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Author
Chamberlain, Shannon Frances

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Character in the Age of Adam Smith

By

Shannon Frances Chamberlain

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Committee in charge:

Professor Janet Sorensen, Chair
Professor Ian Duncan
Associate Professor Kevis Goodman
Professor Emerita Shannon Stimson

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Abstract

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What does Adam Smith's moral philosophy owe to the literary discourse of his own time? Many recent studies of Smith have focused on finding his fingerprints on later imaginative literature, particularly in the nineteenth-century novels of free indirect discourse. The argument of this dissertation is that we gain both a better understanding of Smith and the eighteenth-century evolution of novels by attempting to place Smith in his original literary context, as a well-informed participant in the debates around the moral and didactic purpose of literature, especially as they concerned "character."

The use and purpose of literary character was undergoing profound philosophical changes during Smith's career (1748-1790). From the scandalous and barely disguised society figures who occupied the pages of proto-novels and romances in the early part of the century, to Hugh Blair's late-century assertion that "fictitious histories…furnish one of the best channels for conveying instruction, for painting human life and manners, for showing the errors into which we are betrayed, for rendering virtue amiable and vice odious," literary character in novels became the crux of a larger debate on the relationship between rhetoric—previously a somewhat suspect and corrupt art—and morality. Smith's method of instruction in the *Lectures on Rhetoric and* Belles Lettres has long been understood as revolutionary, but relatively less attention has been paid to how his description of the "character of the author" and this figure's careful deployment of readers' sympathies engages with the relatively new notion that fictional characters were easier to sympathize with, and therefore better figures for the teaching of ethics, than "real" people. Notions of characters' fictionality evolved, I argue, into *The Theory of Moral Sentiments'* assertion that all other human beings are essentially fictional to us, products of their rhetoric and our imagination.

I examine the evolution of moral and literary "character" throughout Smith's career—from his praise for epistolary novels in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* to his engagement with Edinburgh literary circles in the later eighteenth century and especially the novels of his close friend, Henry Mackenzie—to offer a fuller portrait of how Smith's theories came to play such an outsized role in nineteenth-century novels. But part of the purpose of this project is to revise our nineteenth- and post-nineteenth-century understandings of Smith as they have been inflected by J.S. Mill and later thinkers in the liberal tradition, and reinvigorate Smith as the product of a moment that was just beginning to theorize a moral role for imaginative literature. *Gulliver's Travels, Clarissa,* and *Julia de Roubigné* are stories about how we represent ourselves as moral beings to others, and provided Smith with practical examples about rhetoric as a means of moral inquiry and formation. Most fundamentally, I argue that Smith's conception of the "moral sentiments" evolved from formulating a relationship between readers and writers through characters, a subject that was also a particular interest of the eighteenth-century novel.

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Dedicated to the memory of the never-to-be-forgotten
Dr. William Nathan Alexander (1968-2009)

"The word 'however' is like an imp coiled beneath your chair. It induces ink to form words you have not yet seen, and lines to march across the page and overshoot the margin. There are no endings. If you think so you are deceived as to their nature. They are all beginnings. Here is one." –Hilary Mantel, *Bring Up the Bodies*

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Adam Smith wrote that "the duties of gratitude are perhaps the most sacred of all those which the beneficent virtues prescribe to us" and looking back on the way that this work was born and the number of hands that have shaped it, I cannot help but agree. First and uppermost gratitude is due to my committee: the ever-patient Janet Sorensen, who shepherded this project through a variety of nascent and naïve forms; Kevis Goodman, whose early encouragement and generous readings gave me the confidence to keep pushing my work further; Ian Duncan, whom I (and everyone else) is in the habit of consulting like an encyclopedia about all things Scottish Enlightenment, which he is too kind to notice; and Shannon Stimson, who stuck with it through the bitter end and from the other side of the continent.

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I gather that by the time most people finish their dissertations, they are sick of their departments and never want to see from or hear of them again. For me, this is not the case: the English department at Berkeley has been my second home for the last nine years. The Berkeley Connect program—in which I was a mentor for the 2016-2017 academic year and now, as I write this in late 2017, inexplicably and unfairly finds itself on the critically endangered list—was designed to help undergraduates navigate the complexities of a large research university and provide a sense of community; as is so often the case, however, my undergraduates ended up my guides and provided me with the sociable sphere I needed to push through to the end. Thank you, friends, students, colleagues. And to Professors Kathleen Donegan, Lyn Hejinian, and David Landreth, impartial spectators *extraordinaires*.

This project is dedicated to the memory of my undergraduate advisor, Nathan Alexander, who died just as I began my graduate program and whose absence I felt every single moment of it. But you live on every page and in every margin.

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Note on textual abbreviations

As is customary in writing about Adam Smith, I will refer to texts that I reference often by abbreviations. The first time I refer to a text, I spell out the entire name; subsequently, texts are described according to the following acronyms:

EPS
Essays on Philosophical Subjects

LRBL
Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres

TMS
The Theory of Moral Sentiments

WN
An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of The Wealth of Nations

References to the editions I used may be found in the endnotes to each chapter.

Introduction: Character in the Age of Adam Smith

This project began in my speculation that Adam Smith—the first modern economist, but also, as is increasingly understood, a pioneer in the instruction of English literature—was more influenced by the eighteenth-century novel than has been previously noted. Smith, as his Glasgow editors admit in their preface to *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759; hereafter TMS)[i], sometimes seems a bit of a cipher in the context of eighteenth-century philosophy.[ii] We recognize easily enough the ghosts of David Hume and Francis Hutcheson in his work, but the sympathetic interactions he describes in TMS are a particularly significant departure from these earlier conceptions of automatic and visceral (and visually-oriented) sympathies.

On the other hand, the "novelistic" qualities of Smith's work have interested and puzzled many a philosopher, including one of Smith's most prominent interpreters, Charles Griswold. Griswold goes so far as to say that TMS "presents the character of a novel" in its proliferation of literary exemplars and references.[iii] While this seems to confuse the novel and another eighteenth-century genre, the commonplace book, Griswold does anticipate in this statement the growing trend to find Smith's philosophy in actual novels.[iv] In literary studies, accounts of Smith tend to emphasize how his highly narrative descriptions of sympathy's genesis influenced the work of later novelists, like Jane Austen and George Eliot. This is precisely the subject of Rae Greiner's *Sympathetic Realism* (2012), which sees in Smith's call for measured, intellectual, even "mediocre" sympathies the genesis of the Austenian narrator, a kind of impartial spectator who provides precisely the right distance to encourage sympathy, not identification (with which it is often confused).[v] Before Greiner, both Juliet Shields (in 2010) and Evan Gottlieb (in 2007) noted the literary importance of Smith's partial and reflective sympathy as a model for late-century nation building in the wake of the 1707 Act of Union. Ian Duncan describes Smith as making "generous theoretical accommodation" for the novel in his *Lectures on Rhetoric and* Belles Lettres (LRBL) to the extent that Smith provides a historical account of the development of various literary forms, aligning prose about intimate, domestic concerns with the commercial modernity he seeks to describe.[vi] Each of these accounts is persuasive and helps to illuminate many of the structural and moral concerns of very late eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century fiction. They led me to wonder, however, what reading Smith in concert with the fiction of his own time—some of which he explicitly mentions in his larger body of work—might gain us in terms of our understanding of Smith, as well as of the fiction itself.

The most salient and transportable idea of Smith's work, at least for literature scholars, has been TMS*'s* account of sympathy. It receives its fullest articulation and

explanation in that text, where it is defined perhaps most simply as "fellow-feeling" (TMS 10). It is possible to feel what Smith calls an "imperfect" version of it upon the mere sight of a suffering human being, but, Smith is quick to assure us, this is an inadequate and decidedly less full version of true sympathy. For that, the potential sympathizer requires a story. The foundational question of Smithian sympathy is "What has befallen you?" and until we receive an answer to that question that fulfills a variety of requirements, we are liable to, for instance, see a man getting angry at another in the street and instead of sympathizing with the one feeling the emotion by feeling some version of it ourselves, we are "uneasy" and "torturing ourselves with conjectures." Our "fellow-feeling is not very considerable" before we have heard the case represented to us (11-12).[vii]

Even from this brief description, it is not difficult to see, perhaps, why Smith's moral sentiments have proven such fertile ground for literary critics: their founding imperative is to tell a story. But for some time, a fault line among literary scholars of Smith has existed over the question of whether the moral sentiments were "dramatic" or "narrative" in nature: that is, whether their literary fulfillment occurs best in plays or in fiction.[viii] Some of what Smith says (his occasional talk of a "view of the situation," for instance) lead to the understandable conclusion that sympathy obtains when one compares, for instance, the visible signs of anger with a sense of what one would feel in the "imaginary change of situations" with the person feeling the anger: in other words, verifying the situation which inspired the anger and comparing it with the sufferer's expression of that anger. But Smith famously insists that this verification is purely imaginative work, and not a process of, for instance, feeling what that person feels, which is impossible ("Though our brother is upon the rack, as long as we ourselves are at our ease, our sense will never inform us of what he suffers…It is the impressions of our own sense only, not those of his, which our imaginations copy" [9]). In fact, and as is clear throughout TMS, the basis for sympathy *is* the answer to the question "What has befallen you?" and how well it expresses the context of the sufferer. As "we do not grow hungry" upon reading the "journal of a siege, or a sea voyage," we are not truly sympathizing with a victim's hunger, but with a proper rhetorical representation that fully activates our knowledge of what "the distress [of] excessive hunger occasions" (28). The question of "drama" and its immediacy or "narrative" and its supposed remoteness really does not matter: whether one reads about the siege or sees it performed through the magic of stagecraft (or for that matter witnesses it personally), the end goal is to hear its story told by the potential object of sympathy.

Indeed, one important way that Smith seems not to follow Hume in asserting that any visually verifiable or real world analogue need inspire a particularly powerful

sentiment. Almost before he has addressed the question of how sympathy develops between people, Smith uses fiction to illustrate his point: "Our joy for the deliverance of those heroes of tragedy or romance who interest us, is as sincere as our grief for their distress, and our fellow-feeling with their misery is not more real than that with their happiness" (10). This is an oft-quoted line of Smith's, especially among philosophers, political scientists, and economists who make a Griswold-esque point about the importance and centrality of literature to Smith's work. If anything, however, this centrality has been understated as inhering primarily in the use of examples, or the imperative to tell a story. Duncan's account of the *LRBL* digs deeper, noting that the fundamental term underlying Smith's conceptions of both sentiment and rhetoric is "exchange," itself part and parcel of the conjectural literary history that demands a prose genre of everyday life for the complexity of commercial society. This is that "generous theoretical accommodation" that Smith makes for the novel, "without formally admit[ting] [it] into his pedagogy."[ix]

It is true, as many others before me have pointed out, that Smith openly disparages a genre he calls "novels" in the LRBL, mocking their violations of the unities and even calling their tendency to keep one in suspense particularly bad at promoting the measured, reflective sympathy that he believes that "histories" in general more likely to encourage. It is important to remember here that the LRBL were lectures, transcribed in the hands of two of Smith's students and not compiled on the basis of his notes, which were burned at his death after he realized that he would not have the time to complete his planned history of literature. Given his talk of suspense and violation of the unity of time, he may have been thinking of what we would now call "Romance," or the *chroniques scandaleuses* of the very early century. Romance in particular is known for thumbing its nose at the unity of time, often spanning multiple lifetimes to tell sweeping generational stories. To put additional confusion in the mix, many of what we would now call novels called themselves "histories," as in *Clarissa, Or The History of a Young Lady,* the subject of my second chapter and authored by someone that Smith takes the time to explicitly praise in *TMS*. The term "novel," as befitting a genre on the rise, was vexed and precarious, and there are good reasons—Duncan gives some of them—to not take Smith's pronouncement as absolutely inimical to the idea that he was himself conversant with or influenced by novels.

Smith also, of course, praises a few of them: *Gulliver's Travels,* as well as the epistolary works of Pierre Marivaux, Madame de Riccoboni, and Samuel Richardson, author of *Clarissa, Pamela,* and *Sir Charles Grandison,* three extraordinarily popular and influential novels of sentiment, well-known to throw young ladies (and a few young men) into fits of sympathetic sorrow for its long-suffering heroines and hero, respectively. In any attempt to determine what the genesis of Smith's moral sentiments

might owe to novels, it seemed best to start with these: to think carefully about how Smith wrote about them, and what they had in common.

What these epistolary texts have in common—with each other and with Smith's work—is an interest in the relationship between rhetoric and character, at this point only just acquiring the literary meaning that we usually attribute to it now, in the sense of "a character in a book." Smith for his part is veritably obsessive about the connection between character in its multifarious eighteenth-century meanings and rhetoric, from LRBL onward. Stephen J. McKenna, for instance, writes about Smith's rhetoric as an "art of character" through an Aristotelian lens, and identifies its central innovation as its lack of specific attention to the tropes, figures, and elaborate metaphors that formed the basis of earlier rhetorical instruction.[x] Instead, Smith recommends a course of reading that will allow the aspiring rhetorician to communicate his sentiment "by sympathy" (LRBL 23) or in other words by abstracting from this practice of reading a kind of impartial reader who will serve as the hidden interlocutor of these sentiments: encouraging the writer to "plainly and cleverly hit off" (ibid.) his meaning, rather than becoming trapped in the "dungeon of metaphorical obscurity" (8) that he identifies with earlier forms of rhetorical instruction. Rhetoric becomes useful in Smith's system towards two ends, as McKenna explains:

> the internal ends are those consistent with discovering, quite apart from their eventual practical deployment, means of persuasion appropriate for human beings as rational, emotional, ethical animals; its external ends are those objectives to which persuasion may be applied in ultimate practice.[xi]

Where "character" becomes necessary for Smith—and he uses the word over 50 times in the relatively short space of LRBL—is in forging a connection between these two ends. McKenna also notes that both LRBL and TMS contain little in the way of "prescriptive guidance," or sets of rules laid out neatly that one must follow in order to write well, or to become a good person.[xii] Rather, the process of forming a character is intimately bound up in a sensitive communicative practice: one learns about other people and what they need and desire in the course of trying to persuade them to answering one's own needs or wants (primarily sympathy, in TMS). The innovativeness of the approach is not to view persuasion cynically—the way rhetoric was often seen in Smith's times—as the trickery by which one transformed base desires into rhetorical gold for the purposes of fooling others, but instead as a deeply social and even constitutive practice in commercial society. Standing at the height of the Smithian moral pyramid are those who learn "to feel much for others and little for

ourselves" (*TMS* 23) through an honest examination of how their own rhetoric must appear, considered behind the veil of other people's natural indifference to our personal needs and wants. Cultivating a character is the gradual, accretive process of internalizing the imagined responses of others that will direct one's future conduct, in life or, as was increasingly common in the eighteenth-century, in print.

Smith's most direct interlocutor in *LRBL* is "my Lord Shaftesbury," who recommended the "Remedy of SOLILOQUY"—in lieu of imagining the responses of others—as the best guide to cultivating the "character of the writer."[xiii] It is not hard to see why a solipsistic self-dialogue would overturn Smith's entire program of socialized sentiments, or why Smith devotes such space to refuting that supposition by criticizing Shaftesbury's work and speculating about the social conditions of Shaftesbury's upbringing (solitude, lack of religious belief or community) that might have led to these peculiar notions.[xiv] But in the first chapter of this project, I will identify other possible interlocutors for Smith by way of understanding what he thought was particularly praiseworthy about Jonathan Swift and *Gulliver's Travels*: they were a direct challenge to another view of rhetoric: namely, the anti-rhetorical view. Anti-rhetorical sentiment ran high in the beginning of the eighteenth-century in England (far less so in Scotland), and held that rhetoric—or even speech, full stop—stood as a barrier between reality, truth, and science and human understanding of all things. Paddy Bullard points to John Locke's declaration of rhetoric to be the "great Art of Deceit and Errrour" as emblematic of this early Augustan position, one that Swift writes against in *Gulliver* and which Smith seems to pick up in his praise of the novel and its mechanics of personhood, rhetoric, and character.[xv] As my second chapter will elaborate, Richardson makes a form of the anti-rhetorical critique—as it was resurrected and leveled by Henry Fielding and the whole host of Antipamelists against *Pamela*—the subject of *Clarissa* in a way that I believe influenced Smith's thoughts on the novel as a tool of moral instruction.

But to turn again to the question of the ways in which "the" novel—and not just individual novels—might manifest in Smith's work, the rhetorical basis of both character, morality, and arguably reality would appear to open up a new line of inquiry. For as Smith develops his idea of an imagined moral character that is created and sustained through the skillful deployment of rhetoric, so too novels are grappling with the question of how to create "real" (i.e. believable, credible, perhaps likable) moral subjects within imaginary universes about which no direct data is available (or even existent). From Catherine Gallagher comes the crucial insight that it is not the "realistic" that the novel had to invent (as Ian Watt and other writers about early novels long speculated), but the "fictional." Eighteenth-century fictions had to train up in their readers in a response that highly resembles the self-contained, self-reinforcing

rhetorical-moral system of Smith's LRBL and TMS. In Gallagher's account of early novels, this training is primarily done on the grounds of the "particular, but explicitly non-referential, fictional individual,"[xvi] invoking Henry Fielding's claim that he sought to represent a class of persons in a generalized set of situations, not one particular person, and was thus a satirist and not a libeler. But, as Gallagher goes on to note, this claim rather quickly ran up against the problem of the near impossibility of representing a class of people in just one specimen. Thus it is that we find Samuel Richardson, one of Smith's favorite authors, carrying on a correspondence with the Swiss writer Albrecht von Haller about the reality of Robert Lovelace, the villain of *Clarissa*. Von Haller argues with Richardson that no young man in the real world would act as Lovelace does; Richardson responds that young men with all of Lovelace's qualities, experiences, and morals (essentially, the set of Lovelaces that includes one Lovelace) would act precisely as Lovelace does. The debate is at its end, as one writer insists on real world verification for Lovelace, and the other relies on the self-reinforcing fictional (and, of course, notably rhetorical because it is also epistolary) world that he has created.[xvii]

The process of coming to know the "character of the author" is remarkably similar in Smith's LRBL, and famously confusing and apparently paradoxical for that very reason. Smith insists, for instance, that there are many kinds of competent writerly characters who manage to hit off their meaning with their potentially sympathetic readers, and is even at considerable pains to identify two of them (the "plain" and the "simple") and show how they manifest in two writers of equal skill, William Temple and Swift. The anti-prescriptivist nature of Smith's writing "advice" (if we even want to call it that) is well represented in Lecture 7, where Smith tells us:

> The same sentiment may often by naturally and agreably expressed and yet the manner be very different according to the circumstances of the author. The same story may be considered either as plain matter of fact without design to excite our compassion, or [it] in a moving way, or lastly in a jocose manner, according to the point in which it is connected with the author. There are a variety of characters which we may equally admire, as equally go<o>d and amiable, and yet these may be very different. It would then be very absurd to blame that of a good natured man because he wanted the severity of a more rigid one (LRBL 34).

This is, needless to say, a rather unfamiliar type of rhetorical instruction. More specifically, in the context of this lecture, it is meant also to be reading advice: how to read an author like Swift, for instance, and understand his character well enough to

know whether the story that Smith alludes to is being told in a way that is not—we must note again—consistent with some reality out in the world, per se, but with that author's own character. The recursive and self-reinforcing nature of determining an author's character through his rhetoric (and, taking the next step, creating one's own character by further abstracting how others will read this same process in us) describes the same circle that Richardson establishes with Lovelace: he is like this because he is like this, and the text provides its own verification. The real indeed recedes as character becomes further cemented, and the jocose man is locked into his jocosity by virtue of past jocosities and the need to stay consistent with them. Rhetoric directs the moral sentiments in this way, by creating the object against which all future rhetorical performances are to be judged by the potential sympathizer/reader. The formal qualities of my argument here are perhaps best analogized to Duncan's claim about Hume in *Scott's Shadow*: that despite an open disavowal of a type of literary production, the philosopher's larger program in fact relies on some of the conceptual categories that are opened up by that kind of literature, in addition to opening up some of its own for later fictions.[xviii] In Smith's case, his apparent disavowal of something novel-like is undermined by his conception of the rhetoricity of moral sentiments in general and the analogous process by which 'character' is created and reinforced in fiction.

In early fiction, then, I argue that Smith saw a promising articulation of how character development might work rhetorically in precisely the socially constitutive, subjective, non-ontological way that he wanted, where rhetoric itself creates an imaginative "view of the situation" against which this same rhetoric can then be measured. What helped this along, ironically, was the state of flux that character itself was undergoing. At least in novels, "character" as a concept (what it was, how to evaluate it in the context of this new genre, what relationship it bore to 'real life' figures) was still very much in the theoretical, formative stages, which led many authors to thematize of some of the under-resolved issues surrounding it: often, and not coincidentally, perhaps, in the novels that Smith praised. In *Gulliver's Travels*, for instance, Swift mocks the conventions of both realistic fictions and the anti-rhetorical view in his parodic treatment of both the Royal Academy in the Laputa episode. He also parodies *Robinson Crusoe*, another early fiction that demanded and indeed rather openly solicited belief in its real-world referent, but with a less knowing *élan* than the one which Swift would attach to *Gulliver's* paratextual materials. Little has been said about *Gulliver's* various mockeries of *Crusoe*, largely, I think, because we have missed the nature of the critique. The interesting and ahead-of-its-time claim of *Gulliver* is that it is possible to generate a character and judge the accuracy of his claims according to the closed-circle analysis that evaluates the imaginative situation that his rhetoric creates for the reader against this same rhetoric.

To unpack this a bit further and put it in Smithian terms, we use our imaginations to conceive of the situation that Gulliver is put in through our evaluation of his rhetoric, and then we evaluate his rhetoric against what we would feel, placed in the same situation. Later fictions like Richardson's would, of course, present fewer fabulistic or fantastical elements, but in some sense, the greater the degree to which our imagination has to stretch, the more Swift's (and Smith's) point is reinforced. We do not have to believe in the reality of the isle of rational horses to believe in the reality of Gulliver's character, as John Bender might remind us, but the point is different, I think, than the highly empiricist line that Bender takes. It is not so much that Swift cannot help being "swept into [the realist novel's] technical vortex"[xix] as it is that he wants to remind us that the "real," at least when it comes to character, is always rhetorically constructed in the first place. This work of character and its substitution of rhetorical claims to replace ones of physical verification is the subject of my first chapter, about Smith's use of *Gulliver* in the LRBL.

From here, I move on to Richardson and the epistolary form more generally, as all of the novels that Smith praises in TMS are epistolary. Epistolarity occasionally gets short shrift in eighteenth-century novel theory, as eighteenth-century 'character' does in larger theoretical treatments of character itself, where it is often viewed as merely precursory or at an early point in the *telos* of Austenian or Eliotian characters, just as epistolary texts are considered as mere interesting precursors to the third person of free indirect discourse. The most recent attempt to establish a general theory of character in the novel, Alex Woloch's *The One v. The Many*, largely skips over eighteenth-century fictions to discuss instead a question that does not really arise in relation to a novel like *Clarissa* or *Pamela*: how narratives allocate space to turn one character into a protagonist and relegate others to more minor status.[xx] Eighteenth-century fiction's characterological concerns must lie elsewhere, as there is usually very little question about who the protagonist is in a mid-eighteenth-century novel (where they are typically eponymous). Failure to notice differences between eighteenth- and nineteenth-century novel characters has also led to the neglect of specific attentiveness to epistolary and other first-person forms of narrative, as contrasted with what followed. Even Gallagher's paradigmatic and otherwise deeply persuasive treatment of character as non-identificatory or traditionally 'realist' comes to the conclusion that the appeal of the imaginative work that we do on behalf of characters "pertains most fully…to novels with third-person omniscient narrators in the realist mode."[xxi] Most of the texts that I discuss here, however, do not have traditional nineteenth-century third-person omniscient narrators easily able to travel between the heads and behind the eyes of a wide variety of characters. They are true rhetorical creatures, self-made and, as I have been arguing, self-reinforced. The interiority that the narrator of FID evolved

to probe, as Deidre Shauna Lynch pointed out as long ago as 1998, had yet to be invented, although this revelation seems not to have yet made its way into considerations of the purpose of Smith's sympathy as they have been applied to literature.[xxii] What is usually at issue for the protagonist of an eighteenth-century novel is the same thing that is at issue for Smith, in both *LRBL* and *TMS*: the formation of the self not *against* social exteriors, but in tandem and cooperatively *with* them, nearly always through the more or less successful harnessing of first-person rhetoric.

      The issue of rhetorical self-creation comes to something of a head, in fact, in the work of Samuel Richardson, especially in *Pamela* and *Clarissa*. Pamela's innovative epistolary form—Richardson reportedly set out to pen a typically eighteenth-century letter writing and conduct manual, but switched to a more elaborate fiction halfway through the project—apparently struck a sore nerve with many, including Fielding. Fielding's *Shamela* parody put its finger precisely on this closed circuit of rhetoric's creation of sentiment against which additional rhetoric was to be valued by simply creating a secret history of the "courtship" between Pamela and Mr. B ("Shamela" and "Squire Booby," as Fielding re-dubs them) where the prey is the predator and the predator the prey. Richardson himself complained that the many anti-Pamelist texts circulating abroad had his "whole Purpose inverted." Not only did they accuse his heroine of gold-digging, but they also effectively accused Richardson of deploying his skillful rhetoric to the same ends: "How artfully has the Author introduced an Image that no Youth can read without Emotion!" gripes the writer of *Pamela Censured* in 1741, going on to imply that Richardson's quest to make money off of his book through successful sentimental rhetoric is structurally similar to Pamela Andrews' attempt to secure a lucrative marriage contract.

