking is not now and never was critical enough—we criticized the ideologies and infrastructural biases of others while not critiquing our own. This complaint about the misappropriated authority of cultural studies discourse comes from none other than Bruno Latour in his essay "Why has Critique Run Out of Steam?" There is currently no anthropological analysis of literary studies comparable to the kind of analysis that we have deployed of science in science studies, and there needs to be one. Eagleton attacks Spivak without concomitantly attacking himself. Such forms of critique are intellectually dishonest because no one can throw a brick upon which he or she is standing.

I want to emphasize what I am not saying here. I'm not saying, "don't write about racism–it doesn't do any good." That's not true: such writings—my own writings are feminist—such writings do help. Arguably the fact that Britain abolished slavery in England itself almost a century before the US has to do with the anti-slavery movement, much of which took place in published pamphlets and poetry. I'm saying instead, critically question whether, in the act of publishing, you are performing the political act that you think you are. Literary and cultural studies critics imagine themselves as speaking truth to power through a delusion about their impact based upon a lifetime of reading mass-printed books: they hope that a new species of person is made by themselves,

inassailably moral critics, and that a whole new species worships them, doing their bidding. Too often the authority of the cultural studies critic is crafted out of "praising our own steaming shit" (2012: 242), to put it in the scatological terms proposed by Bogost, and before him Swift, in order to shock us into seeing our books as monsters crafted out of decaying flesh, human offal.

Living books

If Victor's monster incarnates his desire for creating worshippers, one that my manifesto has been designed to expose as the cultural critic's genre of moral condescension (was that worth *this* book's carbon footprint?), Mary Shelley's monster is not that: again, he's a meme, not a dead product but a living producible. I want to explore that achievement just a bit before concluding, and I want to do so in thinking about its use.

Usage is of course a fraught term: use-value has been determined by post-Marxists at least to be a myth; and when we are discussing the digital, there is usability which aims to make medium absolutely transparent in the service of quick and easy (down and dirty?) communication: *Don't Make Me Think*, is the title of a usability manual that has made the rounds. I want to spend a moment here thinking about usage as it has been explored in the field of psychoanalysis, particularly in the work of D. W. Winnicott. Works of criticism can be understood by thinking about how constructions in analysis work. First, they don't always work. It is simply not the case, not real, that any construction is as good as any other, that fiction has no tie to reality. That fact is ignored by those who lump constructivists and relativists together. Working constructions in analysis are the stories co-created by analyst and analysand out of living breath, two breaths in a room together. Those stories work insofar as they relieve symptoms. I'm not talking about alleged symptoms such as "homosexuality" or being a "male identified woman," to use the medicalized, disciplinary terms, symptoms which may bother other people about a person

but not the person who is the bearer of them. I'm talking about real suffering—symptoms which, no matter how heroic insofar as contesting normativity, convention, politics, oppression, power, discipline, history, whatever—no matter how heroic, hurt like hell. The stories that work to relieve symptoms do work insofar as they exploit fully the uses to which analysts can be put by analysands. Books of criticism work insofar as they can be put to use, fostering play in transitional space.

Psychoanalysis is arguably staging a scene in which real human breathing is put back onto a blank printed page, arguably in its staging designed to cure neuroses born of print, especially given its epistolary and case-history origins and functioning. Another re-staging it does is developmental, or mythically so: when children learn language, their mother or father plays with them linguistically, uttering nonsense intermingled with sense. The child goes out to meet that cultural production and undecidably—this is a space of sheer play—undecidably finds or produces meaning in the sound memes given by his or her parents. Close-reading of texts allows a similar kind of play: as readers argue that this or that formal element, this or that rhetorical, grammatical, or tropological structure, in conjunction with this or that semantic content, actually means X, the resulting X (the reading) is undecidably the author's and the reader's. Any interpretation that interrupts this play by literary critic, teacher, or psychoanalyst, wrecks it—pace Freud, or maybe, as Freud discovered in treating Dora. That is, it is only classical analysis that requires making the meaning of this play conscious, consciousness here serving as a cover for violent, even terroristic, rationality of the sort that Swift envisioned as deployed by the Houhynyms. Shelley's monster—not Victor's, but Mary's—is an allegory for so many things besides print. David Marshall effectively argues that the monster represents the French Revolution peasantry; I've had discussions while teaching this novel about abortion, cloning—we all have had such discussions and more. Shelley's monster is a producible—he's a bit of transitional space, a play space that is loved, pitied,

and loathed, ultimately rejected as we leave off cultural play to go back to the real world refreshed.