      Clarissa, perhaps due to its tragic ending or considerable length, comes in for fewer takedowns of this sort, although—as I argue—this may have also had something to do with the novel's thematization of the problems of rhetoric and character (a form itself of addressing the reader's concerns and incorporating the view of spectators, which Richardson explicitly does in his introduction to *Clarissa*). In *Pamela*, although Mr. B is inclined to believe her tears and verbal protestations feigned, he is ultimately persuaded by uncovering her letters to her family—the very sore spot upon which Fielding presses by positing that he simply found the wrong set of letters, and that letters can be faked as easily as a tear or shudder. In *Clarissa*, however, Richardson confronts the problem of rhetoric head on: it is Clarissa's skill as a persuader and a rhetorician and her family's suspicion of it that manufactures this tragedy. Even otherwise perceptive modern readers of *Clarissa* (Tom Keymer and William Warner among them) seem to fall into the trap of debating whether Clarissa is sincere or insincere, positing a distance between rhetoric and sentiment that Richardson writes

directly to eschew on terms that I am arguing here Smith later takes up in his discussion of how human beings form moral sentiments. The causality of sentiment works the other way around, as the book seeks to demonstrate: sentiments are not something that exist outside of rhetoric, to be felt and then artfully rearranged into persuasive rhetoric, but start in rhetoric itself and the imaginative situation that the rhetorician attempts to create for her readers, against which her own rhetoric is then compared according to the protocols of sympathy. This is what Clarissa asks her readers to do, and her family—who should be, as I will argue, her ideal readers—are found particularly lacking in this regard. The novel's thematization of the quarrel between Clarissa and her familial interlocutors about the nature of rhetoric and sentiment is, as I will argue, why Smith likely had it in mind when he tells us in TMS that Richardson "best paint[s] the refinements and delicacies of love and friendship" (TMS 143), and that this reference to Richardson helps illuminate considerably Smith's discussion of "the character of virtue," family, and self-command. Clarissa's path to self-abnegating virtue particularly resonates with Smith's most important revision to TMS, "Of the Character of Virtue," his substantive attempt to escape the criticism that—like his predecessor in popular moral writing, Bernard Mandeville—social virtues are merely rhetorical costumes that we put on to fool others. Smith's defense of rhetoric goes as deep as *Clarissa's*: rhetoric is the way that we come to know others and to form a view of how our selves fit to their desires and needs. There is nothing cynical about this process, or about rhetoric itself: it is selfless, not selfish, in its outward orientation.

Tantalizingly, Richardson rejects the apparent suggestion of his friends to put *Clarissa* in "narrative" (i.e. some manner of third-person omniscience) form in his preface to the novel. In a preface to his last novel (*Julia de Roubigné;* 1777), Smith's friend and fellow Edinburghian litterateur Henry Mackenzie performs the same decision, under the same guise of "editor" and "translator" rather than author, to note that he found it too "difficult a task to reduce them into narrative, because they are made up of sentiment, which narrative would destroy."[xxiii] By now, Terry Eagleton's assertion that Richardson's use of the consciously, obviously rhetorical form of epistolary correspondence denies readers "the presence of a coherent overview or 'metalanguage' which may direct the audience's response" should already seem suspicious on eighteenth-century sentimental terms.[xxiv] It should seem no less suspicious applied to Mackenzie, who, perhaps more than any other contemporary fiction writer in Smith's era, seemed to fully understand and internalize the rhetorical embeddedness of the moral sentiments, and the way that they stand above and without need of external forms of verification but nonetheless moved readers towards a sense of community and social consensus. Rhetoric is its own verification of sentiment in *The*

Man of Feeling and *Julia de Roubigné,* as novels whose rhetorical "tricks," as it were, should expose the works as emotionally manipulative, but somehow produce sentiment in readers, anyway. We find very little contemporary debate about whether the man of feeling actually felt what he claimed to feel, despite the occasional modern incredulity with which we now read this fragmentary sentimental narrative—a reaction, incidentally, entirely absent from its contemporary reception. But in *Julia de Roubigné's* introduction and its apparent assertion of the power of epistolarity, I also see a pivot of sorts towards the free indirect discourse that Greiner defines as the inheritance of the novels influenced by Smith and the school of Scots Enlightenment moral literature. What little work has been done on *Julia de Roubigné's* engagement with the philosophy of narrative forms has traced the novel's tendency to allow its primary characters to reconstruct the views of others to Shaftesbury's self-soliloquy: the very subject of Smith's opprobrium in LRBL. *Julia de Roubigné's* characters do not, as Jeanne Britton asserts[xxv], fall into soliloquy when they reproduce the ideas, beliefs, and perspective of others in the novel, but merely show a Smithian rhetorical competence that consists in successfully imagining the situation of the other ("bringing [it] home to themselves," as Smith would say) and then comparing how they would express their feelings in that situation to how the potentially sympathetic object describes it. Mackenzie's assertion of epistolarity's unique ability to demonstrate this process presages the way that the narrator of free indirect discourse will do so automatically, without the need to remind us that the speaker is using his or her powers of imagination and re-creation. By the time the Austenian narrator arises, the "impenetrability of other people" (Gallagher argues that reminding us of this fact is the function of the first-person narrator) will be taken for granted, but so will the role of the self's own imagination in creatively and impartially crossing these barriers without signaling that one is doing so directly, as Mackenzie still must in *Julia de Roubigné.*

The purpose of this project is two-fold. First and perhaps foremost, it seeks to place Smith more firmly and dynamically in conversation with the fiction of his own times. My argument is in its essentials is that Smith finds in reading fiction a conceptual metaphor for the way that we should develop our moral sentiments, one that is helpfully and productively uninterested in the "truth" behind the situation inspiring the sentiment, because that truth does not exist in the first place. For Smith, who shared Hume's skepticism about the world outside of human perception, the rhetorical and imaginative sympathy that was being worked out in the novel through a character's rhetoric proved metaphorically productive for the way that human character also developed in the exercise of sentiment-producing rhetoric. Even the meaning of the word "character" in the century was under fierce contestation and evolution, as Lynch describes in *The Economy of Character*. From a sense of outward signification and

circulation to "inner meaning," character changed over the course of the century. Johnson's *Dictionary* (which Smith reviewed) contained nine separate definitions of the word, none of which had anything to do with "characters" in the sense of "Clarissa is the eponymous character in that novel." The honor of defining character in that way belongs, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, to John Dryden in 1664, but seems not to have accelerated in reference to novelistic characters until much later. The non-fictional character study enjoyed something of a vogue in the early century, where, as Elaine M. McGirr describes it, it argued that "external description could delineate the inner man" and attempted to bridge the exteriors and interiors of personhood.[xxvi] Smith's work, of course, insisted that the boundaries of the person consciousness are firm; any recreation of interiority is in fact an imaginative one, which is why I think that he found in fiction such a productive metaphor for the self and its own rhetorical development in relation to others who would always remain a bit fictional—or, at the very least, not so terribly different from fictional others.

But apart from uncovering where Smith's complex ideas about the self and rhetoric arose, I also want to suggest—to which I alluded above—that our critical reckonings with character have left the eighteenth-century version a bit bereft, a bit undertheorized, and perhaps most of all a bit isolated from the important developments in rhetorical instruction that occurred in the middle to late part of the century. The centering of all perception in the individual that Hume inaugurated flourished not just in Smith's rhetorical instruction, but in the far more directly influential (because it was published in 1783 and did not languish, as Smith's lectures did, in an attic for two centuries) *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* of Hugh Blair, who consulted Smith's notes before he drafted his own, and in Edmund Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1757). Both made important contributions to the discourse of taste and the process by which one comes to develop it, providing an account of its subjectivity and change over time produced by our imagining of the perspectives of others as they look upon mutual objects of potential admiration.

Once the discourse of taste solidified and became almost second nature in the nineteenth century, there was little need to reflect further on its rhetorical epistemologies. The narrator of free indirect discourse is above all a figure of a kind of natural and easy taste, whose judgments we rarely think about as arising from a particularized consciousness. That is the whole point. But in the eighteenth century— and the eighteenth-century novel character—there remains a need and desire to link the self with the social world, and for Smith and others of his intellectual milieu, the rhetorical means by which we come to internalize the judgments of others was still very much at the forefront of theory. The eighteenth-century character draws attention

to the boundaries of personhood even as it tries to transcend them to speak productively to others. The mistake that we sometimes make in speaking of the differences between eighteenth- and nineteenth-century characters is to assume that because the former enacts this movement in a highly personalized, rhetorically noticeable form (the travel narrative, the epistolary novel), it speaks less competently or deeply about other people than the supposedly head-hopping, natural and naturalized narrator of nineteenth-century discourse. This is ultimately the misconception that I think Greiner's work helps free us from, in pointing out that the FID narrator is also Smithian: despite some of its latter-day reception, especially in literary ethical theory, it is ultimately uninterested in accessing anyone's true, unadulterated, un-rhetorical feelings. The "movement from surface structure to deep structure"[xxvii] that many critics identify as the source of their preference for nineteenth-century novel characters may simply be an effect of losing an identifiable speaking self from which to source these impressions. By this account, what changes about fiction is not the aim of character—to imaginatively reconstruct a situation through the rhetoric of another, evaluate that rhetoric against the imaginative reconstruction, and then to incorporate the knowledge that others are doing the same to you—but the degree of attention that is drawn to the mechanics of this process. The elaborate prefaces, framing devices, and truth claims of the eighteenth-century, as well as its embodied first-person voice, can drop away once we have internalized the knowledge that all re-creations of others are imaginative and personal, whether in fiction or in real life. Smith likely developed this idea about the human character from his reading of novel characters, and then passed the idea of this feature of human character back to the many novels where his ideas live. That is the story arc that this project traces.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

[i] All parenthetical references to *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* are to Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1982; rpt. from Oxford University Press edition of 1976.

[ii] See D.D. Raphael's and A.L. Macfie's introduction to *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1982), which notes that the influence of other moral philosophers of his time on Smith's work was "remarkably small" (10). They note the influence of Hume and Hutcheson but remark that "he was not closely acquainted with much of the ethical theory of the eighteenth century" in other respects (ibid.). My supposition, that literature and the novel in particular were more fundamental to Smith's work than previously realized, is also a response to eighteenth-century disciplinary incoherence. As Griswold frequently points out, in the article cited in the subsequent footnote and elsewhere, Smith's reasoning is often fundamentally literary

and aesthetic and he may have considered literary texts more useful than contemporary philosophy, however loosely defined.

iii Charles L. Griswold, Jr., "Rhetoric and Ethics: Adam Smith on Theorizing about the Moral Sentiments" (*Philosophy & Rhetoric*, Vol. 24, No. 3, Theory and Praxis 1991, 213-237). 217.

iv The definition of "novel" is of course a notoriously difficult and vexed subject in the study of eighteenth-century prose, and an entire cottage industry attempts to establish exactly when it begins and which texts it includes. The first modern attempt to provide a social and historical account of its ascendancy in mid-eighteenth-century Britain was Ian Watt's *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957), which has played an inevitable if not unchallenged role in defining which texts were in, and which were out, of the novelistic ranks. Since Watt's work, many challengers have risen up to meet its claims about the conjunction of realism, the bourgeoisie, and the reading public: more than I can discuss or even list with any justice here. The rest of this project engages with many of these alternate accounts—particularly Chapter 1, and the question of whether *Gulliver's Travels* is considered a 'real' novel—and particularly with Watt's assignment of middle class self-representationalism to the genre. In brief, I argue in Chapter 2 that this claim is relevant for the way that Smith saw the novel, although the 'virtues' were not necessarily just the typical ones that we now tend to associate with the bourgeoisie, or which Watt assigned to the bourgeoisie, and that Smith sought to combine the traditional classical virtues with commercial and Christian virtues, which was also in part Richardson's project.

v "Again and again, Smith insists that another's feeling must be imagined and reflected upon, but it need not be felt" (18). From Rae Greiner, *Sympathetic Realism in Nineteenth-Century British Fiction* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012).

vi Ian Duncan, "Adam Smith, Samuel Johnson, and the institutions of English," in *The Scottish Invention of English Literature*, ed. Robert Crawford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, 37-54), 50.

vii Greiner's book is particularly strong on the ways in which Smith instrumentalizes the "uncertainty" and failures of sympathy (22-23), placing it on a narrative basis often in the "absence of emotional response," not its excess (19).

viii The most important and comprehensive "moral sentiments are theatrical" argument originates with David Marshall in *The Figure of Theater: Shaftesbury, Defoe, Adam Smith, and George Eliot* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986) and *The Surprising Effects of Sympathy: Marivaux, Diderot, Rousseau, and Mary Shelley* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), although other versions appear in Griswold's "Rhetoric and Ethics"

article cited above, and Maureen Harkin's "Adam Smith's Missing History: Primitives, Progress, and Problems of Genre," (*ELH* 72.2 2005, 429-51).

[ix] Duncan 50.

[x] Stephen J. McKenna, "Adam Smith's Rhetorical Art of Character," *Character, Self, and Sociability in the Scottish Enlightenment,* ed. Thomas Ahnert and Susan Manning (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, 49-65), 50.

[xi] ibid. 51.

[xii] ibid. 52.

[xiii] Anthony Ashley Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftesbury, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times,* vol. 1 (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2001), 100.

[xiv] See Adam Smith, *Lectures on Rhetoric and* Belles Lettres (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1985), 52-3. All subsequent in-text references to LRBL are to this edition.

[xv] Paddy Bullard, "Rhetoric and Eloquence: The Language of Persuasion" in *The Oxford Handbook of British Philosophy in the Eighteenth Century,* ed. James A. Harris (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, 84-103), 85.

[xvi] Catherine Gallagher, "The Rise of Fictionality," *The Novel, Vol. 1: History, Geography, and Culture,* ed. Franco Moretti (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006, 337-363), 351.

[xvii] ibid. 343-44. Gallagher ultimately ends up in a rather different spot than I do here when she writes, "What we seek in and through characters, therefore, are not surrogate selves but the contradictory sensations of *not being a character*" (361; emphasis original). Her argument is that the fictional boundedness of characters is ultimately responsible for our experience of Aristotelian catharsis when we encounter them in fiction: they could be like us in the modern, 'realist,' novel, but the fact that they are limited to the page gives us a comforting sense of our own comparative infiniteness. That argument seems to me to work better for twenty-first century literary critics than it does for eighteenth-century readers, but Gallagher seems completely correct in questioning the simple form of 'identification' that has dominated discussions of novelistic realism until recently. The lure of prose literature and literary character for Smith seems to have less to do with seeing yourself in characters than it does to determining whether, placed in their situation, you might do as they did, in some measure. Subject barriers stay firmly in place, and the question of 'verification' is put beyond issue by the acknowledgment that the imaginative and the rhetorical are more likely to inspire sympathy in the first place.

[xviii] Ian Duncan, *Scott's Shadow: The Novel in Romantic Edinburgh* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007). "Hume's case, that all representation is a fiction, a poesis, since all experienced is mediated through the imagination, provides a stronger and more comprehensive theoretical base for fiction than any that had appeared hitherto,

delivering it from the science of inauthenticity, of categorical opposition to reality" (133).

[xix] John Bender, *Ends of Enlightenment* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012), 34.

[xx] Alex Woloch, *The One v. the Many: Minor Characters and the Space of the Protagonist in the Novel* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003). It is true that Woloch is explicitly addressing himself to character in the nineteenth-century novel, but in that way only represents the larger difficulty of eighteenth-century literary character studies: that they inevitably fall outside any of the grander, universalizing projects, the red-headed stepchildren of the "novel" as a field of study. He notes in his introduction to the book how problematic developing a theory of character has proven for critics, especially after the Marxist assertion that character in novels are simultaneous with corrupt, bourgeois concepts of the self. (See 16n4.) As Lynch points out, this notion— which seems to originate with Hélène Cixous—is itself a curiously ahistoricized assumption that literary characters and bourgeois selves have anything in common, a connection that had to be invented by the nineteenth century.

[xxi] Gallagher 356.

[xxii] Deidre Shauna Lynch, *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture, and the Business of Inner Meaning* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998). "The eighteenth century's seeming hesitancy about creating individuals looks different, that is, as soon as we acknowledge that not only did self have to be created as a discursive object, so did society" (13).

[xxiii] Henry Mackenzie, *Julia de Roubigné.* Ed. Susan Manning (Edinburgh, UK: Birlinn Ltd., 1999), 5.

[xxiv] Terry Eagleton, *The Rape of Clarissa: Writing, Sexuality, and Class Struggle in Samuel Richardson* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1982), 25.

[xxv] Jeanne Britton, "Translating Sympathy by the Letter: Henry Mackenzie, Sophie de Condorcet, and Adam Smith" (*Eighteenth Century Fiction,* Vol. 22, No. 1, Fall 2009, 71-98). Britton's curious portmanteau article about *TMS's* first French translation seems entirely unaware of Smith's *LRBL* quarrel with Shaftesbury.

[xxvi] Elaine M. McGirr, *Eighteenth-Century Characters: A Guide to the Literature of the Age* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 5.

[xxvii] Elizabeth Kraft, *Character and Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Comic Fiction* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1992) 3.

Chapter 1
Character on Desert Islands: How Adam Smith Read His *Gulliver's Travels*

"To one who was to live alone in a desolate island it may be a matter of doubt, perhaps, whether a palace or a collection of such small conveniencies as are commonly contained in a tweezer-case, would contribute most to his happiness and enjoyment. If he is to live in society, indeed, there can be no comparison, because in this, as in all other cases, we constantly pay more regard to the sentiments of the spectator, than to those of the person principally concerned, and consider rather how his situation will appear to other people, than how it will appear to himself" (*The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 182).[1]

"Were it possible that a human creature could grow up to manhood in some solitary place, without any communication with his own species, he could no more think of his own character, of the propriety or demerit of his own sentiments and conduct, of the beauty or deformity of his own mind, than of the beauty or deformity of his own face….To a man who was from his birth a stranger to society, the objects of his passions, the external bodies which either pleased or hurt him, would occupy his whole attention…Bring him into society, and all his own passions with immediately become the cause of new passions" (111).

In 1749, and under the patronage of Henry Home, Lord Kames, Adam Smith delivered a series of lectures on rhetoric and *belles lettres* in Edinburgh to aspiring lawyers and barristers, clergymen, and other young, professional students embarking on their careers. His first biographer, Dugald Stewart, writes that although the manuscript containing Smith's notes on these lectures was destroyed at Smith's behest right before his death in 1790 (as were all of his unfinished projects; we have the LRBL only by way of their rediscovery in the twentieth century, in two students' hands), they were nonetheless fundamental to Smith's thinking about his entire philosophical system, of which *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* and *The Wealth of Nations* were only

logical extensions. For Stewart, their loss entails also losing an understanding of their centrality, which he hopes to resurrect:

> The best method of explaining and illustrating the various powers of the human mind, the *most useful part of metaphysics*, arises from an examination of the several ways of communicating our thoughts by speech, and from an attention to the principles of those literary compositions which contribute to persuasion and entertainment. By these arts, every thing that we perceive or feel, every operation of our minds, is expressed and delineated in such a manner, that it may be clearly distinguished and remembered. There is, at the same time, no branch of literature more suited to youth at their first entrance upon philosophy than this, which lays hold of their taste and their feelings (emphasis mine).[2]

Stewart delivered these words to the Royal Society of Edinburgh at the very end of the eighteenth century, by which point it was an accepted truth—partially through Smith's doing—that rhetoric was useful or worthwhile at all, let alone central or fundamental to the other branches of what was generically called "science" in 1793 but (at least for a little while longer) encompassed philosophy and the budding social sciences as well. Smith's friend and predecessor in the human sciences, David Hume, did much to center metaphysics and epistemology in perception, feeling, and expression, but at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the matter stood quite otherwise. Anti-rhetorical sentiments had been given their most (ironically) eloquent expression by John Locke, who categorized the study of rhetoric as "the great Art of Deceit and Errour" and "that powerful instrument of error and deceit," in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690). Although he ends the passage with a resigned air about the futility of railing against "those arts of deceiving, wherein men find pleasure to be deceived," his negative view of the rhetorical arts, Paddy Bullard claims, held particular sway in the English part of the British empire well into the century, buoyed by the scientific skepticism of the Royal Society about the unquantifiable and the material truth filtered through imperfect human perception and observation. Peripheries of the empire were spared this fate by their lack of proximity to the contamination of politics: according to Bullard, Scotland "diverted cultural energies that might have once been channeled into deliberative rhetoric, and fostered a sense of nostalgia for public eloquence."[3]

The second part of Stewart's contention—that Smith believed that literature and the arts were a particularly useful pedagogical device to interest and engage the young—was also recently controversial, especially as it concerned the category of what

I will call, for now, imaginative literature or imaginative fiction. Here again, approaching the matter from the periphery of empire, rather than its center, may have helped Smith take the *avant garde* approach, as Ian Duncan argues. As a Scot, Duncan reminds us, Smith approached English as a foreign literature, to be mastered and deployed in "the making of a metropolitan identity" that is the project of "ambitious provincials rather than those who already inhabit the metropolis."[4] Texts in English, which carried among university and political men to the south the taint of the colloquial and the common, were for lowland Scots like Smith a "cultural technology"[5] that allowed them to put on this metropolitan identity. It gave them a window to observe how the community into which they wanted to integrate as seamlessly as possible expressed itself when at its leisure, and model their own attempts at self-fashioning on these expressions so well that they truly could—as Hume suggested in an addendum to a 1752 edition of *Political Discourses*—purge any trace of their Scottish identity from their writing.[6]

Imaginative literature, at least elsewhere and at least as it concerned the education of the young, had a much worse reputation at the beginning of Smith's century. And it is perhaps best here to pause for a moment and define our terms. I am not yet referring to novels because, of course, novels did not quite yet exist, at least not in the form in which we tenuously and even now merely grope towards their definition, not to mention their cultural significance. Indeed, the book which this chapter will come to concern itself—*Gulliver's Travels,* or, to give it its full name, the one that appeared on its title page when first published, *Travels Into Several Remote Nations of the World*, *In Four Parts*—is only imperfectly and incompletely a representative of the genre. As J. Paul Hunter puts it, it is a text that is difficult to understand without the novel in mind, but which it is likewise difficult to place in the "tradition" of the novel before the tradition existed.[7] But a comment that Jonathan Swift himself reported with delight perhaps gives something of a window into the disregard in which the upright and moral held fiction; an Irish bishop, he reports to Alexander Pope, concluded that the fiction was "full of improbable lies, and for his part, he hardly believed a word of it."[8] In Catherine Gallagher's persuasive formulation, fictions in the mode of what we come to call the British novel of its eighteenth- and nineteenth-century heyday had to perform a peculiar balancing act before acquiring their moral and didactic relevance. On the one hand, they had to shed their real referentiality, which primarily inhered in their origins in the *nouvelles scandaleuses* and this genre's barely disguised real society figures and their titillating goings on. On the other hand, they had to invent persons who might very well be real: ordinary people with ordinary, commonplace names, who had ordinary social relationships and ordinary concerns. They had to be "lies" of a sort, but the kind that did not activate the sniffling protest of Swift's Irish bishop.

Imaginative fictions of the sort that developed into novels, as the second chapter of this project will argue, often came to offer their own defense of both morality and rhetoric and the importance of the genre in intermingling them freely. For Samuel Richardson, this initially involved appending what amounted to letters of recommendation to his texts; later, as he became more sophisticated, he dropped the letters of recommendation (the frequent subject of wag parodists like Henry Fielding) in favor of thematizing the defense of rhetoric inside the text itself. By the time that Stewart delivered his eulogy for Smith, this strategy seems to have worked. Hugh Blair, with the moral authority of the Church of Scotland behind him, writes in defense of novels against what he calls "Philosophical Writing" (which in his view prompts little "discussion") that these

> fictitious histories might be employed for very useful purposes. They furnish one of the best channels for conveying instruction, for painting human life and manners, for showing the errors into which we are betrayed, for rendering virtue amiable and vice odious.[9]

Blair's defense is unusual in that is retroactively defends "fictitious histories" with little effort to distinguish the contemporary genre of the novel from its predecessors. "In all countries," he writes, "we find its origin very antient…We create worlds for our fancy, in order to gratify our capacious desires."[10] Samuel Johnson, no less a moral authority in his own way, is clearer to distinguish novels from an earlier form, which display a "wild strain of imagination" and therefore arise not from an "accurate observation of the living world" and are of limited literary or moral use. He never uses the word "novels," but the strain of fiction about which he speaks is particularly recommended to "the young, the ignorant, and the idle, to whom they serve as lectures of conduct, and introductions into life."