Mary Shelley wrote a mass-printed book, and I would claim that, in doing so, she did not cede to Victor's desire: she did not condescend to readers to whom she gave herself as an idol but instead created a play space. Her work lets itself, invites itself, to be used. People can do such things in writing books that will be mass-printed and produced, but they are tempted not to do so, and the affordance to produce something that could be worshipped, that would take author and reader alike out of the world of green jello made with canned fruit bits into the world of celebrity—that temptation, lies there waiting to pounce, unchecked.

If the number of websites devoted to departed loved ones is any indication, desires for immortality are magnified by the digital which seems to hold out the promise of disembodied communication across eternity, all the while offering real sound and images of the departed via multimedia recording.[14] What kinds of tools or programs or modes of peer-review or filters can we produce that would build, protect, and augment a space of cultural play? More important maybe than eliminating monstrous affordances like Victor's monster, his mass-printed book, is our need to preserve the affordances instantiated by Mary Shelley's monster, her mass-printed book: can this new medium give us the transitional space of the literary, a place we look to the university to help us preserve?

Avoiding dead screens

Digital literary studies can be designed in order to create and preserve spaces of interpretation. Steven Jones (2013) and Bethany Nowviskie (2013) have written about digital humanities' investment in handicraft, and clearly, the hand-encoding promoted by the Text Encoding Initiative (http://www.tei-c.org) has been taken up as a standard or norm for digital archival production by the MLA

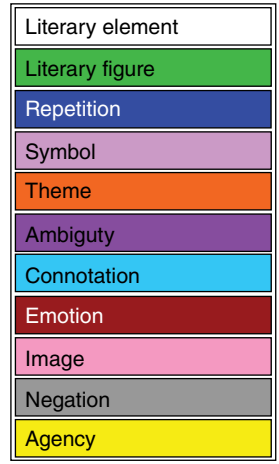
(Committee on Scholarly Editions 2011) and granting agencies. The forms of attention that are required for hand encoding resemble and in fact reproduce those required by close reading. If faculty can learn simple coding and transforming languages, we can ask students to encode texts for any details we wish to have students find—tropology, for example, or historical themes—and then transform those documents into visualizations that help students understand their own thinking better. Figures C.5 C.6, and C.7 show poems encoded by students in my "Writing About Literature" class, an exercise which helped many of what had been "the worst" students become excellent ones, as evinced by the papers they wrote about their poems: they read, they interpreted, they paid close attention.

The actual encoding required that students specify types of figures (metaphor, metonymy, simile) as well as the tenor for each. The ambiguity tag requires listing all the possible meanings of the ambiguous word or phrase. Coding a poem requires concretely implementing one's knowledge of literary techniques, applying them to specific words on the page and explaining why they apply. Visualizing the resulting code helps students see what they have done: the first version of Maya Angelou's "Caged Bird" was all in red because the student had coded almost all of it as having to do with a theme. She didn't like that result, went back, and chose specific them words, "caged" and "freedom."

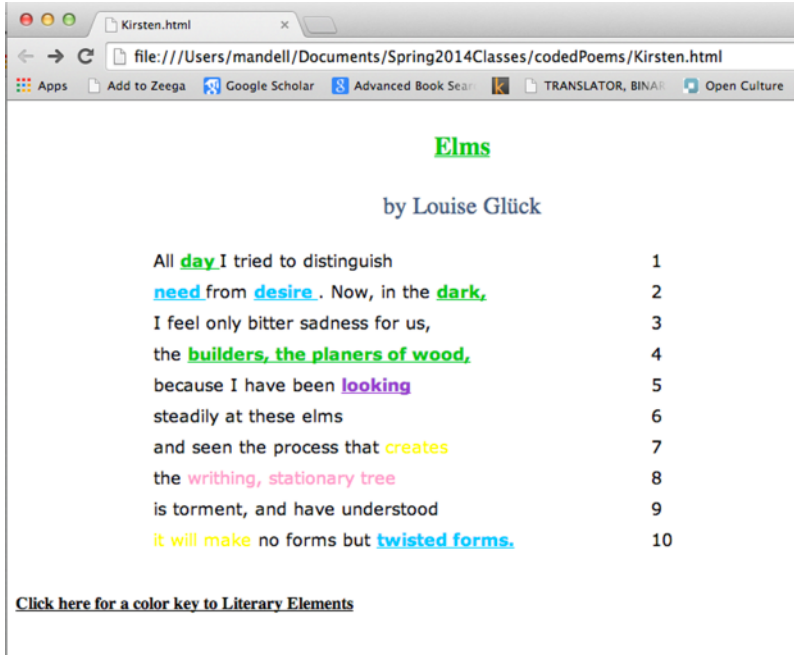
Figure C.8 shows notice of an interpretation tool built by the Praxis graduate program at the University of Virginia: it allows young readers to help each other interpret the texts they read. The graduate students began and finished a collaborative endeavor to make this crowd-sourcing interpretation tool in one year, and it is now used in many K through 12 programs.