Johnson wrote *Rambler* 4 in 1750, around the time that Smith was first delivering his lectures. When the two later met, they were antagonistic, despite Smith's largely favorable opinion of Johnson's *Dictionary* in the short-lived *Edinburgh Review*.[11] But, as was the case with the *Dictionary* (which Smith saw as another useful technology for Scots advancement, although this was perhaps not exactly the way that Johnson intended it), their thinking often moved along parallel but not quite overlapping tracks. For Smith, the particular nexus charted by the LRBL was the need for Scots— particularly young, professional Scots, the most malleable of moral subjects—to seamlessly and perfectly put on their metropolitan identities, without the appearance of guile or imitation in the act. Both Johnson and Smith saw "fictitious histories" as

important tools of moral self-fashioning, although for Smith—as Duncan details—the task assigned to them took on additional cultural implications.

Or that is part of the argument of this chapter, which began in my mind with a deceptively simple question: Why does Smith particularly single out Swift for such fulsome praise in a manual on serious rhetorical instruction for young Scots hoping to advance themselves in British politics, bureaucracy, and law? Of one of the most notoriously slippery satirists in the canon of English literature, Smith offers us this commentary:

> Swift [has] excelled most in this respect…we find that [his] writing is so plain that one half asleep may carry the sense along with him, even tho the sentence be very long…Nay, if we happen to lose a word or two, the rest of the sentence is so naturally connected with it as that it comes into our mind of its own accord.[12]

And although Swift's serious moral essays and prose works were certainly known, when Smith offers more specific commentary on why his young Scots professionals should look to his work for inspiration, the only works he mentions are *Gulliver's Travels* and *The Tale of the Tub*. Put differently, what does a character like Lemuel Gulliver, an obvious fiction whose very obvious fictionality—as Hunter reminds us—was something of Swift's parodic thrust,[13] have to offer sober-minded young Scots making their way through the world?

"Character," as it turns out, proved exactly Smith's point. Smith saw in the evolving discourse around fictional character—which necessarily concerned itself with the rising genre of the time, and the way that its characters legitimated a connection between rhetoric and morality—as a promising way of normalizing and even moralizing the rhetorical advancement of Scots (which was often looked upon suspiciously and given an anti-rhetorical turn—by Johnson, among others). Most importantly, literary character, as it was coming to be theorized, and novelistic character particularly, as the preferred method of reaching "the young, the ignorant, the idle," provide in Smith's system a way of naturally and seamlessly adopting a newly British identity without acts of blatant translation, an art of which Smith is suspicious.[14] Protocols of literary character, this chapter argues, offer Smith a way of articulating the importance of rhetoric in moral character formation, because they start from an assumption that literary character and moral character are both rhetorical and imaginative and are discovered largely through a process of reading and writing: acts that are, more or less, the very matter of novels of the mid-eighteenth-century.

This, of course, is not how we have come to think of literary character. Nineteenth-century novels, which became the genre's standard and dominant representatives in the current cultural imagination, often feature protagonists of a particularly unsociable bent. They are indeed characterized (as it were) by their ability to stand against the process of self-fashioning often cynically represented by the "flat" characters around them.[15] But this, as Deidre Shauna Lynch explains, is a vision that differs considerably from characters in the eighteenth century, whom we often find inadequate by comparison. She writes that "what is tacitly dismissed as the eighteenth-century novel's propensity to overgeneralize and inability to imagine individual variation" was in essence an artistic response to the same "techniques for imagining community and new ways of connecting people"[16] that initiates Smith's project in the LRBL.

Gulliver and Swift provide in Smith's framework an important object lesson in the rhetorical "putting on" of other identities: the sailor Gulliver, who travels to diverse and fanciful nations, and Swift, who—like Smith—approaches British identity from the aspect of a foreigner who must naturalize his use of language. But before I look at the way that sympathy itself—which came to loom so large in Smith's framework—originates in an understanding of literary, even novelistic, character, I look at what a "rhetorical art of character" is in the LRBL.

An art of character

In his "Adam Smith's Rhetorical Art of Character," Stephen J. McKenna argues that Smith's LRBL is an "art of character" that "does not articulate a system of virtues by which to measure excellent character" but instead provides "an ethical baseline from which standards may be glimpsed."[17] The art is "rhetorical" because it does not—as a more typical work about moral character might—prescribe certain moral principles, but instead recommends a process or an epistemology of how one might come to an understanding the sentiments of other spectators, and use this understanding to gain their approbation in turn. As he makes very clear at the beginning of TMS, Smith does not believe that we ever have direct access to the feelings or thoughts of others:

> As we have no immediate experience of what other men feel, we can form no idea of the manner in which they are affected, but by conceiving what we ourselves should feel in the like situation…our senses will never inform us of what he suffers. They 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 what are his sensations (TMS 9).

Imagination seems to play, at least at first, the primary role in this "changing places" (10) with the sufferer, but Smith quickly moves away from a visual conception of the imaginary and into a narrative and rhetorical one. The potentially sympathetic sufferer is addressed to inquire "What has befallen you?" (11), as "sympathy…does not arise so much from the view of the passion, as from the situation which excites it" (12), and TMS quickly (if more implicitly) than LRBL, becomes a matter of comparing the rhetoric of the sufferer about his suffering to a sense of whether, placed in the same situation, we would ourselves use similar rhetoric. Or—perhaps more accurately and to the point—whether a typical spectator whose reaction and rhetoric we must also imagine would approve of the sufferer's way of expressing him or herself.[18]

For McKenna, the advantage of this approach—latent in TMS, more explicit in LRBL—is that it provides a purpose for rhetoric that "at a moment of waning civic exigency as the private civil sphere is starting its definitive historical eclipsing of the public (civic) sphere" manages to cannily and effectively straddle the two and negotiate a relationship between them.[19] Rhetoric, which carried with it the baggage of petty social advancement, verbal trickery, and Locke's "deceit and Error," was for Smith the primary way that we came to understand the social world around us, shedding our inherent selfishness, ironically, to pursue our self-interest, construed as the approbation and approval of spectatorial others. This was part of Smith's squaring of the Mandevillian circle, and, as McKenna notes, explains a large portion of Smith's aversion to Anthony Ashley-Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury and Smith's favorite whipping boy within the LRBL.

Shaftesbury, of course, recommended the "Remedy of SOLILOQUY" for the young writer hoping to develop a unique voice,[20] although Smith's criticisms of Shaftesbury may have something of the narcissism of small differences about them. The process that Shaftesbury describes, after all—of the "Poet" becoming "two distinct persons"[21] and learning, among other things, to "properly laugh at himself"[22]—does not sound so very different from Smith's TMS suggestion that "I divide myself, as it were, into two persons; and that I, the examiner and judge, represent a different character from that other I, the person whose conduct is examined and judged of" (113). But Smith's opposition to the private and closeted nature of Shaftesbury's proposed self-examination remains interesting, especially when one considers that what Shaftesbury truly opposes is the process of learning from other authors and works of art. Shaftesbury goes on to recommend specifically against a theatrical understanding of this art of soliloquy—"Are we to go therefore to the Stage for Edification? Must we

learn our Catechism from the Poets? And, like the Players, speak *aloud,* what we debate any time with our-selves alone?" he asks rhetorically, and answers in the negative[23]—before recommending

> our *Probationer,* upon his first Exercise, to retire into some thick Wood, or rather take the Point of some high Hill; where, besides the Advantage of looking about him for Security, he wou'd find the Air perhaps more rarefy'd, and suitable to the Perspiration requir'd, especially in the case of a *Poetical Genius.*[24]

Retreat from the metropolis—from its stages, plays, conversations, and literature—is Shaftesbury's recommendation for forming a literary character. Smith's criticism of Shaftesbury is illuminating in this regard: his primary sin, he says, was that he "abstracted from his own character…an idea of beauty of Stile," which Smith deems contrary to all of the laws of the "true propriety of language" (56). What Shaftesbury seems to lack is proper congress with the literature and language of his own times—his weakly disposition, Smith theorizes, kept him away from the kind of healthy, self-regulating contact with others that would have allowed him to find a "particular Stile" (ibid.) Instead, Shaftesbury is forced into a specious imitation of the ancients, (the only persons with which he can reasonably converse in his solitude), their "pompous, grand and ornate Stile" (59), which is particularly unsuitable to the period where one must appeal to the half-asleep.[25] What is even worse, "as all copiators exceed the Original…[Shaftesbury] often exceeds and applies a grand diction to subjects of a very different kind" (60). Ridicule—a form that Smith very much respects when it is in the hand of either Swift or Lucian—becomes in Shaftesbury's a "buffoonery" and a "species of wit that is greatly beneath the character of a gentleman" (60-1). Shaftesbury's imitative pompousness cultivates a uniformity of "cadence" that ill suits it to adjust to its objects, high or low; "propriety," or the virtue of mediocrity and adjustment to "to what are, or to what ought to be, or to what upon a certain condition would be, the sentiments of other people" (TMS 262) eludes Shaftesbury because his attention is directed to the imitation of another time, rather than a productive engagement with his own.

Smith's commentary on Shaftesbury and its numerous violations of the biographical fallacy often reads as mean-spirited, but it also usefully illuminates larger points about Smith's commentary on "character" within the LRBL. This commentary is pervasive and at the heart of the entire project: Smith's mission is to teach his writers how to cultivate the "character of the author" by understanding other characters as they manifest in their rhetorical turns: but not, crucially, to simply imitate these other

characters. Even outside of the jeremiad against Shaftesbury, Smith offers long explanatory passages about the variety and suppleness of cultivating a writerly character that insist first and foremost on a lack of prescriptivity and uniformity, or that any single writerly character can or should provide a model (despite his general disparagement of Shaftesbury and admiration for Swift, William Temple, and Henry Bolingbroke). For instance:

> But the same sentiment may often be naturally and agreably expressed and yet the manner by very different according to the circumstances of the author. The same story may be considered either as plain matter of fact without design to excite our compassion, or [it] in a moving way, or lastly in a jocose manner, according to the point in which it is connected with the author. There are a variety of characters which we may equally admire, and yet these may be very different. It would then be very absurd to blame that of a good natured man because he wanted the severity of a more rigid one...The considerations of this variety of characters afford us often no small entertainment, it forms one of the chief pleasures of a sociall life, and few are so foolish as to blame it or consider it as any defect (LRBL 34).

What is admirable about Swift, Smith goes onto remark, is not necessarily his plain style in and of itself, but that Swift best understood the conditions of his own interpretation. It is not that a "plain" or a "simple" style is better—Smith devotes an entire lecture to both the differences between the two and the assertion that either one or a variety of others might reach perfection[26]—but that whatever is chosen must accord with the author's "character." This becomes a cornerstone in the larger course of the lectures, which Smith uses to delineate and defend different genres of writing according to how well they fulfill the conditions of linguistic propriety in their various subjects.

McKenna's assertion that the LRBL is a "rhetorical art of character" mostly harkens back to the Aristotelian model of ethos,[27] but what I would like to suggest now is that Smith's model of character-building also owes some of its complexity to emerging models of literary character in the eighteenth century.

Belles lettres, novels, and character

As McKenna also notes, most of the lectures after the preliminary few in the LRBL are "better suited to teaching literary and social criticism than traditional forms

of rhetorical performance."[28] This is also largely Duncan's point: that the site of identity formation in the LRBL is a "literacy in English" that consciously involves the "pedagogic dismissal of a native vernacular culture."[29] Learn to read in the dominant culture, learn to write in the dominant culture, advance in the dominant culture.

Bringing these two approaches together, however, yields a deeper connection between the rhetorical art of character inculcated by Lectures 2-11 and the more *belle lettristic* analysis of the later lectures. Outside the scope of Duncan's informative essay on the British scope of character-building in Smith's work is another kind of *technē* that was in the process of forging a relationship between literature, rhetoric, and the study of *belle lettres*.[30] This was the discourse around literary character—a term that first came into our modern usage of it in the later seventeenth century[31]—and the proper relationship between literary characters (in novels, especially) and moral development. For Smith, as discussed above, the ability to understand the requirements of propriety, linguistic and interpersonal, turned the selfish and base impulses of the individual towards the social and communicative pleasures of sympathy with spectators. The skillful deployment of rhetoric—usually through the written word in the LRBL— acquires a moral dimension through the protocols of sympathy. Smith is not at very many pains to define the term in the LRBL—he leaves this project for TMS—but in Lecture 6, he attacks flowery, grandiose language and figures of speech on the grounds that they fail to properly understand or comprehend their audience:

> When the sentiment of the speaker is expressed in a neat, clear, plain and clever manner, and the passion or affection he is poss<ess>ed of and intends, *by sympathy*, to communicate to his hearer, is plainly and cleverly hit off, then and only then the expression has all the force and beauty that language can give it. It matters not the least whether the figures of speech are introduced or not…They have no intrinsick worth of their own (LRBL 25-6; emphasis original).

Although the rule as stated has a timeless quality about it, internal evidence suggests that Smith believes his own era might have an even greater burden than the ones that preceded it for clarity, simplicity, and skillful management of emotion through sympathy, from his assertion that Swift's style is suitable for those "half asleep" (7) to the suggestion, later in the LRBL, that "Prose is naturally the Language of Business" (137). Smith's stadial account of language and literature places the clarity and directness of prose at the end of human development, relegating more ornamented forms like poetry to an earlier, bardic age. What Smith calls "Novells" are notably included as part of this later stage of development. Their relatively simple, plain prose

"unfold[s] the tender emotions or more violent passions in the characters they bring before us" in "succed[ing] the Wild and extravagant Romance which were the first performances of our ancestors in Europe" (111). Although Smith never quite makes the point explicitly, prose of this sort has a better claim on the students he addresses because it belongs to the age and literary genre they are attempting to master. The argument, to put all of Smith's parts fully together, is also a moral one. Mastering the sentiments of others through the protocols of sympathy—by abstracting one's own spectatorial concerns and what one has learned about the spectatorial concerns of others—is the moral, character-forming act of the LRBL (and to some extent of TMS as well), and it necessarily involves a close study of not merely the classics, but of the genres of one's own times.

The standard disclaimer must be issued here: something that Smith calls "novels" come in for rather sharp criticism in Lecture 17, where he writes that

> as newness is the only merit in a Novel and curiosity the only motive which induces us to read them, the writers are necessitated to make use of this method to keep it up. Even the Antient Poets who had not reality on their side never have recourse to this method, the importance of the narration they trust will keep us interested (LRBL 97).

In the larger context of the passage, however, Smith's criticism levels itself primarily at the fantastical, "Wild and extravagant" events of Romance, not the probabilistic ones of novels that advertised themselves as "histories," the genre to which Smith opposes his discussion of the problems of newness and suspense. This was territory that novelists themselves were attempting to stake out, often through an assertion of the "realness" of novels as compared to their counterparts and predecessors. This, for instance, is largely the point of Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote; Or, the Adventures of Arabella* (1752)—not to mention the original Quixote himself. Although most of Smith's praise in this lecture is reserved for Thucydides, his description of the best kind of history sounds remarkably like his description of the unfolding of the passions that he identifies with novels a lecture later:

> They carry us as it were into the very circumstances of the actors, we feel for them as it were for ourselves.[32] They show us the feelings and agitation of Mind in the Actors previous to and during the Event. They point to us also the Effects and Consequences of the Event not only in the intrinsick change it made on the Situation of the Actors but the manner of behaviour with which they supported them (96).

Later in TMS, Smith will endorse this type of novel in particular for its tutelage of the "private and domestic affections," an area where he seems to believe that purer moral philosophical discourse has less merit (TMS 143).[33]

Clarifying Smith's point about novels is important, I think, because it puts Smith in closer conversation with the literary discourse of his time. Much of it centered around the idea and proper use of the literary "character" as moral guide and preceptor, particularly as it centered around the genre that would come to be called the novel. To take the most obvious example, Johnson's *Rambler* 4 essay and its limited endorsement of the novel (he also complains about fake suspense, preferring that stories "bring about natural events by easy means, and to keep up curiosity without the help of wonder") warns the potential practitioner in the genre that romances did not contain the same potential pitfalls for the young and inexperienced as events and persons that they could more easily relate to their own lives:

> In the romances formerly written, every transaction and sentiment was so remote from all that passes among men, that the reader was in very little danger of making any application to himself; the virtues and crimes were equally beyond his sphere of activity; and he amused himself with heroes and with traitors, deliverers and persecutors, as with beings of another species, whose actions were regulated upon motives of their own, and who had neither faults nor excellences in common with himself.

Not so, of course, with the novel (which Johnson never mentions by name). There, authors must exercise an even greater measure of moral discretion through selection, taking care not to "paint characters" just because they exist in reality. This is hardly justification; some characters, Johnson proclaims "ought not to be drawn" at all, precisely because their closeness to the ordinary world that readers see around them every day makes them peculiarly imitable. And some writers, heaven forfend, take care to mix both good and bad qualities in the same characters, a slavish devotion to probability that Johnson does not tolerate on the same grounds. As quickly as writers like Samuel Richardson started making claims about the moral-rhetorical education that their novels provided, the question of adjudicating and theorizing character became crucial to influential literary figures like Johnson.

The question for a milder, epistemologically-focused theorist like Smith becomes how to formulate the usefulness of character within the relativistic moral system that the LRBL and even TMS construct.[34] What is moral is to hit off one's meaning clearly and precisely by sympathetic rhetorical appeals to spectators whose

moral sentiments one has anticipated. One learns to theorize about these spectators (at least in LRBL) through a careful reading practice, one which cultivates an appreciation of what spectators' sentiments are likely to be. The purpose of understanding and delineating individual "characters of the author" in the LRBL is to determine whether particular authors have accomplished their sympathetic rhetorical goals according to their own characters. Smith's eschewal of specific, Johnsonesque moral precepts manifests most particularly in his pronouncements against literary imitation (Shaftesbury's problem) and in the formulation of the character of the author, which does not require that any particular precept be followed but that the author stay true to the character he has already established.

The interpretation of the "character of the author" in Smith in fact seems to require a certain degree of hermeneutic suppleness. One comes to understand the character of the author through, presumably, reading his or her works. Then, one compares additional works to determine whether they conform to the original idea of the author's character. Smith does caution that "the character in which a writer assumes he is not obliged on any occasion to maintain without prymeditation," but goes onto add that "many Incidents happen in common Life to which if the manners are not conformed in a moment the affectation will be betrayed" (59). If the eventual goal of the LRBL is to use other characters to understand one's own—as was increasingly the argument for literary characters in general—part of the ideal reading practice would involve understanding how a character is built inside rhetoric in the first place.

Novelists like Samuel Richardson were beginning to turn their attention to this very question around the time that Smith was delivering the lectures that came to comprise the LRBL. Indeed, Richardson's extensive and sometimes exhaustive correspondence about his own work reveals an obsession with defining exactly what "probability" meant within this closed rhetorical circle. Gallagher notes his exchange with Albrecht von Haller, the Swiss writer, as an example of early fictional theory's attempt to define exactly what the relationship of novels should be to the real world, noting that while von Haller would attempt to draw information from the real world to refute the villain Robert Lovelace's particular excesses of evil, Richardson would in turn provide examples from his own novel to defend the notion that Lovelace would act (or write, in this case, as *Clarissa* is an epistolary novel) exactly as he did. Richardson creates and defends the character of Lovelace to von Haller and the rest of the reading world by "reducing his referential scope to almost nothing."[35]

This was a peculiar innovation of mid-eighteenth-century British novels, as Gallagher argues, which specifically formulated themselves against Smith's "wild… Romances" not just on the probability of their events, but also on the probability of

their particular unfoldings of sentiments and emotions. And part of this probability certainly entailed the kind of closed rhetorical circles that Richardson theorized: Lovelace writes like Lovelace because we have many examples of Lovelace writing in exactly this way and conveying precisely those sentiments. What Gallagher helpfully notes is that this process—which she calls "fictionality," arguing against the notion that it is "realism" that is the real innovation of the novel—was particularly conducive to forming sympathetic connections between novelistic characters and readers. Crucially, however, these sympathetic relationships were not formed on the basis of identification, but on the very insuperable barrier that existed between readers and novelistic characters: the latter were specifically formulated as both imaginary and textually bounded in a way that reinforced the subject and object positions that Smith insists on at the beginning of TMS, when he is sure to note that our senses never can and never will carry us beyond our own persons. All other people are, for Smith, essentially probable fictions, constructed out of our evaluation of rhetorical performances. This makes it possible within novel theory discourse for Henry Fielding, for instance, to assert that his entirely imaginary characters, constructed from an amalgamation of persons but no one person in particular, teach readers a morally valuable lesson about the "species,"[36] rather than specific instances of it.

Smith's odd model of the "character of the author" is out of keeping with the typical rhetorical instruction of his times, and often difficult to understand without reference to discourses around fictionality and novelistic character. His insistence that imitating other writers, especially the ancients, without a more deliberate kind of intertextual examination of how others have successfully created consistent characters in their own writing, points less to Johnson's rather naïve model and its concerns that morally wicked characters will cause bad moral behavior in readers (especially when characters are not wholly and completely awful) and forward to more modern examples of characterological theory such as Gallagher's, which claims that characters exert their influence on us not by causing us to confuse ourselves for them, but instead encouraging us perform a difficult cognitive balancing act between "their real nonexistence and the reader's experience of them as deeply and impossibly familiar."[37] In some sense, the entire point of Smith's version of sympathy, which he declares at the very beginning of TMS, is to acknowledge that we will never truly experience what other people do, but that our imaginative reconstruction of this feeling based on what we think will be the reactions of other spectators also gives us valuable moral insight when it comes to constructing our own rhetorical performances: namely, the knowledge that we are essentially imaginary and rhetorical to others, even as we experience our own feelings and thoughts as real. Very typically for Smith, then, the moral lesson of novels is less a specific precept or even endorsement of a type of

character than a set of epistemological protocols that are assisted by certain characteristics of fictional characters in the eighteenth century. These epistemological protocols center around the creation and cultivation of a rhetorical character through a careful study of the examples of others, fictional and non-, with the important caveat that every "other" is essentially fictional in Smith's view, "as we have no immediate experience of what other men feel" (TMS 9).

Character on desert islands

Gulliver's Travels seems, at least at first, an odd choice for Smith's formal admission to the canon of rhetorical exemplars. Smith was a practical moralist; his "epistemological protocols," as I referred to them above, are generally oriented towards the kind of everyday "domestic and private affections" that he would later mark out in TMS as the territory of the epistolary novel's particular tutelage, not towards interactions with improbably small people or intelligent horses that one would only encounter in some of the more fantastical fictions.

For that matter, there is considerable debate—to which Hunter's comments at the beginning of this chapter only allude—about whether *Gulliver's Travels* even *is* a "novel" in the sense in which we critics in the tradition of English literature continuously grope towards a definition of that term. As the terms of this debate (especially as it concerns *Gulliver*) come to bear in important ways on Smith's use of the fiction within his larger rhetorical theory, they are worth rehearsing.

The crux of the question of *Gulliver's Travels* status as a novel, unsurprisingly, concerns its protagonist, the hapless ship's surgeon Lemuel Gulliver. Afflicted by the same "rambling Thoughts" that trouble his literary predecessor, Robinson Crusoe (who is more often and readily admitted to the canon of novelistic characters), he returns from one perilous sea voyage to distant lands only to find himself at sea again, both literally and metaphorically. Hunter's reason for denying it the status of a novel— that the "English novel had barely begun"—itself begins to fall apart when we consider that (as Hunter also argues) *Gulliver's Travels* is itself parodically responsive in numerous respects to the Defoe novel that modern economists seem more often to associate with early political economy.[38] A more serious objection is helpfully summarized by Richard H. Rodino, which is that "Swift speaks his own mind through Gulliver, who is a satirical device, not a novelistic character."[39]

The underlying logic of this statement, of course, is that a satirical type cannot also be a literary, novelistic character. As Rodino also notes, this is a view conditioned by "post-Jamesian assumptions" about the psychological work of the fictional character, although in defense of those who hold it, literary character and novelistic

character in particular have proven themselves particularly difficult to theorize, as Jonathan Culler remarked back in 1975.[40] He echoed other theorists, like Seymour Chatman, who also remarked the profound lack of attention to developing a "theory of character in literary history and criticism."[41] Since the 1970s, the development of a universal theory of character seems to have made relatively little progress, but historicist-inflected accounts of this very dearth have brought to our attention the fact that much of the attempt to construct such a universal theory ignore profound differences between national and historical literatures. For obvious reasons, I am most interested in the growing understanding in characterological theory that eighteenth-century British novel characters look and behave in fundamentally different ways than their nineteenth-century successors.

These differences shed considerable light on both our difficulties classifying *Gulliver* and the problem of recognizing Smith's sustained discourse on fictionalized selves and character in the LRBL. The autonomous and individualistic existence that Rodino claims that the "hard" school of Swiftian criticism denies to Gulliver is not merely conditioned by post-Jamesian assumptions, but by nineteenth-century ones that Lynch points out "did not come naturally to British writers and readers in the long eighteenth century," but had to be taught and conditioned. Eighteenth-century characters were far more likely to suffer from the contemporary charge that they might be "excessively particularized, or 'overcharged'" than that they were insufficiently distinguished from either their authors or from social 'types.'[42] The personal and particularized in literary character had to be invented as a value, she argues, and this invention occurred far later than 1726, the date of *Gulliver's* publication, largely in response to economic and market conditions that Smith's work also charted. Indeed, fictional character often seems to interact and intersect quite naturally with questions of capitalist forms of individuality even when the literary critic's claim to scope extends beyond the period traditionally identified with the rise of capitalism: as it does when Hélène Cixous condemns the literary character as propping up a "particularly bourgeois notion of personhood"[43] that had yet to be invented in the eighteenth century.

Bringing *Gulliver* to bear on Smith and Smith to bear on *Gulliver,* and considering both in their full context as eighteenth-century literature, should cause us at the very least to question whether a satirical character is incompatible with a "literary, novelistic" one, decoupling both of those terms from their acquired nineteenth-century connotations. For Smith, satire—the literary genre context in which he mentions *Gulliver*—represents what is in some ways the most profound and skilled example of self-characterization on the part of an author. And self-characterization is inextricably linked to, and simultaneous with, ethical thinking in the context of Smith's body of

work. This last point has been well understood since Charles L. Griswold pointed out that Smith's ethical and rhetorical theories are of a piece. For Smith, matters of literary organization and communication are not simply questions of aesthetics and style: properly understanding one's auditor ("half asleep" or not) through sympathy is the ethical act, whether one is writing or engaging in any other variety of speech act. Or, put differently, questions of aesthetics and style *are* fundamentally moral. Humor, of which satire is a species, is a potentially deeply fraught social and ethical problem in TMS. Consider, for instance, that Smith's prime example of social mortification in TMS is of a man who "after having endeavoured to divert the company...looks around and sees that nobody laughs at his jests but himself" (TMS 14). "We are even put out of humour," he adds later, "if our companion laughs louder or longer at a joke than we think it deserves; that is, than we feel that we ourselves could laugh at it" (16). Cultivating just the right amount of laughter in readers requires, Smith argues, the most exquisite kind of self-knowledge gained through sympathy.

This contextualizes an aspect of his praise for both Swift and *Gulliver's Travels*, which Smith commends particularly for Swift's management of the "plain" style of self-characterization. This character style which he "affected hindered him from ever making us laugh to excess at any subject in however ridiculous a light he may set" (LRBL 49).[44] Notably, however, Smith extends this praise not just to Swift speaking as a fictionalized, rhetorical version of himself, but also "on any subject that he puts it into the mouth of some other person as in Gullivers travels and the Dyers letters."[45] Although this seems to confirm the view that Gulliver was a mere mouthpiece for his creator, it is notable that Smith effectively puts fictional characters and "characters of authors" on the same level: after all, the character that Swift creates for himself in his writing is also "affected." Gulliver—like Swift—is a fictional creation who has a particular moral-rhetorical role to play, as Smith makes clear when he praises Swift's creations (self and otherwise) for forming half of "a System of morality from whence more sound and just rules for life for all the various characters of men may be drawn than from most set systems of Morality" (51).

As for Gulliver the character, and the question of what an eighteenth-century character does, if cementing a vision of bourgeois individuality is anachronistic (as I have argued here that it is, to the continuing detriment of characterological theory that attempts to encompass eighteenth-century characters). In fact, Swift's work—at least as Warren Montag reads it in his classic study, *The Unthinkable Swift*—was written against the idea that individuals were even legible outside of a social order.[46] The issue had been raised for Swift by another tale of a waylaid traveler, another early fiction to which *Gulliver's Travels* has often been noted as both responsive and parodic: *Robinson Crusoe.*

It is no doubt an irony that this particular text, which neoclassical economists inspired by J.S. Mill have managed to make synonymous with Smith's political science, was the target of the very satire that Smith praises in *Gulliver*.[47] But *Gulliver's* attacks on Daniel Defoe's fictionalized version of the life of Alexander Selkirk have long been noted, by Hunter and Montag, among others. Selkirk was a Scottish privateer and officer in the Royal Navy who was marooned for four years on an island in the South Pacific, and his story proved a popular one in the eighteenth century. But for Defoe and Swift, the philosophical and moral implications of Selkirk's life became part of a larger argument about empiricism, fiction, and the social scientific study of "society" that also fascinated Smith.

In this debate, Smith clearly takes the Swiftian side. Swift's argument against Defoe's text engages on multiple levels, but the very uppermost one is the implicit claim of *Robinson Crusoe* to formulate an individualistic character that can exist and act outside of society: an impossibility within Smith's conception of a "character" that is fundamentally tied to close and rhetorical connection with others. Defoe made considerable revisions to the story of Selkirk, but one of his most profound and in some sense "unrealistic" ones was the assertion that Crusoe's time on his deserted island—with only distant cannibals and eventually Friday to keep him company—left him mentally unaffected. Selkirk, who was marooned only one-seventh of the time that Crusoe supposedly was, reportedly spent the rest of his life avoiding the company of others, and even dug a hole into his yard to hide from the mere possibility of social contact. Crusoe, on the other hand, sets out on another journey.

Comparative *Crusoe-Gulliver* criticism has often noted this apparent problematic of both texts: for all of Crusoe's rich empirical detail and insistence on its own literal reality—and, it is left implied, all of Gulliver's fanciful giants and talking horses, which no one could possibly take seriously—the former misses the mark on the potential psychological effects that such a long-marooned castaway would undoubtedly suffer. The inconsistency is generally dismissed as an oddity or mere bagatelle, but Montag identifies it as fundamental to Swift's purpose, and more broadly illuminating of the text's apparent attack on Defoe's puritan, providential vision of the predestined *homo economicus*. The Gulliver who finally returns from the land of the Houyhnhnms is not the same character who began his journey as the cheerful bourgeois fresh out of Emmanuel College, Cambridge.[48] Like Selkirk, he spends his time in social and even olfactory isolation, stopping up his nose with "Rue, Lavender, and Tobacco-Leaves" to avoid the now-offensive odors of other humans (*Gulliver* 249).[49] In other words, the subject of Gulliver's satire on *Robinson Crusoe* is specifically the claim that one can live apart, not speaking to anyone for nearly three decades, and still behave and fundamentally act like a human when one returns to human society.

Smith provides plenty of reasons to doubt this claim in TMS, and in language that shows his conversance with the genre of experimental castaway fiction, a favorite image in some of his textual thought experiments. I began the chapter with two of them, but will quote them again here:

> To one who was to live alone in a desolate island it may be a matter of doubt, perhaps, whether a palace or a collection of such small conveniencies as are commonly contained in a tweezer-case, would contribute most to his happiness and enjoyment. If he is to live in society, indeed, there can be no comparison, because in this, as in all other cases, we constantly pay more regard to the sentiments of the spectator, than to those of the person principally concerned, and consider rather how his situation will appear to other people, than how it will appear to himself (TMS 182).

> Were it possible that a human creature could grow up to manhood in some solitary place, without any communication with his own species, he could no more think of his own character, of the propriety or demerit of his own sentiments and conduct, of the beauty or deformity of his own mind, than of the beauty or deformity of his own face….To a man who was from his birth a stranger to society, the objects of his passions, the external bodies which either pleased or hurt him, would occupy his whole attention…Bring him into society, and all his own passions with immediately become the cause of new passions (111).

The first quotation puts its finger squarely on the problem of the "Robinson Crusoe economy," a favorite thought experiment in international trade economics textbooks. When Crusoe is alone on the island, he is both producer and consumer of his own goods, and the relevant tradeoff is his leisure time for his goods, a formulation that does considerable interpretive violence to Crusoe's divinely-ordained work ethic. Introducing Friday introduces the possibility of limited trade.

Smith's island thought experiments about social isolation seriously question the notion that material desires ever exist outside of the ability to think about character—an ability that is always socially formulated through rhetorical exchange, whether in TMS or in the LRBL. Without a sense of an auditor or spectator, there is no particular need to think about how to formulate an image or rhetorical identity to the world. As rhetorical identity is the generic form that the human desire to "truck, barter, and

exchange" takes (as Smith famously puts it in *The Wealth of Nations*), commercial and material desires also fail to inhere outside of society.

"Character," understood in its socially and rhetorically formulated eighteenth-century sense, serves a site of resistance to this *Crusoe*-inflected view of self-sufficiency in both the LRBL and *Gulliver's Travels*. In contrast to Crusoe, who notably encounters no linguistic others until Friday, whom he teaches to speak his own language and on his own terms, Gulliver's task in the *Travels Into Several Remote Nations of the World* (as the original title page identifies it) is fundamentally and inextricably about encounters with rhetorical others, to accommodate one's own selfish needs into a language that they might understand. I next turn my attention to Gulliver's rhetoric and the protocols of sympathy that were likely the subject of Smith's admiration.

Gulliver's rhetoric

Smith's rhetorical instruction eschewed traditional imitation, as I argued earlier in this chapter, a longtime rhetorical pedagogy. Imitation fails to fulfill the most basic requirements of Smith's sympathetic rhetorical-moral method of inquiry, which is to understand one's own character through thinking about one's likely reader. This socializes and tames the selfish sentiments and incorporates the most blatantly self-serving aspects of rhetoric under a heading of civil discourse and a recuperated civic virtue.

Gulliver's Travels is a fiction about this dilemma writ large, across several wildly different and disparate lands, where it is Gulliver's task to fit himself both physically and rhetorically into the space in which he finds himself, and imitation from one country to the next serves him ill. Most modern interpretations of the novel have tended to focus on its various linguistic ironies and the ultimate misanthropy that these journeys induce, which for C.J. Rawson makes Gulliver less a fully-fledged novelistic character than "a satirist's stance of ultimate exasperation."[50]

But my goal is to read *Gulliver* as Smith would have read it, and for Smith, as we have seen, "character" was not inflected with the same modern burden of bourgeois identity that necessarily excludes a satirist's exasperation with the world. Satire in fact represents a superior management of the interpretive (which for Smith also means moral) relationship between readers and writers, a subject that *Gulliver* has long been understood to concern. Ernest Zimmerman reminds us, for instance, that it is "a book not about a man who undergoes certain experiences but about a man who writes a book about experience that he has undergone."[51] Rodino further complicates this picture:

At a minimum, we need to acknowledge that Swift the author writes the story of Gulliver the character, who in turn becomes the author of various texts for various readers within the *Travels*. In addition, Gulliver is constantly the reader and interpreter of others' texts and frequently (and most uncomfortably) also a character in them, as well as in his own and Swift's stories.[52]

The substance of eighteenth-century novels (as opposed to their more familiar nineteenth-century counterparts) often is this matter of interpretive game, of referred and nested levels of reading, as writers attempt to adjudicate questions of interpretive authority between themselves and their audiences. This is Rodino's interpretation of *Gulliver* in general: that it is a text that in its hoax-like qualities, parodic reinterpretation of the realist novel in the Crusoe-ian mode, and textual interpretive loops, casts doubt on possibility of a real, original referent, an uncorrupted text, a meaning that exists beyond or outside of language. In other words, it is a story about how stories are made, interpreted, and misinterpreted, and one that ultimately comes to the rather bleak conclusion that authors have very little control over the meanings that their readers make for them.

Obviously, this kind of linguistic poststructuralism was not an interpretive position available to Smith, either,[53] but it does point the way rather helpfully to why Gulliver strikes Smith as a particularly well-managed example of satire that forms one-half of a moral system. For the question then arises: what is the object of the satire, and why does its effective communication seem particularly moral to Smith? Clearly, and as is widely acknowledged, part of Swift's satire is on the question of *Robinson Crusoe's* stubbornly persistent claims to literal realism, and, more to the point, the moral significance of its realism. *Crusoe's* truth claims were tied up in its assertions of the workings of divine providence: "to justify and honour the wisdom of Providence in all the variety of our circumstances, let them happen how they will" was the defense its preface offered for its often exhaustive recording of how its eponymous character manages every detail of his castaway survival, and Robinson tends to see divine providence indeed working in even the most minor of situational coincidences and material objects.[54] To doubt any detail of Crusoe's narrative is thus to doubt the workings of divine providence.

This is one way to manage the relationship between readers and writers. Another way is to put the literal truth claim beyond the point, as Swift's ironized prefaces and arguments between Gulliver and "Richard Sympson" over emendations to the text tend to encourage one to do. Or, more to the point, they locate realism somewhere else. Smith's appreciation for the text's management of the relationship

between the character of the author derives in some sense from its satire on the notion of the reality of clearly fictional others. For Smith, as well as for Swift, the others to whom we write were always a combination of their rhetoric and our imagination about that rhetoric, so the particularly moral text was the one that best thematized the employment of rhetoric.

This was more generally true of eighteenth-century novels over their nineteenth-century counterparts: to borrow Zimmerman's phrasing, nearly all of them (including even *Robinson Crusoe*) were not about events that happened to a particular person, but instead about a particular person's *account* of those events. This is why "character of the author" proves a particularly significant phrase in Smith: nearly all characters were also their own authors in early novels, whether they were writing in the mock travel mode (*Gulliver* and *Crusoe*) or in the epistolary one. Free indirect discourse and its knowledgeable (if not omniscient) narrators who could provide a bird's eye view of the reality of the situation were an invention of a much later time. Partially, at least, this is the object of Swift's well-managed satire on *Robinson Crusoe*: the very idea that the events, and not our reading of the character's rhetorical performance of them, were the significant things to which we ought to pay close attention, and that any true idea of an event could derive from a person's account of it. Swift's insistence on the significance instead of rhetorical performance (which was the substance of Gulliver's adventure, in every land to which he travels) satirizes the very notion that we can ever gain access to the "truth" of an event outside of someone's rhetoric about it.

Quite obviously, what this leaves us is Smith's sympathetic protocols, in which we evaluate a character's rhetoric against how we ourselves would feel when placed in a situation: a mental process that does not particularly require us to believe that human-like creatures the size of our thumb might really exist, or that an island of talking horses floats somewhere out in the sea. In some sense, the more fantastical the situation, the more that we have to admire Gulliver's ability to stretch or shrink to fit it. From the second he sets foot on Lilliput, it is Gulliver's task to encourage this potential sympathy for two potential sets of readers (and here I use the word in the most flexible sense, and to encompass auditors): the Lilliputians and the actual readers of the novel in four volumes called *Gulliver's Travels*. The sympathetic protocols are highly wrought and complex here, so it is worth stating them again: we readers of *Gulliver's Travels* are meant to sympathize with Gulliver's representation of his representation to the inhabitants of Lilliput, et al. This remove creates a certain interesting textual artifact: a sense that we can fully know the content of what it is that Gulliver suppresses or will not say to garner sympathy with the local populace to whom he is trying to communicate his desires and sentiments.

For instance, at a point when Gulliver is functionally mute in Lilliputian, and cannot express his desires and needs to the tiny people of his adopted land, he takes the necessity of "creeping" away to relieve himself of "the Necessities of Nature," the very necessity of which he cannot explain to them. The needs of the body might not be inherently sympathetic according to Smithian protocols[55], but what we seem to be asked to sympathize with here is what our own imagination can recreate of the painful awkwardness of needing to void our own bowels and having no means by which to ask our hosts where that might be done with a minimum of inconvenience. One of the inherently unsympathetic bodily passions is transformed, then, into something with imaginative significance. We may not be able to feel the strain of our bowels at this very moment well enough to sympathize directly with that problem, but when it comes to sympathetically *imagining* Gulliver's embarrassment, and, curiously, his inability to communicate it to his text's internal auditors and get what he needs from them, the bodily barriers to sympathy disappear. The nature of Gulliver's rhetorical representations to his reader perform another part of the essential Smithian formula, as well: acknowledging that one's representation of this whole messy business should be directed outwards to one's interlocutors, taking into account (in this case explicitly) their possible sympathetic boundaries: "I hope the candid Reader will give some Allowance," he writes, "after he hath maturely and impartially considered my Case, and the Distress I was in" (24). The situation is not much different when Gulliver asks for food from his diminutive captors. Although he proclaims it "against the Rule of Decency" (23) to put his finger in his mouth to signify that he wants food, we sympathize with his discomfort, if not the feeling of actual hunger itself. Hunger, of course, is Smith's example in *TMS* of the inherently unsympathetic desire, unless it is otherwise transformed into an imaginative currency (TMS 27-28).[56] Most of the "action" of the plot, especially in Lilliput, seems to consist in translating uncomfortable physical constraints into embarrassment about one's ability to do much more than make crude gestures to represent them in the general direction of one's interlocutors. These needs themselves are inherently unsympathetic by Smithian lights; translated by rhetoric into our imaginings of how terrible it must be to be mute and without the rhetorical arts, they become legible and sympathetic.

The matter becomes rather more serious (and removed at an even greater imaginative distance) by the time that Gulliver arrives in Houyhnhnm, the land of the supremely rational and morally superior horses. The rational horses are, curiously and possibly relevantly, completely uninterested in matters of truth and falsehood because they do not lie or dissimulate themselves. Gulliver is tasked with explaining his own England to them, and once again the sympathy that we feel for his character is complex and mediated not by physicality, but by our imagination of both his discomfort and

theirs. He describes how horses are kept in bondage until they are dead, at which point their carcasses "were stripped and sold for what they were worth, and their Bodies left to be devoured by Dogs and Birds of Prey" (203). While our mind's eye is perhaps initially drawn to the horrors of this situation for the horses, the protocols of sympathy here tend to emphasize rather Gulliver's horror at having to describe this situation to his kindly Houyhnhnm master. Smith tells us in TMS, to emphasize the imaginative and non-bodily qualities of the same, that "we sympathize even with the dead…it is miserable, we think…[to be] a prey to corruption and the reptiles of the earth; to be no more thought of in this world" (TMS 12). In this case, it seems that we are sympathizing with Gulliver for finding the imaginative possibilities of the death of horses horrifying, now that he can see it as the Houyhnhnms themselves might; when he "begged his Honour would please to excuse me from proceeding any farther" (*Gulliver* 203), it is less that we feel the misery of the theoretical Houyhnhnm, who is dead (and also imaginary), than we feel a kind of referred, mutually imaginative sympathy with Gulliver for finding himself in this delicate situation, making an effort to suppress what he knows must be hard for his horse masters to hear.

Indeed, it is often Gulliver's effortful rhetoric in pursuit of sympathy—along with the impression that the textual apparatus creates, that he is concealing from his hosts more than he is saying about his needs as a person so much larger than they are—that we as readers are meant to find sympathetic, in a way that tends to simply reinforce the way that sympathy for Smith is endlessly recursive and spectatorial.[57] The farther we are removed from whatever passion (especially bodily) that inspires the quest for sympathy, the better. *Gulliver's Travels* allows us to sympathize with rhetoric directed not at us but at someone else, creating an enormous imaginative remove to contemplate such questions as, "What do the Lilliputians think of this giant who has washed up on their shores? In their place, would I believe the same?" Part of the fun and the joke of the Lilliputian section is the apparent ability to "tell" Gulliver, the human, in a different frame of reference altogether, and to recall that we are getting this report re-translated for us. For instance, Gulliver supposedly translates into English a Lilliputian text about the possessions found in his pockets (the same passage that Hunter believes parodic of *Robinson Crusoe*) and learns that the Lilliputian neologism for him is "Man-Mountain" and that simple objects like his pocket handkerchief appear to the Lilliputians as rugs large enough for a throne room (28). Hunter does not do much with the fact that we learn about the apparently parodic items in Gulliver's pockets through Gulliver's written report of a Lilliputian minister's written report to the Lilliputian king, but it seems worth noting. There is a possible mockery of the *ars memoria* of novelistic realism lurking in Gulliver's ability to recount (in English and "word for word" [ibid.]) the full and colorful Lilliputian inventory of

the objects found on his person. But the thrust of the passage (and possibly the parody) resides in the rhetorical purpose to which these objects are put, and the very unreality of Gulliver's account perhaps a clue telling us to look elsewhere for the passage's meaning, rather than simply stopping at the critique of novelistic "realism." In *Robinson Crusoe,* the story of rugged self-reliance and realism alike are both undermined when Crusoe pulls his pipe and tobacco from his pocket after describing his pockets as empty. In *Gulliver,* self-reliance in the Crusoe-ian sense of the phrase never truly seems at issue. His problem is more that the worlds he visits are all too inhabited by others with whom, as with the Lilliputians, he must make his rhetorical way. Even the account of the items in his pocket—connections with the novelistic "real," as it were—are embedded in Gulliver's representation of someone else's representation of them, and come back to us thoroughly defamiliarized. The larger part of Gulliver's task, as he tells us himself, is to become skilled enough in the rhetorical arts of Lilliput to convince the tiny people to give him his freedom.

What Swift seems to do in this passage is give us a sense of Gulliver as a fellow reader, studying the rhetoric of the potential sympathizer for a view of the self as it must appear to them. The critique here, if there is one, seems to rely more on passage about novelty from TMS—where reading a book through the eyes of the other reinvigorates it—or, from the LRBL, the general call to be "interesting." And what Gulliver seems to grasp from this inventory is a sense of scale: just exactly how much larger he is, and how much correspondingly larger his task will be in convincing the Lilliputians to let him loose. A few paragraphs later, Gulliver describes himself as taking "all possible Methods to cultivate [a] favourable Disposition" (31), including lying down so that Lilliputian children might play hide and seek in his hair. His physical "fitting in" mirrors and metaphorizes his rhetorical quest, providing him the ability to re-translate his story for the sailors of his own size who rescue him by providing them evidence in the form of tiny sheep with a tale attached.

For Smith, the list of objects in Gulliver's pocket, which were part of the subject of Swift's parody of *Robinson Crusoe,* had additional significance. His account of the invisible hand in TMS relies on our ability to sympathize with the rich in complex and commercial societies. This sympathy develops in his description primarily through our apprehension that the "trinkets of frivolous utility" (180) that convey very small utility to their bearers. "All their pockets are stuffed with little conveniencies" (ibid.) Smith complains, and might as well be complaining about Gulliver, whose own inventory discovers that his pocket contain "several other little Conveniencies" that really do not seem to help Gulliver at all in any discernible practical way (*Gulliver* 31). But far from truly trivial, these objects are "often the secret motive of the most serious and important pursuits of both private and public life" (TMS 181). When we

sympathetically imagine what pleasure the rich must get from using them, we desire to be rich ourselves and thereby enjoy the same "pleasures of wealth and greatness" that arise from this "complex view" (183), even as we can acknowledge in periods of sickness and bad humor that these objects truly are trivial, frivolous, and do not promote our general happiness in the least. The famous turn of the invisible hand, however, is that this sympathetic tie to others (not selfishness, as Mandeville might have had it) is a "deception which rouses and keeps in continual motion the industry of mankind" (183) and promotes the excess wealth that ends up in the hands of the poor. It is only on Smith's "deserted islands" that trinkets lose their social currency, and thus their real value. But no island that Gulliver ever travels to is ever truly deserted—another way that *Gulliver* revises and subverts *Crusoe*.

Ironically, of course, *Robinson Crusoe* has long been the eighteenth-century fiction associated with vaguely Smithian economic theories about production, and Crusoe the prototype of the *homo economicus* who "rouses and keeps in continual motion the industry of mankind," cultivating the earth, building cities, and so on.[58] But for Smith, Crusoe's desire for the objects that sympathy for the rich causes us to covet would fail to develop or inhere (as indeed it didn't for Selkirk). In *Gulliver*, Smith seems to find a better model for the social sympathies. Gulliver's trinkets do not provide any clear practical utility to him: the point is driven home again and again by the unimportance of his watch, which he calls his "Oracle" (29), but which cannot be used to consult the time at all under the circumstances. Nor do these objects serve as markers of novelistic realism, as they did in Defoe. But they do provide an opportunity for Gulliver to represent (to himself and to the reader) their utility to others in the highly occupied and sociable islands that he visits. That representation of the Lilliputian's representation turns out to place a very high agglutinative value on these objects: they become area rugs and pillars fit for royal palaces when looked at from the remove of several imaginations. We can indeed imagine the Lilliputians have "more of the means of happiness" (TMS 180) when reconsidering these mundane pocket contents from their view, even as they lose value to Gulliver in their original context and had no "real" existence for us in the first place beyond the sympathetic economies that give them meaning.

The pattern repeats itself in some way for every new land that Gulliver enters, this requirement that he recreate himself in a new language and through the mastering of an additional rhetorical-sympathetic protocol. But simply imitating the past rhetorical-sympathetic protocols of a previous land is just about as likely to work as if Gulliver allowed the giants of Brobdingnag use his hair for hide-and-seek: the pattern that repeats is not Gulliver's specific way of employing rhetoric, but, rather, the pattern of his effortful attempts to voice his own character in a new language and our own

readerly sympathy with the exertion. Although critics like Rodino tend to view this through the lens of a post-nineteenth-century insistence on characterological stability and thus represent Gulliver as having been "lulled into complete readerly docility"[59] by his acceptance and employment of, for instance, Lilliputian rhetoric, the text itself gives no indication that this is fundamentally a nightmarish vision, or, indeed, that Gulliver had any kind of stable, original identity to lose. Indeed, after three of his four voyages, Gulliver sets out again, for all that he calls them "unfortunate" (*Gulliver* 125).