One year.

If faculty learn to create and understand algorithms and datasets (Chapter 2), use tools such as JuXta Commons, encode texts, teach students to encode them, and then learn how to transform their



Figures C.5 Screenshot of the coded poem key.



Figures C.6 Screenshot of a coded poem.

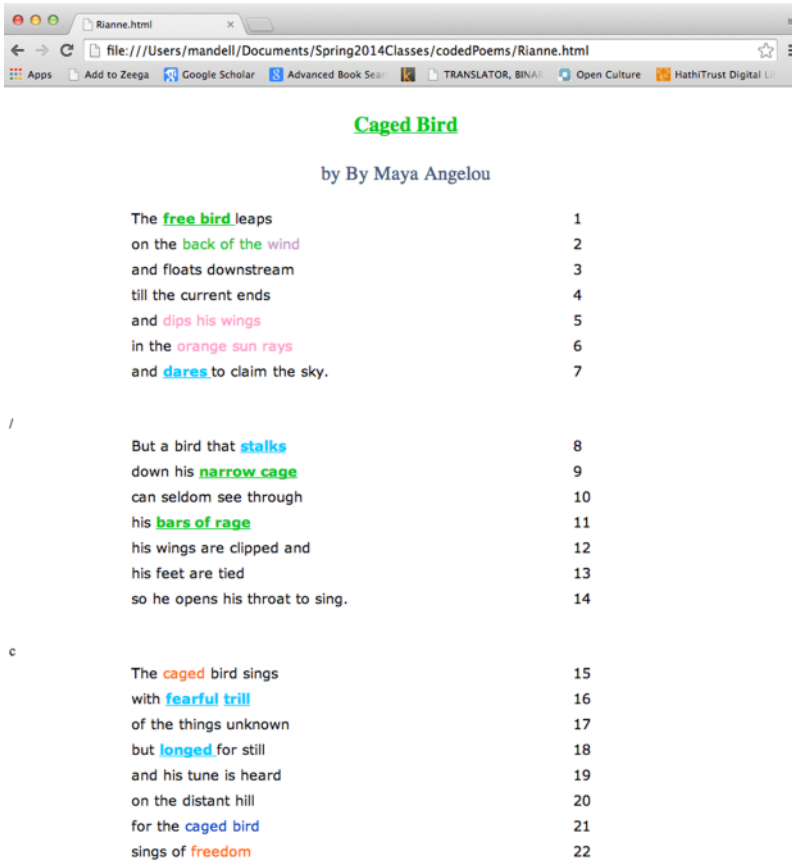


Figure C.7 A coded and visualized poem.

students' work into visual aids to thinking, if we learn how to collaborate on teams to build tools and create datasets that matter to us, if we can become digitally literate in a way that matters for the future of literature, we can hold open the spaces of interpretation and the time of play, the best thing that the book machine in our discipline has been able to do. If "now is not the worst," it is time to roll up our sleeves.

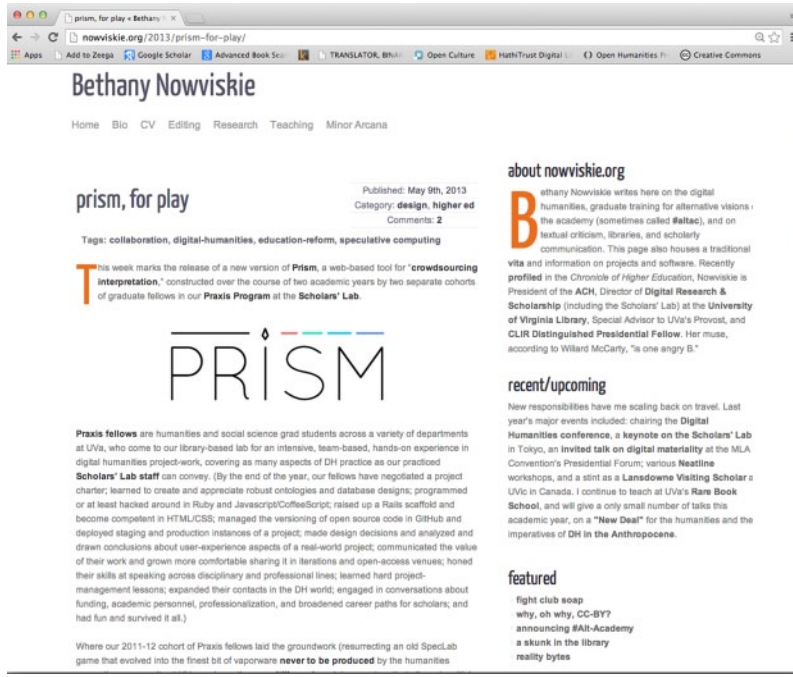


Figure C.8 A reading and interpretation tool, Prism, developed by the Praxis graduate program at the University of Virginia.

Notes

1 Franco Moretti 2005, 2000, 2003, 2009a, 2009b; Katie Trumpener 2009; N. Katherine Hayles 2007; John Guillory 2010.

2 Thus Rudi Visker analyzes a problem in Foucault's work: if power is constitutive of knowledge, then unmasking power relations in the construction of knowledge does not reveal some kind of culpability (1995: 57–8).

3 On Keats's Odes as offering discipline-grounding exemplarity, see Furniss and Bath (2007), Part I. Formal Introduction. I'm quoting, of course, Shelley's "Ode on the West Wind."

4 Aden Evens (2005), "Chapter 3: HCI," presented at HASTAC 2009, University of Illinois. Aden is here discussing the interface, the

mouse and the keyboard, but the same can be said of printed and as well as verbal language, fort/da, for example.

5 I altered the sentence structure slightly.

6 For sound studies related to Romantic authors, see Andrew Elfenbein, "Sounding Meaning," in 2009: 108–43; Celeste Langan (2001); Laura Mandell (2007); Walter Ong, "Romantic Difference and the Poetics of Technology," in 1971: 255–83.

7 Second edition, titled *Prosodia Rationalis* (London: 1779). I get this example from Eric Griffiths (1989).

8 "Had some of the celebrated speeches from Shakespeare been noted and accented as they spoke them, we should […] be able to judge whether the oratory of our stage is improved or debased. If the method, here essayed, can be brought into familiar use, the types of modern elocution may be transmitted to posterity as accurately as we have received the musical compositions of Corelli" (14). Though it is the progress of acting he seems to care about in the example of Shakespeare, Steele's real goal is to create a notation so that "the *melody of speech* … may be described and communicated in writing" (14–15; orig. emphasis).

9 John Walker, *The melody of speaking delineated; or, elocution taught like music, by visible signs, Adapted to the Tones, Inflexions, and Variations of Voice* (London, G. G. J. and J. Robinson, 1787)—in this case, not intonation alone but elocution itself is called "the melody of speaking."

10 L. O. Purdon proposes another source for "unheard melodies," a passage from Suetonius who describes Nero as longing to perform the lyre on stage and so reciting the following Greek proverb: "Hidden music counts for nothing," "A Possible Source of Keats's Unheard Melodies in 'Ode on a Grecian urn," *Keats-Shelley Journal* 38 (1989): 21–2. Keats's phrase is certainly over-determined, but I want to emphasize here that hidden is not at all the same thing as silent, because of course "melody" can be written on a piece of paper, in plain sight, and yet remain completely mute.

11 This term comes from Stewart (1990). This text self-consciously deploys the catechresis I have mentioned, as can be seen in the chapter titled "To Hear with Eyes" (37–65).

12 Cleanth Brooks, "Keats's Sylvan Historian: History without Footnotes," from 1947, rpt. Lentricchia et al. 2003, 64.

13 "Blind mouths!" St. Peter attacks clergy who hold offices out of greed in "Lycidas," line 119. This is an example of catechresis typically given with definitions of it.

14 See also N. Katherine Hayles's critique of the disembodied pretensions of digital media (1999).

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