While the elements of the *Robinson Crusoe* parody are perhaps as heavy-handed as they often are elsewhere (like Crusoe, Gulliver has been "condemned by Nature and Fortune to an active and restless life" [69] and seems to offer no further or illuminating account of his own motivations), to ask him for a character outside of this readerly anticipation of the interpretation of others merely reinscribes the conditions of a later and different kind of novel, which seems to be from whence the assertion that "Gulliver is not a real character" proceeds. As Elizabeth Kraft reminds us, "in the eighteenth century, the absence of opportunity to escape individual identity would have seemed just as debilitating to the notion of self as the denial of personal expression would seem in the twentieth century."[60] What Rodino reads as readerly docility and the loss of agency is effectively the stuff of the eighteenth-century novel, for all that *Gulliver* seems in some ways to precede it. What we are meant to admire, the moral trajectory of the eighteenth-century novelistic character, is not a reinstatement of identity but the effort to shed it—and in Smith's vision, and arguably in the vision of other eighteenth-century "characters of the author," this is a shedding that is formulated rhetorically. Just as the objects in Gulliver's pockets come to hold reflected and refracted meanings that obviate whatever their 'original' might have been—to their benefit—the original of Gulliver recedes well into the background, along with whatever motives he might have possessed for undertaking the voyages in the first place. Sympathy for his use of rhetoric locates his value somewhere else.

The story of *Gulliver* as rhetorical tragedy, in fact, does not quite emerge until Part IV, "A Voyage to the Houynhnms," from which Gulliver returns not the moral master of rhetoric that his previous voyages have proven him (for instance, at an earlier point, he manages to use his knowledge to persuade his rather recalcitrant wife and children that he should head for sea again), but a social isolate with an abhorrence of his own humanity and the family that once served as his primary form of characterization outside of his deployment of rhetoric in other lands, as well as the belief that he ought to imitate the horses of England (down to the sound of their "language"), even with the knowledge that they are not quite Houyhnhnms. The Houyhnhnms present as exceptional in various ways in the text even beyond their status as the last land visited and the only "peoples" whom Gulliver ever seems to

desire to imitate perfectly once he returns to England. For Gulliver, they are moral paragons, although modern critics tend to greet Gulliver's breathy assertion that they have no words for "Power, Government, War, Law, Punishment and a Thousand Other Things" (225) with skepticism, and as possible evidence of horse hypocrisy, noting that the "Yahoos" with whom they co-habit would quickly be squeezed to death for the crime of trying to mount a Houyhnhnm (229), by the very testimony that Gulliver unwittingly repeats, and that their General Assembly and the existence of a "Masters" among them clearly indicates some form of government (228-9).

Equine utopia primarily inheres, according to Gulliver, in its enshrinement of "*Reason*" (italics original) and the very fact that what this Reason means is the universal unthinkability of its opposite: "Neither is Reason among them a Point Problematical as with us, where Men can argue with Plausibility on both sides of Question; but strikes you with immediate conviction" (225). Gulliver cannot even translate the word "opinion" for them, nor communicate the notion that two different interlocutors might find themselves on the opposite side of a question, or even an aesthetic preference (226). Gulliver generally admires this and finds fault only in one aspect of the "Defectiveness of their Language" (228): namely, that they do not write. Terry Castle's classic deconstructive essay on *Gulliver* links the Houyhnhnms' unlettered status to their desire to fix meaning and fear that texts always and necessarily escape the closely-guarded, meaning-making oral procedures and pedagogies that Gulliver describes, which virtually exclude the possibility of disagreement, because their distribution cannot be controlled.[61] Rodino furthermore points out that Gulliver—in authoring a text about the Houyhnhnms—necessarily opens himself to precisely the kinds of disagreements whose absence he seems to admire most about the horses, which seems to open Gulliver up (to his horror in the final pages of the novel) to the "Tribe of Answerers, Considerers, Observers, Reflecters, Detecters, Remarkers" (247), and determines never to write again.[62]

It is difficult to know how Swift intended this to be read—and, indeed, if the majority of deconstructive critics are to be believed, Swift's entire point was to write a text about how texts escape their authors and any attempt to fix them with reference to an observable, Crusoe-ian reality where one cannot dispute the workings of either divine providence or material things. For Smith, however, even Gulliver's misanthropic, melancholic end after his encounter with the horses may have had a particular rhetorical-moral lesson. For Smith, as I have been describing him in this chapter, the fundamental moral act is the interpretation of potentially contentious others and the incorporation of their competing opinions into one's own framework, of modulating one's voice to meet theirs (particularly their half asleep, particularly unsympathetic, un-alert ones). Without fundamental disagreements, or fundamentally

different linguistic others, Smith's moral epistemological framework collapses. If we somehow manage to acquire "immediate experience" of what other men (or horses) feel, the entire need for the kind of imaginative and rhetorical sympathies that form the basis of the moral act for Smith simply evaporate. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, we find that for the Houyhnhnms, sentiment formulated along Smithian lines as such does not seem to exist: unlike the man who holds his pinky finger in higher esteem than the nation of China, the horses treat the "Stranger from the remotest Part" equal to their "nearest Neighbour" and even have no particular preferences for their own colts or foals (226). Although their literary characterization as particularly skilled, unlettered poets seems to align them well with Smith's stadial theories of social and civil development—where oral poetry precedes prose, the language of business—even Smith's "barbarians" (the Chieftains of the Highlands of Scotland who "used to consider the poorest man of his clan, as his cousin and relation [TMS 223[) manage to make some distinction between kin and not kin, a distinction that Gulliver will no longer be able to formulate for himself when he returns to England. Sentiments, and the consideration of how our rhetoric and actions (particularly directed towards kin) will strike the view of other spectators, serve as the primary motivators of moral behavior. Indeed, part of Smith's defense of epistolary novels, as we will see in my next chapter, is that they condition the "peculiarly odious man" out of the "defect" of appearing to "feel nothing for his own children" (143). In a utopian society of particularly indifferent horses, there is no need to consider how such a defect would appear to them, and no need to modify our sentiments—written or oral—accordingly. Fittingly, perhaps, what Gulliver loses in the end is the ability to do anything but imitate the horses' noises for an audience that cannot understand them, even as he retains the ability to *write* his story for the same (however disputatious he becomes about its meaning). Linguistically, he might as well be the man raised from infancy in some deserted place.

What *Gulliver* fundamentally was for Smith, I think, was a defense of the principals of a rhetorical ethics. One would never imitate Gulliver (of course), but one could imitate his process. That is, one could imitate his rhetorical process until the very end, when he himself eschews the value of moral reasoning through rhetoric, and naturally ends up the worse off for it. It was virtually a manual in the cultivation of rhetorical adaptability in the most trying of circumstances, one which engaged the sympathy of readers for the very moral-rhetorical process in which its protagonist was engaged. Next, I turn to an example that transported this defense of moral rhetoric to a context less immediately fantastical but no less fictional.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

[1] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1982). All subsequent in-text citations will refer to "TMS" where it is necessary to distinguish the source from other in-text citations, and give the page number from this edition.

[2] Dugald Stewart, "Account of the Life and Writing of Adam Smith, LL.D. From the Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh"(1793). In Adam Smith, *Essays on Philosophical Subjects* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1980), 274.

[3] Paddy Bullard, "Rhetoric and Eloquence: The Language of Persuasion" in the *Oxford Handbook of British Philosophy in the Eighteenth Century,* ed. James A. Harris (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013), 85.

[4] Ian Duncan, "Adam Smith, Samuel Johnson and the institutions of English" in *The Scottish Invention of English Literature,* ed. Robert Crawford (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 41.

[5] ibid.

[6] The 1752 list is available in David Hume*, Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, Vol. II, ed. Thomas Hill Green and Thomas Hodge Grose (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1875), 461-464.

[7] J. Paul Hunter, "Gulliver's Travels and the Novel," in *The Genres of Gulliver's Travels*, ed. Frederik N. Smith (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1990), 56.

[8] Jonathan Swift to Alexander Pope, 27 November 1726, in *Correspondence*, ed. Harold Williams (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), Vol. III, 189.

[9] Hugh Blair, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, ed. Linda Ferreira-Buckley and S. Michael Halloran (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2005), 421.

[10] ibid.

[11] The subject of the disagreement was not philological; it was in fact David Hume, who had died recently, and about whom Smith had written a deeply felt eulogy that did not confirm the pious Dr. Johnson in his belief that atheists repented their heresies at death. See Ian Simpson Ross, *The Life of Adam Smith* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1910), 203-4. For Smith's review of Johnson's *Dictionary,* see *Essays on Philosophical Subjects,* 232-41.

[12] Adam Smith, *Lectures on Rhetoric and* Belles Lettres (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1985), 7. All in-text references to this edition will after appear as LRBL where it is necessary to distinguish them from other in-text references, followed by the page number.

[13] Hunter 66.

[14] See LRBL 3: "Foreigners though they may signify the same thing never convey the idea with such strength as those we are acquainted with and whose origin we can trace."

[15] This, at least, is Alex Woloch's theory in *The One vs. The Many: Minor Characters and the Space of the Protagonist in the Novel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), which argues that nineteenth-century novel characters battle for "character-space," assigned on the grounds of their relative "roundness" or "flatness," a process that Woloch links to an account for alienated labor in capitalist economies.

[16] Deidre Shauna Lynch, *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture, and the Business of Inner Meaning* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 13.

[17] Stephen J. McKenna, "Adam Smith's Rhetorical Art of Character," in *Character, Self, and Sociability in the Scottish Enlightenment*, ed. Thomas Ahnert and Susan Manning (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 52.

[18] My third chapter argues that the figure of the "impartial spectator" developed over time and the course of Smith's revisions to TMS, and ended up very differently from the ordinary representative of social mediocrity that it seems to be throughout the first book of TMS.

[19] McKenna 52.

[20] Anthony Ashley-Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftesbury, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times,* Vol. 1 (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2001), 100.

[21] ibid.

[22] ibid. 99.

[23] ibid. 100. Instead, Shaftesbury recommends a scene played alone, in solitude, before a roaring fire.

[24] ibid. 101.

[25] Smith's commentary on Swift and Shaftesbury subtly recalls his *Wealth of Nations* pragmatism about the parlous state of the urban poor in advanced commercial societies: "Invention is kept alive, and the mind is not suffered to fall into that *drowsy stupidity* which, in a civilized society, seems to benumb the understanding of almost all the inferior ranks of people" in "barbarous" societies (for Smith, these are the agrarian and pastoral ones that precede commercial civilizations; emphasis mine; WN 782). One of the real detractions of Shaftesbury's self-soliloquies is that he does not write for the world in which he finds himself but for the one occupied by Plato and Virgil. But Shaftesbury also does not quite write for that world, either. Smith examines one of Virgil's Georgics and finds that when the latter "is disposed to be in a transport [he] does not run mad" (LRBL 61)—unlike Shaftesbury, who lacks any form of outside regulation from the world around him, as he addresses himself to a dead world.

[26] Lecture 8, LRBL 40-47.

[27] McKenna 60.

[28] ibid. 62.

[29] Duncan 41.

[30] For more about the evolution of *belles lettres* into literary criticism and the influence of the Scottish Enlightenment on the same, see Neil Rhodes, "From Rhetoric to Criticism" in *The Scottish Invention of English Literature* ed. Robert Crawford (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[31] OED, definition 14: "A person portrayed in a work of fiction, a drama, a film, a comic strip, etc.; also a part played by an actor on the stage, in a film, etc., a role. (OED online: http://www.oed.com, accessed 1 November 2017). The OED records its first usage with John Dryden in 1664. This usage of the term notably does not appear as one of Samuel Johnson's definitions in his dictionary.

[32] This also recalls Smith's TMS assertion that "our joy for the deliverance of those heroes of tragedy or romance who interest us, is as sincere as our grief for their distress, and our fellow-feeling with their misery is not more real than that with their happiness. We enter into their gratitude towards those faithful friends who did not desert them in their difficulties; and we heartily go along with their resentment against those perfidious traitors who injured, abandoned, or deceived them" (10).

[33] "Racine and Voltaire; Richardson, Marivaux, and Riccoboni; are, in such cases, much better instructors than Zeno, Chryssipus, or Epictetus" (TMS 143).

[34] My reservations about the extent to which Smith remained relativistic throughout the course of his life and revisions to TMS are addressed in Chapter 3 of this project.

[35] Gallagher 344.

[36] Henry Fielding, *Joseph Andrews*, ed. Martin C. Battestin (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1967), 189.

[37] Gallagher 356.

[38] Murray Milgate and Shannon C. Stimson devote considerable energy to excavating this tradition—and pointing out its problems—in neoclassical economics (which sees itself as a descendant of Smith) in *After Adam Smith: A Century of Transformation in Politics and Political Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 214ff.

[39] Richard H. Rodino, "'Splendide Mendax': Authors, Characters, and Readers in *Gulliver's Travels*" (*PMLA*, Vol. 106, No. 5, Oct. 1991), 1055. I should note that Rodino himself does not hold this view, but rather associates it with the "hard school" of Swift criticism, as opposed to the soft one, which operates "via post-Jamesian assumptions about consistent psychological development in characterization, distinguishing between persona and author" and thus finds in Gulliver more of a gentle satire on

human nature than a running political commentary on contemporary eighteenth-century politics.

[40] Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics, and the Study of Literature* (London: Routledge, 1975), 230.

[41] Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978), 106.

[42] Lynch 9-10.

[43] Woloch 16. In reference to Hélène Cixous, "The Character of 'Character'" (*New Literary History* 5, 1974) 383-402.

[44] It's also worth noting here Smith's use of what Griswold calls the "protreptic 'we'": he brings his readers along with him by performing their moral-aesthetic response to Swift. See Charles L. Griswold, *Adam Smith and the Virtues of Enlightenment* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 45ff.

[45] The student notes format of the LRBL is likely to blame here: Smith means the *Drapier's Letters*, a series of pamphlets that Swift penned under the pseudonym M.B., Drapier. The ostensible subject of these pamphlets was the licensing of a local Irish concern to mint an inferior copper coinage, but the larger issue was licensure and patents in general and the relationship of Ireland to the Crown. Swift advocated for the notion that Ireland was and ought to be fiscally independent of the United Kingdom, and in service of the idea of a unified Irish community: a topic that was obviously of interest to Smith and his fellow Scots as they attempted their own articulations of where Scotland stood in the newly United Kingdom, especially following the Jacobite Rebellion in 1745.

[46] Warren Montag, *The Unthinkable Swift: The Spontaneous Philosophy of a Church of England Man* (New York: Verso, 1994). See Chapter 4.

[47] See n 38.

[48] In fact, Hunter identifies some of these small details of education and profession as some of the elements of Gulliver that are most parodic of the bourgeois Crusoe (Hunter 66-7). See also C.J. Rawson's "Gulliver and Others: Reflections on Swift's 'I' Narrators" in *Swift: The Enigmatic Dean: Festschrift for Hermann Josef Real*, ed. Rudolf Freiburg, Arno Loffler, and Wolfgang Zach, with the assistance of Jan Schnitker (Tubingen: Stauffenburg-Verlag, 1998), 231-46, which notes the Puritan associations with Emmanuel College, the high church dean's dig at Defoe's dissenting roots.

[49] Future in-text references are to Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, ed. Albert J. Rivero (New York: Norton, 2002).

[50] C.J. Rawson, *Gulliver and the Gentle Reader: Studies in Swift and Our Time* (New York: Routledge, 1973), 27.

[51] Everett Zimmerman, *Swift's Narrative Satires: Author and Authority* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983), 115.

[52] Rodino 1057.

[53] Nor was reader-response theory, which is why I have deliberately excluded it in the analysis that follows.

[54] Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe,* ed. John Richetti (New York: Penguin, 2003), 4.

[55] As TMS puts it, in the context of a larger section on why describing the needs of the body is largely unlikely to induce sympathy:

> Such is our aversion for all the appetites which take their origin for the body: all strong expressions of them are loathsome and disagreeable…The true cause of the peculiar disgust which we conceived for the appetites of the body when we see them in other men is that we cannot enter into them. To the person himself who feels them, as soon as they are gratitfied, the object that excited them ceases to be agreeable: even its presence often becomes offensive to him; he looks round to no purpose for the charm which transported him the moment before, and he can now as little enter into his own passion as another person. When we have dined, we order the covers to be removed (28).

[56] "Violent hunger, for example, though upon many occasions not only natural, but unavoidable, is always indecent, and to eat voraciously is universally regarded as a piece of ill manners. There is, however, some degree of sympathy, even with hunger. It is agreeable to see our companions eat with a good appetite, and all expressions of loathing are offensive…We can sympathize with the distress which excessive hunger occasions when we read the description of it in the journal of a siege, or of a sea voyage. We imagine ourselves in the situation of the sufferers, and thence readily conceive the grief, the fear and consternation, which must necessarily distract them. We feel, ourselves, some degree of those passions, and therefore sympathize with them: but as we do not grow hungry by reading the descriptions, we cannot properly, even in this case, be said to sympathize with their hunger" (27-28). Swift seems in agreement: Gulliver remarks, "This is enough to say upon the Subject of my Dyet, wherewith other Travellers fill their Books, as if the Readers were personally concerned, whether we fared well or ill" (*Gulliver* 197).

[57] The failure to recognize the object of sympathy in *Gulliver's Travels* is largely Jonathan Lamb's problem in *The Evolution of Sympathy in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2009), where Lamb spends quite a long time talking about the successive

failures of Gulliver's sympathies but very little time talking about Gulliver's own bids for the reader's sympathy.

[58] See, for instance, Northrop Frye in "Varieties of Eighteenth-Century Sensibility": "We saw that Locke, like Descartes before him, based his philosophy on a philosophical man abstracted from his social context, in short, a theoretical primitive. Also that Robinson Crusoe was an allegory of another abstract primitive, the economic man of capitalist theory, whose outlines are already fairly complete in Adam Smith. These are the individual primitives at the core of Augustan culture" (33).

[59] Rodino 1061.

[60] Elizabeth Kraft, *Character and Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Comic Fiction* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1992), 15.

[61] Terry Castle, "Why the Houyhnhnms Don't Write: Swift, Satire, and the Fear of the Text" (*Essays in Literature* 7, 1980), 31-44.

[62] Rodino 1067.

Chapter 2
Brought Home to the Breast: Epistolary Sympathies and *Clarissa's* Rhetorical Knack

Whatever one's feelings about *Gulliver's Travels* and its claim to the distinction of full-fledged novelhood (and characterhood for its wandering protagonist), Samuel Richardson's three fictional epistolary productions—*Pamela* (1740), *Clarissa* (1748), and *Sir Charles Grandison* (1753)—are generally acknowledged as members of the club in good standing, at least since Ian Watt's epoch-defining *The Rise of the Novel*.[1] It is despite an apparently withering critique of novels in the *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, then, that we find Smith offering fulsome praise of the genre in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*:

> The poets and romance writers, who best paint the refinements and delicacies of love and friendship, and of all other private and domestic affections, Racine and Voltaire; Richardson, Marivaux, and Riccoboni; are, in such cases, much better instructors than Zeno, Chryssipus, or Epictetus (*The Theory of Moral Sentiments* 143).[2]

One purpose of this chapter is to explore the apparent contradiction between the Smith of the *LRBL* and the Smith of TMS, and determine what this difference can tell us: about Smith's work and about the increasing dominance of epistolary novel in the middle of the century. This dominance at least in part thanks to Richardson's enormously popular and controversial works, but also to the French writers—Pierre de Marivaux (1688-1763) and Marie Jeanne Riccoboni (1713-1792)—that Smith mentions in the passage of TMS quoted above. Smith singles out the epistolary novel, I argue, because it best fulfills the conditions of distance, observation, and desirability of many auditing "others" under which Smith's sympathy obtains; furthermore, Smith's apparent preference for the epistolary novel as a means of moral instruction left its traces in TMS itself. More particularly, *Clarissa*—Richardson's famously voluminous exploration of a tragic breakdown in parent-child relations—was likely the example that Smith had in mind when he spoke of Richardson as a better moral teacher than the Stoics.

Our best clue for the latter, I think, resides in the larger context of the passage in which Smith singles out Richardson for praise:

> The man who appears to feel nothing for his own children, but who treats them upon all occasions with unmerited harshness, seems of all brutes the most detestable. The sense of propriety, so far from requiring us to

eradicate altogether that extraordinary sensibility, which we naturally feel for the misfortunes of our nearest connections, is always much more offended by the defect, than it ever is by the excess of sensibility. The stoical apathy is, in such cases, never agreeable, and all the metaphysical sophisms by which it is supported can seldom serve any other purpose than to blow up the hard insensibility of a coxcomb to ten times its native impertinence (ibid).

Clarissa, of course, is perhaps best described as an immense dilation on the subject of parents who do not seem to have the ordinary degree of affection for at least one of their children, and who would be well instructed to consult a novel in letters if need be to gain it (or at least a more convincing performance of it). Accusations of improper defects of both filial and parental feeling in fact fly in all directions, with Clarissa's family members lining up on one side to accuse the young woman of failing to fulfill her proper duties as a daughter, and Clarissa herself—in one critic's terms, to which I will return later in the chapter—alleging that what has been denied to her is the common degree of "nurturance" that parents (according to Smith and Clarissa both) owe their children.[3] Clarissa's charge against the Harlowes is precisely that they exhibit an odious defect where they an excess of sensibility would be more understandable, and her letters—which are oriented towards an unseen, public reader from the beginning—are meant to draw attention to this defect while performing her own filial pieties. Of course, these filial pieties themselves are not above suspicion. Smith writes slightly earlier that "men are seldom accused of affecting to be fonder of their children than they really are [but] they have sometimes been suspected of displaying their piety to their parents with too much ostentation" (TMS 142). And indeed, we often find the Harlowes accusing Clarissa of mocking them "with outward gesture of respect" (*Clarissa* 103)[4] or the "ostentation" (199) of her care for them and for others, especially once they realize that her letters to them are being distributed to a wider audience through the tireless efforts of her friend Anna Howe.

Smith's recommendation of epistolary novels as the best form of tutelage for the otherwise incorrigible moral sentiments—and the implication that they somehow serve as both a corrective to philosophy and perhaps even to the 'native insensibilities' that should be otherwise but require priming—cuts to the heart of what he writes earlier is the very point of the moral sentiments, "to feel much for others and little for ourselves" (TMS 25). Volumes have been written already[5] about how *TMS*' imaginative sympathies prompt one to see oneself from the outside, or, more accurately, from the perspective of a theoretical impartial spectator, an abstracted version of a variety of viewpoints, sometimes across space and time and sometimes closer to the community

whose reactions one observes every day.[6] By seeing ourselves from the perspective of an indifferent and impartial outsider, we learn that it is strong feeling for others and insensibility to the self that most earns the approbation of people who are not us. And at least to some extent, the important role that Smith gave to art and literature in curing the native insensibilities of coxcombs has been recognized in the general, multi-disciplinary field of Smith studies. Charles Griswold, for instance, speaks of Smith as "aestheticizing ethics" in the mode of both Francis Hutcheson and David Hume before him.[7] Jonathan Wight argues (to economists, in his case) that for Smith, "the arts," very broadly construed, are the best way of stimulating "character development" in commercial society.[8] Martha Nussbaum's *Poetic Justice* argues strenuously, with Smith as guiding light, that *sans* the "literary imagination," it is difficult to think of the rights and claims of others in the abstract.[9]

Relatively less attention has been paid, however, to what form of art or literature might best stimulate these faculties, and when it has, it has focused primarily on the nineteenth-century novel and its third-person narrator of free indirect discourse, which of course Smith could not have known about at the time that he was recommending epistolary novels and our sympathies (or not) with its characters as a means of reflecting on the performance of our own duties and character for spectators. The apparent critical failure to note that Smith recommends epistolary novels in particular may have something to do with our own, twenty-first century tendency to denigrate the form as needlessly emotionally overwrought, its claim (which originates with Richardson) to write "to the moment" obviously and apparently false, and its characters not at all what we have been tutored by the nineteenth-century novel to expect in terms of our own sympathetic reading experiences. Elizabeth Kraft and Deirdre Shauna Lynch—two amongst the relatively small fellowship of critics who have seriously examined the changes in character that the eighteenth-century wrought on literary character and the fundamental differences between eighteenth- and nineteenth-century novel characters—both note our apparent dissatisfaction with the former and recommend a more "generically responsible criticism" that acknowledges that the purposes of these kinds of characters were different.[10] Both remind us that "the twentieth century has tended to privilege the individualistic, the internal, as though that were the nature of identity."[11] The movement from "surface structure to deep structure"[12] that the nineteenth-century novel emphasizes best fulfills our particular assumptions about how sympathetic engagements with others' supposed depths must and should work.

But Smith's ethics, as I argued in my previous chapter, does not quite work this way. While it is true that we imagine the reactions, feelings, and judgments of others, what we imagine about them is how they are receiving *us*. More particularly, we

imagine them imagining our rhetoric, and comparing it to what they themselves would produce, placed in a like situation. Self-representation embedded inside rhetoric is for Smith the substance of ethics—which goes a rather long way to explaining why he was particularly attentive to his own written work—and the actual content of other people's feelings is less important than the "face" that they present to the public, a face that for Smith and others like him, participating in the newly literate public sphere, was increasingly formulated as writing and letters.

Curiously, what Smith would consider the pinnacle of ethical conduct has long been linked precisely to our dissatisfaction with the characters of the eighteenth-century novel: their obsession with the way that their identities must be be managed, translated, socialized, and understood in a larger context. "The interest in the individual is an interest in his or her eventual location in a precarious social order," as Kraft puts it.[13] The opening line of *TMS* fits well into this structural concern with character: howsoever selfish we may begin our journey, we will understand that self only so well as we can understand it from a larger, more expansive perspective, using tools provided by the moral sentiments.

Although neither Kraft nor Lynch closely remarks it, the epistolary form seems peculiarly appropriate to a vision of character where the "inner selves" of novelistic characters are not only unimportant, but have yet to be invented. In addition to the meaning that letters give to the social quest to find one's place in the world, the form is, generally speaking, fascinated with the inaccessibility of the inner self and the possibilities and dangers of the outwardly-oriented rhetorical performance of the self and its sentiments. Hence all of the accusations of dissimulation, and of performing more or differently than one feels, that lit up the literary world about Richardson's *Pamela* in particular, and hence Henry Fielding's placing of his finger on the pressure point of whether a different set of letters more accurately revealed the young ingénue to be, in reality, a scheming, letter-writing fortune hunter who carefully constructed the letters published as *Pamela* to gain not only the squire's sympathies, but also the larger sympathies of the reading public.[14] The necessity but also the ethics of finding one's place in a precarious social order was one with which the epistolary, even before it was fictionalized into novels, was inherently implicated. Richardson, as is well known, was inspired to create *Pamela, Clarissa,* and *Sir Charles Grandison* by his efforts as the author of the rhetoric manual *Letters to and From Particular Friends On the Most Important Occasions Directing Not Only the Requisite Style and Forms to be Observed in Writing Familiar Letters; But How to Act Justly and Prudently in the Common Concerns of Human Life.* Here, self-interest and everyday morality are freely mixed. Instruction in "Nature, Propriety of Character, Plain Sense, and General Use" are the aims of the text, according to its preface, but for a twentieth-century reader, these letters primarily look

like means for their writers to seek their places and interests in a larger and increasingly less well understood or socially stable world.

How to understand this list? What is the connection in Richardson's mind between getting a good place as a servant and acting justly and prudently in the common concerns of human life? Smith—like Pamela Andrews and her creator—has long stood accused of confusing or conflating morality with self-advocacy, prudence with justice, and an interest in one's reputation with a proper and well-formed ethical foundation. In fact, Scott Paul Gordon explicitly links the Anti-Pamelist assumption that "all conduct [is] proof of self-interest" to Bernard Mandeville, who was also Smith's primary (if largely hidden) interlocutor and bête noire, and contends that these terms are still largely dictating contemporary critical responses to Richardson's masterwork, *Clarissa*.[15] Gordon's analysis in the end claims that Clarissa's trick is to "deploy pathos" as a means of helping us forget that the letter form which so defines the novel is fundamentally a rhetorical performance, with all of the baggage of self-advocacy and self-interest that the rhetorical carries along with it. This seems belied by Richardson's own prefatory words to the novel, which assert the importance of its epistolarity to its meaning-making, a subject to which I will return again briefly at the end of this chapter. For now, however, I want to at the very least assert a common subject for Smith and the epistolary novelist writing in the mid-eighteenth century, which is the intersection of self-interest, self-advocacy, and morality; character, rhetoric, and self.

A large part of Smith's project—in LRBL first, and then in TMS—was overturning Bernard Mandeville's contention that "a man of good Sense and Knowledge may learn to practice them from no better Principle than Vain-glory," an approach that Gordon notes has the argumentative advantage of "unfalsifiability."[16] It is Smith, of course, who has stood since accused of reducing all economic and social activity to a matter of self-interest, at worst, or an "ethics of social construction"[17] at best. Smith admits that Mandeville's "Fable of the Bees" in "some respects borders upon the truth" but fails particularly where it regards "every passion as wholly vicious" and "virtue" itself (as in *Pamela, or, Virtue Rewarded*) as a mask that vice puts on to seek the good opinions of others, when at heart it is merely vice by another name (TMS 313).

Rhetoric was always deeply involved in this form of disguised self-preference, as it was for the Antipamelist writers who took such strong objection to Richardson's first fictional epistolary text. Fielding's *Shamela* largely functions on the promise to reveal the trick: it *was* a matter of self-interest after all, and the set of letters published as *Pamela* was itself part of the plot to disguise the real intentions and self of the author, whose "real" name and identity were quite different than what the false letters were

carefully constructed to reveal. Indeed, in choosing "Shamela," Fielding seems to deny Pamela Andrews even the proper but non-referential name that Catherine Gallagher regards as the *sine qua non* of the ethically legible, novelistic character: Shamela is nothing if non-referential, a way for an outer sign like a name to make sense of an inner self that the novel *Pamela* had threatened to make inaccessible except through a suspect rhetorical performance.[18]

Part of Smith's recuperation of self-regard and self-interest along non-Mandevillian lines is the rehabilitation of rhetoric as *the* important part of the formation of a good character, and its outward-regarding turn for a potential audience its primary benefit, not its main detraction. This aligns his purpose in important ways with Richardson's in *Clarissa*, where the author makes an attempt to neutralize the rhetorical self-interest objection that loomed so darkly over the publication of *Pamela* by performing the anti-rhetorical critique in the text itself. The effect of this performance is not so much to make us forget the rhetorical form in *Clarissa* as it is to make us regard it as rehabilitated, other-directed, and fundamentally ethically *unselfish*. The epistolary form is essential to Richardson in *Clarissa*, as it might very well have been to Smith when he was thinking about how novels might help us feel for others as we perhaps ought to have felt in the first place.

I turn first to the rehabilitation of rhetoric as theme in *Clarissa*, then to the question of the public-private nature of letters in the eighteenth century, a status that make them particularly conducive to Smith's conception of how private desires might be made publicly legible with a larger readership in mind. Finally, I examine how Clarissa's skillful use of rhetoric allows her to progress through the Smithian virtues, from a more narrowly defined prudence to the self-command that becomes the subject of admiration for even her unsympathetic foes, underscoring Smith's TMS argument that rhetoric is the tool of moral inquiry.

Rhetorical Knack, Rhetorical Suspicions

By far, the most frequent charge leveled against Clarissa is that her "knack" for writing well in her own defense bamboozles her readers and effectively hides her true self and its nefarious (by which her family members mean "against their own interests") intentions. In a curious coincidence, or perhaps a familial dearth of rhetorical knack, this is precisely the word that her uncle Antony uses, then her brother James, and then her sister Arabella, to describe why they no longer want to correspond with Clarissa or hear her objections to the marriage with Roger Solmes: objections which they regard as self-interested, or, more to the point, against the family interests. Equally curiously, the physicality that so animated the Antipamelist

writer who disparaged Richardson's ability to "introduce an Image that no Youth can read without Emotion!"[19] seems to prompt very little by way of sympathy from Clarissa's relatives, at least in the way that Clarissa describes them to Anna. On countless occasions, Clarissa falls at the feet of close relatives, weeps onto their bosoms, physically debases herself for them, but to little apparent effect. Sympathy for Clarissa is left for her correspondent, Anna, to whom Clarissa gives an account of this scene in Letter 8, but her own relatives seem more concerned that her letters to them will soften their hearts (almost against their own wills) than her performance of distress in their presence. Indeed, almost everyone who hears of Clarissa's situation and then reads her representation of it in her letters to Anna seems more disposed to sympathy than her own family members, who are daily entertained with the spectacle of her mourning presence.

To be fair, her letters are hardly more effective, at least in the first part of the book. But they are distinctly more feared. Uncle Antony's letter, for instance, assures Clarissa several times that she had best not write; its ultimate threat—to "search her heart to the bottom" from his perspective of the Biblically unsympathetic "neighbour" who "cometh and searcheth" for the truth—remains largely unfulfilled. He closes the letter with yet another admonition to "send me no more letters" apart from a "compliable" one, as if he is afraid that his examination of Clarissa's inner intentions has not quite hit the mark (154-6). (It hasn't.)

This level of rhetorical suspicion for the letter specifically on the part of internal characters was not an important part of *Pamela*. In fact, Mr B. takes Pamela's letters to her parents—once, through subterfuge, he has obtained and read them—as sure evidence that she is indeed as virtuous and non-self-seeking as she had always claimed to be, earning the "Booby" part of Fielding's reimagining. It was Pamela's fainting spells and signs of outward physical distress that Mr B. regarded as dangerously feigned performances, but her letters as the true outpourings of her heart ("I know I wrote my Heart," as Pamela puts it) and evidence of good intentions.[20] Rhetoric, at least for Fielding and many of the Antipamelists, was the easiest and most likely subject for fakery, and in some ways the easiest to uncover because one could already assume its association with a certain amount of bad faith or self-advocacy. Rhetoric baldly invokes the interests of the writer, as it did in the letter-writing manuals that Richardson was writing when he first got the idea for Pamela. The Richardsonian notion that they could also teach "Propriety of Character"[21] would have seemed absurd: how could one pursue self-interest and virtue at the same time?

But Richardson's view of the power of rhetoric in the teaching of the virtues comes very close to Smith's attempted modifications of Mandevillian self-interest, up to and including the conditions under which sympathy—the tool of moral sentiment-

formation—seems to obtain best. In my previous chapter, I argued that Smith's apparent lack of interest in the truth of a situation except as it was expressed through rhetoric and re-imagined by the listener or reader borrowed from early, outrageous fictions like *Gulliver's Travels* and the sympathetic protocols they established regardless of their claims to "realism" in the Wattian sense. But Smith's approbation of the epistolary novel genre—and the Richardsonian manifestation in particular—suggests that he saw something ethically significant in Richardson's defense of the idea that self-advocatory rhetoric did not necessarily imply incurable selfishness. Indeed, in *Clarissa,* it is quite the reverse: it is Clarissa's anti-rhetorical interlocutors are the ones who transparently reveal themselves as shamelessly selfish, unable to master the rhetorical protocols of sympathy that serve as the titular protagonist's main character throughout the novel. Clarissa is first and foremost characterized as a *writer*; and, it is suggested, her moral character is intimately related to her ability to represent herself to a wide variety of even unsympathetic others.

Sympathy, especially when it involves telling a story about one's suffering, works best under conditions of distance and remove, where the imagination can be allowed free reign:

> We can sympathize with the distress excessive hunger occasions when we read the description of it in the journal of a siege, or of a sea voyage. We imagine ourselves in the situation of the sufferers, and thence readily conceived of the grief, the fear and degree of consternation, which must necessarily distract them. We feel, ourselves, some degree of those passions, and therefore sympathize with them: but as we do not grow hungry by reading the description, we cannot properly, even in this case, be said to sympathize with their hunger (TMS 28).

Although an epistolary novel is not quite the same thing as a journal, it has in common with a journal's account of suffering both the first person and unverifiability outside of rhetorical self-representation, usually because of time and distance. Janet Altman's useful reminder about the epistolary text is that the "creation of meaning derives from the structures and potentials specific to the letter form."[22] When it comes to epistolary fictions, one of these structuring potentials is always distance: there is always some reason why the participants in the conversation are writing to each other instead of interacting in person, and writers spend a great deal of time constructing the obstacles that necessitate the correspondence. They are often, but not always, motivations of physical distance: Lovelace and Clarissa write to each other because the Harlowes disapprove of his courtship and later because Clarissa has fled from the brothel where

Lovelace has imprisoned her. She writes to Anna Howe, first of all, because they are not in the same place, but also because Anna—as she announces up front—wishes to distribute Clarissa's letters to their mutual "friends without doors" (40), or the circle of people who consider themselves interested in Clarissa's affairs without having direct access to Clarissa herself. As the novel proceeds and expands, this circle expands along with it. In the first letter, Anna tells Clarissa that she will be giving a copy of Clarissa's reply to an aunt who—although she has never met Clarissa personally—"assents to the preference given you in [the affair of her grandfather's will]" (41). A bit later, she tells Clarissa about a cousin on an unspecified tropical island who has become an avid reader of Clarissa's letters about her situation, and begs for more (78). Even relatively late in the novel, Clarissa makes her own case directly to a number of relative strangers in society, as well as to Lovelace's friend and libertine correspondent, Belford, one of the characters who seems least likely to sympathize with her plight, but does nonetheless. Distance seems to aid this process, rather than inhibiting it.

    Clarissa is not just an epistolary novel, but also a *Briefwechselroman,* or a type of epistolary fiction where one sees all sides of the correspondence. One voice might edge out the others for dominance, but on some level, one is seeing the matter at hand from multiple perspectives and interests.[23] Clarissa pleads her case against marrying Solmes, but multiple family members plead the case that she ought out of a sense of daughterly duty to go along with her father's and brother's plans. The fact that Clarissa has inherited this fortune and could easily enough retreat to her grandfather's estate, contrary to the will of her family, both simplifies and complicates the matter at once: Clarissa does not necessarily require the approval of her family to do as she likes, but she nonetheless desperately seeks it—or wishes to appear as desperately seeking it, which for Smith may amount to the same thing, for reasons I will treat at greater length below—just as the selfish person at the beginning of TMS is interested in the fate and fortune of others, almost despite him or herself.[24]

    The distinction between seeking this approval and appearing to seek it is not a minor one in a novel where, as Gordon points out, "interest" is often regarded to be at the heart of the matter, and Clarissa's adoption of a kind of "disinterestedness" is regarded by modern critics as especially suspicious.[25] It is true that Clarissa writes for an audience that she herself acknowledges is larger than Anna, and she occasionally performs filial duties in a way that is blatantly other-directed:

> It is not for a child to seek to clear her own character, or to justify her own actions, at the expense of the most revered ones; yet, as I know that the account of all those further proceedings by which I may be affected

will be interesting to so dear a friend (who will communicate to others no
more than what is fitting), I will continue to write (53).

In Smithian terms, this performance of child-like filial devotion might be viewed as a
suspicious display of "piety to their parents with too much ostentation," although
Smith declares this a far less serious crime than the defect of the display: if we do not
"perfectly approve, we should not severely condemn it" (TMS 142). For modern critics,
as Gordon notes—informed as they are by the direct access to minds and hearts that
the nineteenth-century novel supposedly provides—such self-advocacy appears over the
top, inherently self-interested, evidence of its own fundamental (and unfalsifiable)
mendaciousness. Wayne Booth's famous dictum that "every narrator is an unreliable
narrator" would not be coined for more than three centuries after the publication of
Pamela.

      This "direct access" to the nineteenth-century character, of course, is always
ironic, artful, and circumscribed in the ways that Rae Greiner describes it when she
locates Smith in Austen or Dickens, and not in his own century.[26] Its aesthetic *frisson*
may even arise from what Gallagher says are the pleasures of recognizing your own
depths against the fictional character's relative lack of them, although in some ways,
this sympathetic and imaginative mood seems somewhat better facilitated by the novel
written in the first person, not the third, as Gallagher would have it.[27] The epistolary
novel in particular constantly reminds us, in its very formal constraints, of the textual
boundaries of the characters that it creates. But the one crucial and insuperable
difference between novels in letters and a novel in almost any other form is that a letter
is necessarily interrogative. It is written with a purpose and an internal audience in
mind. Its *raison* is self-advocacy, whether that self-advocacy was—as was the case in
many of the letter-writing manuals from which they derived—direct and businesslike,
or, as is more often the case in the actual novels themselves, requesting a sympathetic
hearing. They invite both the internal reader and the external one to imagine
themselves placed in the same situation—but, perhaps more pointedly, given their
form, invite them to think about themselves as if they were the *writers* of those same
letters. Thus were rhetorical and moral instruction intertwined for Richardson: part of
the moral claim of the novel was that it would teach one how to write by reading about
how other writers represented themselves in a similar situation, and applying that
knowledge to one's own practice.

      As we saw in the last chapter, Smith's method of moral inquiry was also
fundamentally rhetorical. Smith's LRBL addresses a group of young men who would
have an interest in that question: namely, future barristers and lawyers. They do not
address epistolary rhetoric specifically, but, in Ian Duncan's terms, take part in the

larger intellectual shift of the eighteenth century by realigning the national culture "upon a conception of literacy set against…a 'primitive' orality."[28] In structuring the modern subject "as a reader," they also necessarily constitute him or her as a writer, to the extent that this subject participates in polite 'literary' culture. The problem LRBL seeks to solve is how not to *appear* unnecessarily self-interested when one writes, and its primary advice for addressing this problem is to imagine a reader "half-asleep" (LRBL 7) and thoroughly uninterested in one's subject matter, as Smith claims that both Swift and Bolingbroke do successfully. In TMS, rhetoric about the self is redeployed as a means by which we imagine a spectator, as it were, 'half-unsympathetic.' While the LRBL might be uncharitably described, despite its occasional mentions of sympathy, as a manual for writing or speaking *as if* one cared more for others and less for the self, by TMS, there is little doubt that Smith's intention is for self-advocatory rhetoric to be the gateway to understanding the self from the outside and acquiring a real indifference to it. We seek sympathy through our rhetoric about ourselves, develop from its reception an idea of how little others regard our troubles or our joys, and incorporate this indifference into not just our future attempts at sympathy but in the way that we think about and regard these trials and tribulations. Smith is quite clear about this: "Nor is this only an assumed appearance: for if we are at all masters of ourselves, the presence of a mere acquaintance will really compose us, still more than that of a friend; and that of an assembly of strangers still more than that of an acquaintance" (TMS 23). This end helps to recuperate the suspicious rhetorical origins of sympathy, or perhaps (as I think is nearer to the truth) suggests that these suspicions of rhetoric are already baseless. As Smith's pupil and associate Hugh Blair put it in his own *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres,* which he based in part off Smith's, "it is childish indeed to expect that in Letters we are to find the whole heart of the Author unveiled. Concealment and disguise take place, more or less, in all human intercourse" (63-4).[29] The Scottish Enlightenment's tendency to regard identity itself as an essentially fictional construct performed with an audience in mind already did a great deal to enable aesthetic buy-in for later novels, including Sir Walter Scott's histories.[30] In this case, rhetorical self-advocacy—which Smith was at considerable pains to dissociate from Mandeville's formulation of it as vanity by another name—is already, according to Blair, a bit of fiction itself, and to be regarded with a detached, ironic judgment with which readers would later come to treat novels.

Suspicions about Clarissa's rhetoric become one of the markers not just for the poor writing skills of her interlocutors, but also their poor moral sense. Their rhetoric reveals them, of course, to be blatantly self-interested even as they attempt to assign self-interestedness to Clarissa's skillful deployment of rhetoric. In the case of Arabella and James and Uncle Antony, their inability to write well becomes the marker for their

general lack of a moral sense. Uncle Antony's methodology—to plumb the depths of Clarissa's heart outside of her self-representation in letters, from a godlike position of omniscience unavailable to any reader—is more largely characteristic of both his ego and his poor reading skills; or, as Smith might add, they amount to the same thing. Good reading is good writing, and good writing is simply a reflection of one's ability to limn and understand potential readers, and—as the novel implies—the broader a community of one's readers one understands, and the more unconnected and potentially unsympathetic that audience is, the more universal and skillful are one's ethics. The letter form, as I will argue next, had a peculiar generic status in the eighteenth century due to its status as a private document that was often meant to be read publicly. A letter addressed to one person that could be read sympathetically by many manifested a particularly high level of skill, and it is Clarissa's ability to write this particular kind of letter that marks her out as peculiarly sympathetic.

A Broad and Unsympathetic Audience

Customs around epistolarity in the eighteenth century, fictional and non-, further underscore the communal and sympathetic associations that letters likely had for Smith. As Eve Tavor Bannet points out, "the expectation in the eighteenth century was still that letters would be read aloud to family, friends, and acquaintance, and/or shown around, to give everyone something to talk about" (47).[31] Following Christina Marsden Gillis in *The Paradox of Privacy*, Tavor Bannet also asserts that a limited reading of *Pamela* as reflecting a letter-writing practice reliant on the "solitude of the closet" did not describe the typical reading practices associated with letters, or, at least early in the century, with fiction itself. In writing a letter, one could expect virtually, at least, to address that "assembly of strangers" that Smith thought so conducive to promoting not just feigned cheerfulness, but actual cheerfulness, after a blow to the spirits. In TMS, Smith also describes a scene of communal reading that is likewise an opportunity for mutual sympathy amongst a text's readers:

> When we have read a book or poem so often that we can no longer find any amusement in reading it by ourselves, we can still take pleasure in reading it to a companion. To him it has all the graces of novelty; we enter into the surprise and admiration which it naturally excites in him, but which it is no longer capable of exciting in us; we consider all the ideas which it presents rather in the light in which they appear to him, than in that in which they appear to ourselves, and we are amused by sympathy with his amusement which thus enlivens our own (TMS 14).

For Smith, at least, this kind of communal reading practice seems to provide a potentially pedagogical experience in what is sympathetic in theory before one seeks the actual sympathy of others in practice. He makes a distinction in Book I of TMS, for instance, between "objects that are considered without any peculiar relation, either to ourselves or to the person whose sentiments we judge of" and those which "peculiarly affect one of other of us" (19). In the former category he places objects of primarily aesthetic value—"a picture, a poem" or even "a system of philosophy"—and says (perhaps contrary to my own experience, I must admit) that "there is little danger of our quarrelling" about differences in aesthetic approbation, presumably because the stakes of such disagreements when they do not personally pertain to us is acceptably low. If, on the other hand, "you have either no fellow-feeling for the misfortunes I have met with, or none that bears any proportion to the grief which distracts me…we can no longer converse upon these subjects" (21). This was a weighty enough punishment when "conversation" looms so large in Smith's universe and where sympathy with others and their possible sympathy for ourselves is how Smith derives objects as apparently distant from social interactions as wealth and value creation (as he does in *The Wealth of Nations,* where our most human tendency is the one "truck, barter, and exchange") but it did not match the looming social perils of interactions that touched one more dearly.

We may, in other words, quarrel with friends with whom we fail to sympathize, but we are unlikely to quarrel over whether we find Pamela Andrews mutually sympathetic, so communal reading with sympathy for a third object in mind might provide the ideal testing ground for refining and testing our sympathies in a relatively low stakes environment. This kind of removed, cool reception was, of course, not quite born out by the reality of the Pamelist/Antipamelist controversy, itself mostly conducted in a flurry of letters back and forth across England: but perhaps Smith has a question of degrees in mind. And if his thinking on this subject does not quite reflect the realities of one of the eighteenth century's most bitter publishing controversy, that in itself may say something about the ways in which *Pamela's* paratext—a subject of frequent attack and mockery by Antipamelists—attempted to forestall or preemptively perform the task of communal reading that characterized the more typical way in which eighteenth-century letters were received and conceptualized by their readers. Fielding's *Shamela* satire, as usual, works its finger into this sore point in its own parodic paratext by making rational disagreement that arrives at mutual consensus (and not hearty approval simply underscored several times) its point. Parson Tickletext, who begins the correspondence with precisely the kind of silly name that we know should doom him forever to a foolish partisanship on Pamela's behalf, actually does come around to

Parson Oliver's argument when presented with evidence of duplicity and a decent argument. These two old friends, engaged in a mutual reading of a text, find that although one of them was surprised and admiring where one of them could not be, they can discuss the book in a way that does not cause them to "become intolerable to one another" (*TMS* 21), as a more personal withholding of sympathy might. As if to underscore the point about mutual dialogue, the first letter of *Shamela's* paratext performs precisely the kind of vocalic "unison" (22), the Shaftesburian monologue with the self, that Smith deems both impossible and undesirable:

> The EDITOR to Himself
>
> Dear SIR,
>
> However you came by the excellent *Shamela*, out with it, without Fear or Favour, Dedication and all; believe me, it will go through many Editions, be translated into all Languages, read in all Nations and Ages, and to say a bold Word, it will do more good than the C----y have done harm in the World.
>
> > *I am, Sir,*
> > > *Sincerely, your Well-Wisher,*
> > > > Yourself.[32]

To Smith, and it seems to Fielding as well, the letter might very well provide unparalleled opportunities for addressing a large audience of an unknown predisposal to sympathetic engagement, apart from the nominal addressee: that was in fact its primary benefit, which Richardson corrupts when he creates a paratextual apparatus to vouch for Pamela and collapse her epistolary indeterminacy for an audience used to friendly disagreements over communal texts. The charge of monologism *avant la lettre* might just as easily apply to the actual text itself. Although, as Tom Keymer and Peter Sabor point out, Mr B. himself occasionally performs the criticisms of *Pamela Censured* and other, less sophisticated Anti-Pamelists than Fielding[33], his mind is immediately and unalterably swayed when he reads Pamela's letters to her parents. Clarissa's suspicious "knack" for writing is in *Pamela* instead a "lucky Knack at falling into fits, when she pleases,'[34] which curiously Mr B. is able to see as a feigned performance, while Pamela's rhetoric—a traditional means of deception—is, for him, an indubitably true outpouring of the heart. Subsequent parts of *Pamela* and its execrable, unauthorized sequels (i.e. *Pamela's Conduct in High Life*) inevitably feature the same path

of immediate rhetorical unisons achieved by all parties, in which Pamela's writing style is not only admired, but also imitated, by her socially superior correspondents.

I am not the first to notice the ways in which Smith's interest in "concords" instead of unisons lends itself to the epistolary form. Evan Gottlieb, in *Feeling British,* describes the Scottish novelist Tobias Smollett's turn from first-person narration (in *Roderick Random*) for the epistolary of the far more famous and successful *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* to "deny…accusations of improper partiality" for his characters, for instance.[35] For Gottlieb, the epistolary text is a "technology of consensus" and a form that Smollett specifically borrowed from Smith and Hume to build and burgeon a sense of common "Britishness" for Scots within the English empire.[36] Although the discussion of nationality and British identity is far outside of my scope here, this emphasis on nation-forging through a sense of social and literary consensus is yet another way in which epistolarity seems to fit naturally within the purview and general interests of Smith's *oeuvre.* Gottlieb remarks the epistolary text's imaginative properties and the ways in which its fictiveness "works with" rather than against conceptual imagined communities, especially those spread across large geographical spaces and united by little else than the postal system. Indeed, difference—not self-monologue—is largely the point of eighteenth-century epistolary novels, according to Juliet Shields' reading of both Smollett and Henry Mackenzie's non-epistolary but first person narrated *The Man of Feeling,* which she points out was never meant to be read with unalloyed sympathy for its protagonist, Harley, but rather with "moral judgment" in mind.[37] Its introduction specifically resists Richardson's Pamelist tendency to perform this judgment, however; its first reader "could never find the author in one strain for two chapters together" and contains not a single "syllogism from beginning to end."[38] This important clue to how the novel was meant to be read generally escapes the analysis of those who have regarded it as a bit of sentimental bagatelle.

Syllogisms, of course, are just the sort of thing one might find in those philosophical texts that Smith regards as so apt to puff up coxcombs into not possessing even a normal degree of moral sensibility for close connections. Rather oddly, Richardson's prefatory thoughts to *Pamela* are phrased in the form of one, i.e. "If to Divert and Entertain, and at the same time to Instruct, and Improve the Minds of the YOUTH of both sexes…the Editor of following Letters…ventures to assert, that all these desirable Ends are obtained in these Sheets."[39] Even Richardson, however, seems to feel a need "to divide [himself], *as it were*, into two persons" (TMS 113; emphasis mine), however fundamentally fictitious this division, to assert that both his "Passions…were uncommonly moved" by reading the book, and because "an Editor may reasonably be supposed to judge with an Impartiality which is rarely to be met with in an Author towards his own Works."[40]

Fielding's charge would perhaps be that that division was not genuine, or perhaps even more broadly speaking disingenuous, for monologuing when it should be dialoguing, and using a multi-vocal epistolary form to disguise that formal decision, a charge which *Pamela Censured* likewise associates with a kind of Mandevillian vanity. Curiously, Gordon seems simply to repeat, when it comes to *Clarissa*, a with-the-grain form of Richardson's other claim: that *Clarissa's* rhetorical performance deploys pathos to convert its reader to her cause. Feeling, as Greiner helpfully and consistently reminds us, is not much at issue in Smith's work, generally speaking,[41] so we are still left with the paradox of Smith's admiration for Richardson's moral pedagogy. Simple pathos, I would now like to suggest, is not the means of our sympathy in *Clarissa*, nor the reason why Smith thought that it made a better teacher than philosophy. What we are meant to find sympathetic in *Clarissa*—and indeed what Adam Smith found constructive for his purposes in TMS—is its heroine's steady and rhetorically-formulated path towards a true indifference to the self that begins in self-advocacy but ultimately transcends it.

The Art of Character

Ryan Patrick Hanley's analysis of Smith's sixth revision to *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* ("Of the Character of Virtue") emphasizes Smith's distinction between "genuine transcendent virtue and mere propriety" as a response to critics who called him Mandevillian by other means, and these revisions stand as "particularly central to his diagnosis of and therapy for a commercial society."[42] Modernity's chief sin, self-preference, was a natural result of its material prosperity. Hanley particularly emphasizes Smith's attention in this revision to "commercial society's [deleterious] effects on moral psychology" over political considerations of distributive justice."[43] This is a subject that remains a bit underbaked in Smith's famous example of the invisible hand earlier in *TMS*, where the moral effects that the pursuit of wealth and preference have on the poor man's son are converted to large-scale societal benefits and option for the poor without any particular remedy for the man who finds at the end of a life spent in pursuit of material self-interest that "wealth and greatness are mere trinkets of frivolous utility" that have not brought him the happiness that he initially sought (TMS 181).

Hanley views Smith's prescription on this score as direction away from "both moral rules and utility maximization…[and to]…the cultivation of character."[44] In this methodological regard, at least, Smith's sixth revision might not be as remarkable a break with his earlier work as Hanley seems to see it. Stephen J. McKenna, for instance, describes the LRBL as a neo-Aristotelian "an art of character" formulated on

the rhetorical grounds of cultivating the speaker/writer's ethos[45] and echoes Jack Russell Weinstein's argument that the precepts that guide effective language use "become rules prescribing both human action and character development."[46] Rather than dictating moral or linguistic precepts *a priori*, Smith identifies a process and sets out some general rules for acquiring them through social contact and interaction with an increasingly large and varied society.

But as far as I am aware, no critic has yet remarked the similarity between the trajectory that Smith is describing—using the social rules acquired through contact with the larger world to construct one's own character—and the trajectory of eighteenth-century novelistic character development, which likewise relied on moving its young heroes and heroines about in the world, often through their letters, as a means of showing how their moral characters were to be formed. But in his recommendation of epistolary novels as a means of reforming the moral character, Smith must have had this meaning of "character" in mind, along with the Aristotelian sense of a cultivated rhetorical ethos. Johnson's *Dictionary* does not record a meaning of character in the sense of a "person who appears in a work of literature" as a separate entry, but its definitions reflect well an early point in the transition that both Lynch and Kraft describe as a response to eighteenth-century commercial modernity. For Johnson, character begins as "a mark, a stamp, a representation," is then specifically associated with circulated material ("a letter used in writing or printing" and "the hand or matter of writing"), and finally, at definitions six and seven, arrives at "the person and his assemblage of qualities," for which Johnson resorts to Dryden: "In a tragedy, or epick poem, the hero of the piece must be advanced foremost to the view of the reader or the spectator."[47] What all of these definitions seem to have in common in a sense of movement to an outside, a placing *before* an audience, rather than an intimate, personal, inward-directed reflection. Only in definition seven—"personal qualities; particular constitution of the mind"—does Johnson seem to hint at something of the intimate and socially unconstructed self that Lynch describes, in reference to later eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century fiction, as a defensive response to sociability and the commercialization of ordinary human relations like courtship. Even then, Johnson's example is from Alexander Pope's *Epistle to a Lady*, a nominal letter in verse addressed to Lady Mary Wortley Montague.

For Smith—as Hanley points out—the crux of the matter in the sixth revision is how to combine the so-called "bourgeois virtues of men of 'middling rank'" with those of "human excellence independent of and transcending modern liberal virtues," the ones which he particularly identifies with classical Roman society and regards as deficient under the conditions of commercial modernity.[48] Which brings us around, of course, to his praise of epistolary novels. These novels, in Smith's telling of them,

address themselves to the "private and domestic affections" and "moderated sensibility to the misfortunes of others, which does not disqualify us for the performance of any duty" (TMS 143). This is set in opposition not just to any kind of philosophical instruction, but most specifically to "stoical apathy," which the editors of the Glasgow edition of TMS helpfully gloss as the official school of Roman Stoicism's "absence of feeling or passion, for the sake of mental tranquility" (TMS n11, 143). Tranquility was, for Smith, a precondition of happiness, and precisely the mental condition least likely to inhere in modern, commercial societies and the bourgeois virtues.[49] Commercial modernity's outward orientation, its tendency to replicate in the human soul the "psychic restlessness" of self-seeking and the pursuit of wealth, was the heart of the problem; but, as Smith's condemnation of the Stoical moralists makes clear, neither did he naively regard the adoption of the morals of antiquity as sufficient remedy. Clarissa's family seems to possess something of Epictetus's famous maxim to regard one's children as the dispensable gift of the gods, without Epictetus's concomitant indifference to the more material benefits of fortune. The problem for Smith, rather, is how to possess the best of the bourgeois virtues without their downsides, and the best of the classical virtues without those significant downsides, either.

There is certainly a way to read the Richardson passage in TMS that sees novels as primarily addressed to the cultivation of the bourgeois virtues (of "private and domestic life") and less to the timeless values of human magnificence. This impression is of course not much allayed by the last century's concerted critical effort to align the eighteenth-century British novel with the rise of bourgeois society and make its values and form reflect the values of commercial modernity.[50] But if Smith's purpose was, as Hanley articulates it, to find a way to merge the values of antiquity and the values of modernity in "Of the Character of Virtue," it is worth attending to whether novels of the period saw themselves at the same task: to better understand Smith's use of them and perhaps to call into question our assumptions about the supposedly inherent bourgeois nature of novels, at least in the way that "bourgeois" is typically constructed. That construction is usually confined to something like what Smith describes alternately as prudence or propriety, and not the full range of Smithian virtues as articulated in the sixth revision.

The case for a larger set of virtues opposed to "mere propriety" is particularly strong for the Richardson of *Clarissa*, who certainly saw all of his work as an engagement with virtue. (Which, naturally, Fielding turns into "vartue" in *Shamela*, a perversion of the original that not only calls into question the word's moral claim, but also contains within itself a class critique premised on a member of the lower class's supposed inability to pronounce the word in a 'standard' way). More specifically, and as it is in Smith's work, this engagement is adduced as rhetorical and formal. It is also

newly (for *Clarissa,* as opposed to *Pamela*) interlocutory, in the sense that Richardson stages it as a debate between himself and a friend over the form that the work should take of the sort that would have seemed misplaced in the adulatory prefaces to *Pamela,* despite their ostensibly more dialogic format as letters. But here, the 'friend' (assuming his existence out in the world) advises Richardson to dispense with the *briefwechselroman* format of the *Clarissa,* and "publish only what concerned the principal heroine—striking off collateral incidents and all that related to the second characters…being extremely fond of the affecting story, he was desirous to have everything parted with, which he thought retarded its progress" (36). To this claim, unknown "other gentlemen" object that the story "could not be reduced to a dramatic unity, nor thrown into the narrative way, without divesting it of its warmth and of a great part of its efficacy, as very few of the reflections and observations, which they looked upon as the most useful part of the collection, would then find a place" (ibid).

      Smith's LRBL objection to "novels" was that they promoted exactly what the first interlocutor thinks is their virtue: speed and hastiness, as we are propelled forward by banal curiosity to find out exactly what happens to their characters, and thus fail to attend to "the feelings and agitation of Mind in the Actors previous to and during the Event" (LRBL 96), certainly an apt enough description of *Clarissa* and many members of its epistolary sisterhood. Although it is true that Smith sounds a bit Humean in his LRBL assertion that "Romance" cannot teach us what historical narration might because "the facts must be real, otherwise they will not assist us in our future conduct" (LRBL 91), eighteenth-century categories of literary production are sufficiently fluid enough not to rule out him having something in mind like *Clarissa,* which after all subtitled itself "A History of a Young Lady." The novel, as Gallagher describes it, was in a constant struggle to define itself and looked to "romance" as a conveniently close-but-not-quite category: hence *Don Quixote* and *The Female Quixote,* novels about the novel's claim to reality over the fantasies of romance and the very real consequences of preferring the latter.[51] It is from this same section of the *LRBL* that Smith later draws his *TMS* passage about our ability to feel for "characters of tragedy and romance," who "affect [and] interest us greatly by the Sympatheticall affections they raise in us. We enter into their misfortunes, grieve when they grieve, rejoice when they rejoice and in a word feel for them in some respect as if we ourselves were in the same condition," to the end of determining "by what manner and method we may produce similar good effects or avoid Similar bad ones" (90).

      Smith, like Richardson, privileges the account of the events and the effect that they have upon others above the actual telling of the events themselves, denigrating a "bare narration where [events are] described directly without taking any notice of any of the effects it had on those who were either actors or spectators" (86), something

similar, perhaps, to Richardson's construction of the "narrative" turn that his first interlocutor wants him to take. Above all, Richardson says, it is affect that matters: what may be "brought home to the breast of the youthful reader" (35): a notion that Smith, of course, famously echoes in TMS, where he sprinkles variations on the phrase "brought home" profusely throughout:

> …his agonies, when they are thus brought home to ourselves, when we have thus adopted and made them are own, begin at last to affect us (7);

> …when we bring home in this manner his case to our own bosoms (71);

> …it is impossible that we should be displeased with the tendency of a sentiment, which, when we bring the case home to ourselves, we feel that we cannot avoid adopting (73);

> …if, by bringing the case home to myself, I feel gratitude arise in my own breast, I necessarily approve of the conduct (78);

> We cannot form the idea of any innocent and sensible being, whose happiness we should not desire, or to whose misery, when distinctly brought home to the imagination, we should not have some degree of aversion (235).

This last passage occurs in "Of the Character of Virtue," as part of the recommendation to universal benevolence. Its invocation of imaginariness and indeed even its semi-fictive mental processes ("we cannot form the idea") remind us of the important role that the invention of others' psyches plays in forming the moral virtues, even, and perhaps especially, a difficult, god's-eye virtue like universal benevolence. But it is important to recall what the role of such imaginings play for Smith in this chapter, which is as a means to attain a newly rehabilitated, de-Stoicized "self-command" appropriate for the modern, commercial world and the ordinary demands of private life and domestic affections. Universal benevolence, and the broad imagination it requires, inculcates a tamped down regard for the self premised on precisely this ability to imagine countless fictive others with just as much claim to the view of the deity (elsewhere and sometimes the "great demigod within the breast" [246]) as the subject. We have no direct access to others, as Smith points out, but we do have our imaginative reconstruction of what we would feel, placed in their circumstances. And the purpose of this imaginative reconstruction is an enhanced understanding of how

we must look to them when we are in our own "misery," and thus build our own characters based on our perception of theirs.

Clarissa Harlowe turns out to provide a near perfect model for the climb towards the virtue of self-command using the rhetorical arts with which she is closely associated in the novel. The earliest virtue Anna gives her is "prudence," specifically: she remarks this in the first letter, assuring Clarissa that her "present trial is but proportioned to [her] prudence" (40). Anna formulates Clarissa's prudence rhetorically, asking her to write in such a way that will "bring home every little circumstance" and obey the Smithian injunction to tell "What has befallen you?" (TMS 11). "Pray write in such a manner," Anna requests, "as may gratify those who know not so much of your affairs as I do." The reason for this becomes clear quickly: "If anything unhappy should fall out from the violence of such spirits as you have to deal with, your account of all things previous to it will be your justification" (40). Smith describes prudence as "the care of the health, of the fortune, of the rank and reputation of the individual, the objects upon which his comfort and happiness in this life are supposed principally to depend" (TMS 213). Anna's initiating concern is that Clarissa should use her superior rhetorical knack—her ability to attend to the sentiments of spectators that Anna even mentions in the letter as distant and removed—to advocate for herself and her reputation, should any damage befall them due to the mismanagement of her "directors and directresses" (her family members, in other words). In fact, it is Anna's performance of her own closeness to Clarissa ("your concerns are my concerns…your honour is my honour" [40]) that comes in for Clarissa's gentle rebuke at the beginning of the next letter when she admonishes Anna that she must not give "reason from your kind partiality to call into question your judgment" (41). It is a more distant spectator that Clarissa must appease to be regarded as even commonly prudent, as Smith points out when he writes that the "prudent man is always both supported and rewarded by the entire approbation of the impartial spectator" in his/her desire not to impose upon others with their "present appetites" (TMS 215). Clarissa's attentiveness to her future reader and her own approval of her friend's "*precautionary* regard for [her] fame" (53; emphasis original) betray the future orientation of her thoughts on this subject. It was, of course, precisely this care for reception that could seem suspiciously selfish and rhetorically self-interested; Smith, however, repurposes it for the natural view of the impartial spectator. "To him," he writes of the spectator observing the sympathetic, prudential bourgeois, "their present, and what is likely to be their future situation, are very nearly the same: he sees them nearly at the same distance, and is affected by them very nearly in the same manner" (TMS 215).

The difficulty of prudence for Smith—and I would argue for Richardson as well—is that it is not sufficient unless wedded to the other virtues. This, after all, is essentially what stands at base of the Antipamelist critique: just as Pamela attended narrowly to her fortune (and later, her reputation) by means of fooling others with her rhetorical wiles, so did Richardson attend to his in his labors, which anticipated the demands of a public titillation in guise of a moral lesson. Prudence must combine with "many greater and more splendid virtues" to become admirable, including benevolence, justice, and, finally, self-command (216). Narrow attendance to self-advocacy might breed excessive self-love, but for Smith (as a virtue ethicist), a modicum of concern for one's reputation might serve as a way station on the path towards feeling progressively less for the self. Certainly caring nothing for it—imprudence—comes in for a high degree of disapprobation. When it is "combined with the other vices, [it] constitutes the vilest of all characters (217), subject as it is to none of the moderating concern for reputation that might eventually direct sufficient attention outward to the justice claims of others.

Other virtues were required, and Smith systematically categorizes the outward turn of prudence in "Of the Order in which Individuals are recommended by Nature to our care and attention," beginning with the care of the self and proceeding to a care for "members of his own family, those who usually live in the same house with him, his parents, his children, his brothers and sisters" (219). The reason is obviously that

> he is more habituated to sympathize with them. He knows better how everything is likely to affect them, and his sympathy with them is more precise and determinate, than it can be with the greater part of other people. It approaches nearer, in short to what he feels for himself (ibid).

This, of course, is the ongoing, rather dark joke of *Clarissa*: her parents, and her brother and sister, seem to have hardened their hearts against her but also to fear her ability to bring her cause home to them, perhaps because of the near degree of their affinity. Or perhaps not, in the case of James Harlowe: Smith devotes a passage in this section to the failure of affection, or what "is in reality no more than habitual sympathy" (220) in those cases where "the absent brother" (221) raised apart from a sister, may fail to rise to the happy expectations of future mutual sympathy that distance, in Smith's telling, tends to create, because that very habitualized sympathy cannot properly form. James's first characterization in the book is absence: he is off attending to an estate he has inherited in Scotland when Clarissa first catches the eye of Lovelace. His rivalry with Lovelace proceeds from his having been away at school with Clarissa's erstwhile suitor, presumably educated outside of the company of his sisters.

In the family's specific objections to Clarissa's rhetoric, and Clarissa's response, comes Richardson's more direct attack on the idea that self-advocacy must always be suspiciously self-interested and an instrument of concealment for the "true" intentions of the letter writer, or the inner (and presumably corrupted) self. In the case of Lovelace, it clearly is—the lesson that Richardson had in mind in his preface is that a rake cannot be reformed, even if Clarissa asserts in a letter to her sister that at one point Lovelace was thought "reclaimable" (139)—but his example only serves to highlight the way in which Clarissa writes differently, and for the purpose of both extending habitual affection to her family members and puzzling over their lack of it. A letter to Arabella pleads for her sister to change places with her in imagination and asks what she would do if their positions were reversed (138), but perhaps more to the point, admonishes her that she has not already done so. Her complaints about James in this same letter ring a by now familiar Smithian note in citing James for an excess of "manly spirits," which cause him to be a "stranger to the gentler passions," which Clarissa specifically sources to his university education, as "raw from college" he attempts to "control and bear down on an unhappy sister" (139). But to these objections, her family members always have an unfalsifiable response: that Clarissa merely advocates for herself, instead of genuinely seeking their approbation and affection. Sometimes, this formulates itself as their concern that she is writing to others about them, as when they fire the maid Hannah to prevent her letters from circulating (unsuccessfully; 120), or on the many occasions they write to warn her not to write to them, either (125, Mrs. Harlowe; 126, James; 138, James again; 140, Arabella; 158, Uncle Anthony, and so on). Throughout, Clarissa does not deny the charge of self-advocacy—it would be hard for her, after all, to do so, while advocating for herself—but rather asserts the familial and kin relationships, and the ordinary degree of familial regard that habit (habitual sympathy, as Smith might put it) that frequent contact should engender.

For Clarissa, letter writing is not a way to force her will on others but to foment those sympathetic bonds between family members. Or, rather, to foment those sympathetic bonds that should already exist: brother James is typed as precisely that kind of coxcomb "tutored" (138) up on a curriculum of Stoical philosophy that has put him beyond the ability to sympathize with a sister in distress. Smith's Richardson passage in *TMS* specifically addresses itself to the James-type villain, and in his lurking fear of Clarissa's correspondence lies the possibility that her epistolary rhetoric will break through his "native impertinence" to teach him "the refinements and delicacies of love and affection" (*TMS* 143) that the "brother without a heart" (65) seems to have lost (or never had to begin with). Although she is early on forbidden the presence of her parents, there is no internal indication that she cannot see James (when he is

town) and Arabella whenever she pleases, at least until she runs away from home to avoid the forced marriage with Solmes. The meaning that the epistolary form gives here to the text is Clarissa's direct pursuit of a correspondence with her brother and sister over one premised on physical proximity, and their continued desire to interpret her rhetoric as narrowly self-interested against the backdrop of their own, frequently self-seeking behaviors. Clarissa seems to deliberately seek the distance in which Smithian sympathy best inheres.

The outwardly directed nature of Clarissa's correspondence, meant as it is for readers beyond its nominal addressees—as Anna frequently reminds us in the text—could open Clarissa to the charge of feigning to feel more than she does for her family to engage the rhetorical approbation of others. Smith, we may recall, categorizes this as a fairly minor crime compared to the real disapprobation the impartial spectator will feel when he perceives a "deficit" of a parent's more natural affection for a child than a child's for a parent. But even then, the text makes the case that in directing herself to the approbation of these very distant spectators, Clarissa continues to ascend the hierarchy of virtues. It is easy to imagine and sympathize with those with whom we have been taught to feel habitual sympathy, Smith argues, but how much more do we learn about pleasing the impartial spectator when the sympathy that we seek is from people who are not accustomed to extending it to us? Character's outward orientation towards finding its place in the world in eighteenth-century novels is well aligned with the virtues of magnanimity and universal benevolence, as Smith describes them, however much it may begin in a self-interested and narrow prudence. This is Smith's manner of civilizing or taming the bourgeois virtue of prudence, and it appears to be Richardson's, as well, framed as response to those who doubted the instrumentality of Pamela's rhetoric for anything other than her own social climbing. One of the ways in which this comes to inhere in the novel is Arabella's suggestion that even Clarissa's charity is suspiciously and cynically rhetorical, as when she imagines vividly Clarissa's future life:

> …with your poor at your gates, mingling so proudly and so meanly with the ragged herd! Reflecting, by your ostentation, upon all the ladies in the county, who do not as you do. This is known to be your scheme! and the poor without-doors, and Lovelace within, with one hand building up a name, pulling it down with the other!—(199).

By now, the charge sounds familiarly Mandevillian—what appears to be charitable is actually merely vain-glorious—but also refuted easily enough when rhetoric, with all of its self-interested associations, is repurposed as the means by which to understand

character from the outside and reform it in a virtue ethical sense. If Clarissa's (imagined) charitable acts begin in ostentation, they at the very least get her outside of the gates and mingling with "the meanest as well as the greatest" (*TMS* 235).

Perhaps more pointedly, Arabella's critique locates a tension in the virtue of "magnanimity." In "Of the Character of Virtue," magnanimity, the classical virtue, helps the bearer correct and transcend prudence of the narrower, commercial sort. But as Smith describes it, it can also descend quickly into pride and excessive self-regard of a kind that results in "conflicting loves of individual superiority and of humanity."[52] This is essentially the conflict that Arabella articulates in her imagining of Clarissa's ideal life, and there are indications in the novel that Clarissa may enjoy too much of the approbation of society to escape the charge entirely. The admiration of her peers is a constant subject of Anna's letters. Danger seems to lie in this for Smith, for it is the proud or magnanimous character who through contact with society, the admiration of "every intelligent and impartial spectator," comes to believe him/herself "really and justly…above…the ordinary degree of excellence which is commonly attained by other people" (*TMS* 249). In TMS's second book, it is "looking mankind in the face" that naturally tamps down this excessive self-preference and reminds him that he is "one of the multitude" (83), although the primary purpose of this observation seems to be less to picture any one particular person than to reconstruct imaginatively—as Smith requests at the beginning of the chapter on "universal benevolence"—a beneficence or "love for the good of the whole" that Smith regards as inextricable from the strong religious belief in a god's "immediate administration of the world" that animates the later pages of *Clarissa*.[53] This is a necessary corrective to "circumvent the arbitrariness and sentimentalism to which compassion and pity are prone" (191), perhaps the charge that one might level against *The Man of Feeling's* Harley.

An articulation of the values of Christian benevolence in an empirical age is also an important part of Richardson's project, as E. Derek Taylor describes in *Reason and Religion in* Clarissa, quoting one of the novel's early readers:

> You have taken upon you to foist into your work several obsolete opinions about the Oeconomy of Providence, and have furbish'd up and beautified an old Machine called Grace, that hath been cast, time out of mind, amongst the lumber of Enthusiasm…You have dared soar above Nature in an age that hath lost all relish of Christianity.[54]

In fact, Taylor sources some of the failure to appreciate the novel's more overtly Christian themes to "such eighteenth-century deists as Adam Smith," an identification that Hanley's analysis of the Christian roots of universal benevolence in Smith should

cause us to at least question.[55] Taylor finds most of his examples in the manner of Clarissa's death and the "strange Providence" that seems at times to drive the motions of a plot where characters are set against each other by forces apparently beyond their control. But those are precisely the kind of circumstances that Smith's final and apetical virtue, self-command, is meant to address.

Self-Command

There is indeed a long tradition of associating Clarissa with an exalted and even terrible self-command, one that goes back to at least Anna Barbauld's defense of *Clarissa* against the charge of "hardheartedness," and perhaps to one of Clarissa's first readers, Lovelace himself. After all, according to an acquaintance, only his own death prevents him from hiring an embalmer to disinter the lady to find out whether her heart was made of "iron or marble" (1382). Smith warns of the perils of true powerful a self-command slipping into a "hardness of heart"—

> The man who feels little for his own misfortunes must always feel less for those of other people, and be less disposed to relieve them. The man who has little resentment for the injuries which are done to himself, must always have less resentment for those which are done to other people, and be less disposed either to protect or avenge them (*TMS* 190)—

and thus regards the other virtues as necessary tutelage against this possible consequence. In fact, Smith's recommendation of novels earlier in *TMS* is part of this worry: that excessive stoicism about the self will prevent one from participating in the ordinary pleasures of day-to-day sociable and domestic life, and that Richardson's novels will or can play an important role in assuring that one acquires a proper degree of the sociability required to live in the commercial present.

Clarissa finds herself in precisely this bind. Her high degree of self-command is the source of constant counterfactual (and unfalsifiable) anti-rhetorical readings in the novel, and not just by her family members, but also by her friend and advocate Anna Howe. It is the normally sympathetic and agreeable Anna who is constantly imputing "throbs" and "glows" (73) in regards to Lovelace where Clarissa insists that there are none, and every subsequent denial on Clarissa's part only serves to convince Anna that the truth is simply more deeply hidden and requires more of her doubt to bring to the surface. It is Anna who asserts, famously and early, that it "will come out to be LOVE" for the rake Lovelace, trampling over Clarissa's as yet unvoiced objections in a parenthetical "Don't start, my dear" (71). Anna performs a reaction that many readers

seem to have had to the novel, and to its "failed" marriage plot, according to Wendy Anne Lee, who traces the central philosophical conflict of the novel back to John Locke's notion of indifferency, an early precursor of Smith's more personalized, affective notion of the impartial spectator. Indifferency is a "an impartiality that risks alienation for the sake of understanding and autonomy."[56] In other words, one acquires distance and judgment at the risk of becoming separate, apart, and to some degree unfeeling, in precisely the way that even some of Clarissa's readers described her. Lee traces Clarissa's dying days and her apparent "refusal of interiority" to this Lockean indifference. It is of course difficult to tell which philosopher Richardson had in mind (if any), but for Smith, at least, the peculiar appeal of *Clarissa* was more likely the resolution of this knotty Lockean problem.[57]

The problem for Smith, we may recall, is to feel less for ourselves and more for others. The trouble with feeling little for the self—acquiring a sentimental form of this Lockean indifference in order to consider how a situation might look in a more impartial light—is that when we change affective stations with another, less stoical person, we may be tempted to import our own extraordinary stoical self-command and thus feel little for anyone else. In Smith, this roughly maps to the "mere propriety" v. "virtue" debate of the first chapter (25), with the latter encompassing the social, commercial virtues and the latter the classical, magnanimous, stoical ones. If the issue, as Hanley argues, is to combine the two strands, the interlocutory nature of the impartial spectator is Smith's way of squaring the circle. One is always "addressing" (263) or "regarding" (262) this figure, building up an idea of his perfection from the ordinary social and rhetorical interactions that one has or witnesses on a daily basis. Although Smith does not say so explicitly, "mere propriety" seems in this regard a waystation on the road to virtue:

> Respect for what are, or for what ought to be, or for what upon a certain condition would be, the sentiments of other people, is the sole principle which, upon most occasions, overawes all those mutinous and turbulent passions into that tone and temper which the impartial spectator can enter into and sympathize with them (263).

By orienting the principle rhetorically, outwardly, and socially towards acquiring the view enjoyed by the impartial spectator, Smith resolves the central problem of Lockean indifference, which is that "the world is apt to cast great Blame on those who have an Indifferency for Opinions" (12.45) and "those that break from [custom] are in danger of Heresy" (34.103).[58] One acquires impartiality precisely through attending, at first, to

the opinions and views of others, and then acquiring a higher, abstracted idea of these opinions in the form of addressing the impartial spectator instead.

Although Lee traces Clarissa's actions in her final days towards the pursuit of "indifferency" defined as specifically an instance of "antisociality" and refusal of the society of others,[59] this has always seemed to me a difficult case to make in a novel where the supposed refuser of social contact continually seeks it out, albeit not, as Lee notes, with Lovelace—but then again, why should she? I place more emphasis on Clarissa's desire "to be among absolute strangers" (978), a situation that she is well able to seek in the urban anonymity of London, and which she does. These people, who are in some sense the least likely to sympathize with her, further stick the knife in the collective Harlowe belly insofar as Clarissa describes them as "perfectly *paternal*!" (1088; emphasis original). Her indifference to herself is constantly figured in her refusal of her own name; in one letter, she signs in place of her name "Your true— Plague upon it!" (890). She is not allowed to write to Anna as herself or by her own name, and begins instead writing to relative and relatively unsympathetic strangers, like Lovelace's aunt Lady Betty Lawrance, in a series of self-abnegating letters that disavow her "best self" as having been left in the brothel when her presumably worst self escaped, and asks, in a moment that recalls Smith's distinction between "praise" and "praiseworthiness," why should she "seek to conceal that disgrace from others, which I cannot hide from myself?" (985).

It is not the fact of Clarissa's social contact that transforms so much as it is the person to whom it is addressed. Her circle of potential sympathizers no longer consists of her family or even of Anna Howe, who has ultimately betrayed her, but of the least potentially sympathetic auditors, approaching far closer, therefore, to impartiality. They are the ultimate test of Clarissa's rhetorical skills, these people who have no particular connection to her and no predisposition to associate any particular virtues with the name Clarissa Harlowe. The importance of urban anonymity to this test has been noted before, by both Lee and Edward Copeland, who writes that "the language of commerce is the language of truth,"[60] and notes that Clarissa's writing of the account of her life that will survive her own death is done in a public café, no longer the private, secret closets of *Pamela*. It is truly meant as a document for public consumption, and Clarissa composes in public in all senses of the word. Belford notes with shock that Clarissa reveals Lovelace's effort to have her imprisoned for debt in the public shop below her rented rooms in the manner of someone who does not care if "there been twenty people in the shop" (1072). Smith's injunction that minimizing our problems to the indifferent and impartial spectator actually helps us feel them less seems to inhere: Clarissa's repeated exclamations about her own sufferings, as Lee notes, take on an air of "jubilation," not remorse or suffering.[61] But all of these interactions

premised not so much on the refusal of social intercourse, but in their loud embrace of the opportunity to display indifference to the self. Clarissa arrives at this ability not through stolid unsociability, but by the rhetorical command with which she has been associated throughout the novel. Her rhetoric is merely oriented towards a more indifferent spectator, and therefore seems to escape the trap of unsociability or heartlessness that Locke would lay for it.

Death, by these lights, presents Clarissa with her greatest challenge yet. Smith writes, "The man who, in danger, in torture, upon the approach of death, preserves his tranquility unaltered, and suffers no word, no gesture to escape him which does not perfectly accord with the feelings of the most indifferent spectator, necessarily commands a very high degree of admiration" (TMS 238). Throughout *TMS*, Smith has proven himself interested in the question of how death transforms the impartial spectator, and whether one can effectively address this figure after death or in the moment of one's dying. The ability to imagine the impartial spectator's approbation of one's actions after death is what causes men to have "voluntarily thrown away life to acquire after death a renown that they could no longer enjoy. Their imagination, in the meantime, anticipated that fame which was in future times to be bestowed upon them" (116). This spectator, of all of the possible spectators, is likely to be the most indifferent, impartial, and skeptical, and death one of the greatest extremities to which one's rhetorical representation can be put. Barbauld, of all Richardson's readers, was the most perceptive about the centrality of Clarissa's preparations for death to the story, perhaps because she did not view it primarily as a failure of the marriage plot. She finds the moral of Clarissa's story in "the greatness of mind with which she views and enjoys the approaches of death" (ciii), and her indifference to it as what is perfectly calculated to win "our fondest affections" (cii).[62] Significantly, and not surprisingly in an epistolary novel, most of that preparation takes the form of writing, another way in which letters and interlocutory address give the novel meaning. Lee is likely right to note the death plot refuses both interiority and the anti-rhetorical reading—Clarissa was not in love after all, just like she said—but this is also an opportunity for Clarissa to address spectators specifically through a refusal of another kind of interiority, the internal fear for the "king of terrors." Smith believes that ignoring that fear and putting on an indifferent show to whether we live or die represents us particularly well to even our most indifferent audiences, and is in some sense the only consolation of a death, even an ignominious one. Barbauld's attribution of a spectatorial position to Clarissa not only helps deny interiority, but in a real way emphasizes the extent to which contemplating death from a spectatorial position—and imagining her chief enemies reading her letters after her death—allows Clarissa to enjoy her passing from one life to the next. "The ways of Providence" might well be "unsearchable" (1375), but Christian

benevolence in the novel inheres mostly in this spectatorial contemplation of her interlocutors after she has died a Christian death. It is, as one would expect, spectatorial Belford who performs the moral sentiment for the reader when he writes that, "Were I in any of their places, how much rather had I that she had quitted scores with me by the most severe recriminations, than that she should thus nobly triumph over me by a generosity that has no example?" (1371). Part of the genius of Clarissa's final letters to her family members is that they speak to them as if they were truly indifferent spectators, addressing them in terms of "sir" and "honoured madam," rather than in the more familiar way that she has written to them earlier. In her letter to Arabella, she slips into the third person, "even while she writes, in imagination, purified and exalted, she the more fearlessly writes to her sister" (1375). Clarissa's stoicism does result in a kind of alienation, but it is a spectatorial self-alienation more than it is an alienation in respect to her interlocutory others. In fact, the apex of her rhetorical skills, and her increasing remoteness from sympathetic others, produces her ability to embody a spectator's view of her death, and write effectively to the people who should have been her most sympathetic spectators to begin with.

Smith and novels

It is hard to say for certain, of course, how much of an influence one specific novel might have had on *The Theory of Moral Sentiments,* or what the nature of that influence, conscious or unconscious, might have been. There is again the additional difficulty of Smith's rather unsurprising but still disappointing typing of the stoical or virtuous death with men ("war is the great school for both acquiring and exercising this species of magnanimity" [226]). But in Richardson's rhetorical art of character and especially in Clarissa's increasing command of the sentiments of others, brought about in degrees by exposure to increasingly unsympathetic spectators, it is difficult not to see the deeper parallels between Smith's character of virtue and Richardson's novelistic character of virtue. Thinking of "character" and likewise realism as the manifestation of inner psychology on the page has thus far prevented an analysis of the similarities between the two, or of Smith's use of novels to talk about the moral sentiments. As for his disavowal of novels, it is worth re-examining at this point the characteristics of that dismissal once again in light of Richardson's novel: "As newness is the only merit in a Novel and curiosity the only motive which induces us to read them, the writers are necessitated to make use of this method to keep it up" (LRBL 97). By contrast, in a history, where the important even is not kept in "Suspense," the writer can

carry us as it were into the very circumstances of the actors [so that] we may feel for them as it were for ourselves. They show us the feelings and agitation of Mind in the Actors previous to and during the Event. They point us to the Effects and Consequences of the Event not only in the intrinsick change it made on the Situation of the Actors but the manner of behavior with which they supported them (96).

On nearly all counts, Richardson defends his work in the same way. His events "abound not only with critical situations, but with what may be called instantaneous descriptions and reflections which may be brought home to the breast of the youthful reader: as also, with affecting conversations, many of them written in the dialogue or dramatic way" (35). By "instantaneous," he seems not so much to have in mind a literal writing to the moment (all of the letters are conspicuously written after the fact) as that they take us into the circumstances and situations of the characters. More specifically, Richardson's formal considerations—whether to take the advice of his friend that the collection ought to be given a "narrative turn," and lose its epistolary form—are attentive to speed and haste in the same way that Smith appears to be attentive to speed and haste. Richardson does not keep his event in "Suspense," but provides, for anyone who is looking for it, the likely result of Clarissa's story. He contemplates the merits of trimming down the work so as not to "retard…its progress" (36), but ultimately concludes that it is the "variety which is deemed the soul of a feast, whether mensal or mental" (ibid.) In the end, he declares himself the servant of his reader, and whether their "half-tired" minds will bear additional volumes, just as Smith declared the virtue of Swift to lie in his appeal to the mind "half-asleep" (LRBL 7). Richardson's anti-rhetorical critics might read such a line as blatant evidence of abasing himself to the crowd. Smith likely read it differently.

Clarissa thus arguably represents the apex of Smith's engagement with the moral literature of his own time. It was an engagement that—as my next chapter argues—proceeded well into the latter half of his life and throughout his many revisions of TMS. But the nature of that engagement changed considerably as indeed novels changed considerably, as my next chapter—about the denigration of the epistolary form in the work of Smith's colleague and friend Henry Mackenzie—argues. A dimension of Clarissa that I have left deliberately unexplored up until now in this chapter is its relationship with gender. The last section of this chapter read Clarissa Harlowe as ascending through the ideal Smithian hierarchy of virtues (as they were re-represented in Smith's sixth "Character of Virtue" revisions) through skillful deployment of a measured but confessional rhetoric, to the apetical virtue of "self-command," while largely ignoring the fact that Smith's "Character of Virtue" revisions

were 1) largely oriented towards silence on the part of the potentially sympathetic sufferer; 2) gendered male in important and significant ways, especially as his description of the development of stoicism types war and battle as the tutors of a magnanimity that is nearly lost in commercial societies. Earlier versions of TMS, however, noted distinctly female forms of suffering, such as the pangs of childbirth.

Clarissa's suffering in the novel is likewise typed as a particularly female form of suffering, which is to say, rape.[63] Her so-called "Rape Papers," a textual representation of the breakdown of her mind, specifically figure her suffering as fundamentally unable to be represented, as has long been remarked. In the context of my argument here, they signal a temporary inability to harness the powers of rhetoric that have previously served as Clarissa's defining characteristic. But the situation that they represent is short-lived, and Clarissa quickly recovers her ability—now more strongly than ever—to make rhetorical appeals to others (and especially unsympathetic, even anonymized others). Indeed, part of Richardson's moral brilliance, as Frances Ferguson would have it, consists in making rape the particular crime from which Clarissa must recover, as it gets to the heart of the "intersection between eighteenth-century skepticism and prose fiction."[64] Rape, as Ferguson argues, was a crime that brought to the fore the supposed unreliability of women's testimony around issues of consent and intention; nobody, in the end, can doubt that Clarissa was raped. The public legibility of the private experience are the grounds on which the novel is formulated, and neutralizing the self-interestedness of rhetoric also results in neutralizing the unreliability of female testimony.

Bodily suffering was always downplayed in TMS, of course: famously, in the loss of the leg versus the loss of the mistress scenario, where the latter is far more sympathetic because it involves imaginative sufferings, rather than simple physical ones. Accordingly, our sympathy for the fact of Clarissa's rape quickly transfers from the horror of the physical event to our horror at the inability of this previously deeply rhetorically skilled writer to represent it, to, finally, the utter loss of compassion for herself, indifferency and self-command, into which the event is imaginatively transmuted. The gendered nature of the rape becomes something that even men might come to sympathize with, even as Belford comes to sympathize with it, performing the reader's spectatorial interests in such a way that our sympathies eventually come to rest in part with Belford himself for being properly sympathetic. But in my next chapter, I turn to the ways in which Smith's sixth and final set of revisions to TMS come to a notion of virtue that inheres less in rhetorical representation than in restrained silences that are figured as particularly male. The Smith who admired Clarissa, Marianne, and Fanny Butlerd grew less tolerant of the female, chatty, and

sociable virtues, and less insistent on them as the path to moral virtue, a fact which was itself reflected in the decline of epistolary novels towards the end of the century.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

[1] "Gradually, however, the code of romantic love began to accommodate itself to religious, social, and psychological reality, notable to marriage and the family. This process seems to have occurred particularly early in England…where the break with the originally adulterous character of courtly love was complete" (Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel*: *Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding*, Berkeley: UC Press, Second American Edition, 2001, 137).

[2] As was the case in previous chapters, all subsequent references to *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* will be abbreviated as TMS, followed by a page number.

[3] Elizabeth Kraft, *Character and Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Comic Fiction* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1992), 9.

[4] For the ease of the reader, page references are to the only edition of *Clarissa* still in print. *Clarissa, or The History of a Young Lady,* ed. Angus Ross (New York: Penguin, 1985).

[5] Some of these I have referred to already in my previous chapter (Greiner, Griswold, Hill and Montag, Gottlieb, Shields; cf. notes 14 and 15), but in addition, Dave Marshall's *The Figure of Theater: Shaftesbury, Defoe, and Adam Smith* (New York: Columbia UP, 1986) and Susan Manning's introduction to Henry Mackenzie's *Julia de Roubigné*, (xvi-xviii).

[6] Sometimes the impartial spectator is the figure of "mere propriety" and sometimes he or she is the "great demigod in the breast" who seems to have a much broader and less socially particular view. See D.D. Raphael, *The Impartial Spectator: Adam Smith's Moral Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), 32-3.

[7] Charles Griswold, "Rhetoric and Ethics: Adam Smith on Theorizing the Moral Sentiments." *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, Vol. 24, No. 3, Theory and Praxis (1991), pp. 213-237. 215.

[8] Jonathan Wight, "Adam Smith's Ethics and the Noble Arts" (Review of Social Economy Vol. LXIV, No. 2, June 2006, 155-180), 156.

[9] Martha C. Nussbaum: *Poetic Justice: The Literary Imagination and Public Life.* Boston: Beacon Press, 1995. 3.

[10] Kraft 7.

[11] ibid. 5.

[12] ibid. 3.

[13] ibid. 13.

[14] This is a large part of the complaint of *Pamela Censured,* itself an epistle comprised of some outraged reactions to the novel, collected in 1741 by person or persons unknown, which breaks down each scene of the original novel and provides a running account of its moral and aesthetic failures. The most common charge it levels against Richardson is "vanity" under the guise of his dual role of "HALF-EDITOR, HALF-WRITER" and of stirring up the sexual titillation of readers for money.

[15] Scott Paul Gordon, "Disinterested Selves: Clarissa and the Tactics of Sentiment" (*ELH,* Vol. 64, No. 2, Summer, 1997, 473-502), 476.

[16] ibid.

[17] Ryan Patrick Hanley, *Adam Smith and the Character of Virtue* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 6.

[18] Catherine Gallagher, "The Rise of Fictionality" (*The Novel,* ed. Franco Moretti, Vol. 1, 336-363), 352-3.

[19] *Pamela Censured,* http://www.gutenberg.org/files/33735/33735.txt. Accessed 15 July 2017.

[20] Samuel Richardson, *Pamela, or, Virtue Rewarded* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 240.

[21] The phrase is from the introduction to the letter-writing manual that Richardson wrote in advance of coming up with the idea to fictionalize such manuals: *Letters written to and for particular friends: on the most important occasions. Directing not only the requisite style and forms to be observed in writing familiar letters; but how to think and act justly and prudently, in the common concerns of human life,* 1741.

[22] Janet Gurkin Altman, *Epistolarity: approaches to a form* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1982), 14.

[23] See Altman, Chapter 3 of *Epistolarity,* for distinctions between the kinds of epistolary texts.

[24] "How selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it" (TMS 9).

[25] Gordon 476.

[26] See Rae Greiner, *Sympathetic Realism in Nineteenth-Century British Fiction* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012). Greiner's concern with "disentangling sympathy from omniscience, identification, and knowledge" (13) through the techniques of free indirect discourse that the nineteenth-century novel pioneered and embraced only serves to emphasize how pervasive and common those ideas about the

nineteenth-century novel and its characters' consciousness are. It also should, in suggesting Smith as a key figure in this transformation and his sympathy as foundational to it, encourage us to look for literary predecessors in the epistolary novel.

[27] Gallagher 357.

[28] Ian Duncan, "Adam Smith, Samuel Johnson, and the institutions of English," *The Scottish Invention of English Literature,* ed. Robert Crawford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, 37-54), 41.

[29] Hugh Blair, *Lectures on Rhetoric and* Belles Lettres (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965), 63-4.

[30] Ian Duncan, *Scott's Shadow: The Novel in Romantic Edinburgh (*Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), 2007.

[31] Eve Tavor Bannet, *Empire of Letters: Letter Manuals and Transatlantic Correspondence, 1688-1820 (*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 47.

[32] Henry Fielding, *Joseph Andrews* and *Shamela* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 309.

[33] Tom Keymer and Peter Sabor, *Pamela in the Marketplace: Literary Controversy and Print Culture in Eighteenth-Century Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 5-6.

[34] Richardson, *Pamela,* 68.

[35] Evan Gottlieb, *Feeling British: Sympathy and National Identity in Scottish and English Writing, 1707-1832 (*Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2007), 45.

[36] Ibid. 80.

[37] Juliet Shields, *Sentimental Literature and Anglo-Scottish Identity, 1745-1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 72.

[38] Henry Mackenzie, *The Man of Feeling* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 4.

[39] Richardson, *Pamela,* 3-4.

[40] ibid. 4.

[41] Greiner 3-4.

[42] Hanley 43.

[43] ibid. 27.

[44] ibid. 54.

[45] Stephen J. McKenna, "Adam Smith's Rhetorical Art of Character," *Character, Self, and Sociability in the Scottish Enlightenment,* ed. Thomas Ahnert and Susan Manning (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, 49-65), 50-1.

[46] McKenna 51; see also Jack Russell Weinstein, "Emotion, Context, and Rhetoric: Adam Smith's Informal Argumentation," *Proceedings of the Fifth Conference of the*

International Society for the Study of Argumentation, ed. Frans van Emeren et al., (Amsterdam: Sic Sat, 2003), 1067.

[47] See the entry for "character" in Johnson's *Dictionary*: http://johnsonsdictionaryonline.com/. Accessed 16 July 2017.

[48] Hanley 43.

[49] ibid. 39.

[50] Watt, of course, is highly guilty of this, but it is a curious fact that many of his most vociferous critics in that regard, like Michael McKeon, more or less repeat the same argument, but, acting within a Marxist-influenced critique of "late capitalism," regard this as a defect instead of a virtue. See McKeon's introduction to *The Origins of the English Novel, 1600-1740* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000).

[51] See Catherine Gallagher, *Nobody's Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace, 1670-1820* (Berkeley: UC Press, 1994), 148.

[52] Hanley 175.

[53] ibid. 188-9.

[54] E. Derek Taylor, *Reason and Religion in Clarissa: Samuel Richardson and the 'Famous' Mr. Norris of Bemerton* (London: Ashgate, 2009), 113.

[55] ibid. 112.

[56] Wendy Anne Lee, "A Case for Hard-Heartedness: Clarissa, Indifferency, Impersonality," (*Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, Vol. 26, Number 1, Fall 2013, 33-65), 33.

[57] There is a long and to my mind bewildering tradition of associating Richardson and Locke. E. Derek Taylor, for instance, goes as far as including a chapter in his book called "Un-Locke-ing Samuel Richardson" (Adam Smith notes quite correctly in *LRBL* that punning is the lowest form of humor) and tells us that "Richardson lived in the age of Locke" (34). In fact, of course, Richardson and Smith were much closer contemporaries. Richardson could not have had the benefit of Smith's work, of course, but my argument in this project is, as I have said, the reverse.

[58] John Locke, *Of the Conduct of the Understanding,* intro. John Yolton (1706; Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1996).

[59] Lee 53.

[60] Edward Copeland, "Remapping London: Clarissa and the Woman in the Window," *Samuel Richardson: Tercentenary Essays,* ed. Margaret Anne Doody and Peter Sabor, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 55.

[61] Lee 61.

[62] Anna Laetitia Barbauld, "Life of Samuel Richardson, with Remarks on His Writings," in *The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson,* ed. Anna Laetitia Barbauld. London: Lewis and Roden, 1804). Vol. 1. ciii and cii, respectively.

[63] And here, I echo Frances Ferguson's analysis in "Rape and the Rise of the Novel" that although there is nothing that prevents a man from being raped, the crime itself, in being usually perpetrated on women, had that connotation in eighteenth-century minds and retains it even in ours (*Representations* 20, Autumn 1987, 88-112), 88.
[64] ibid. 99.

Chapter 3
Invisible Hands and Sociable Virtues: Smith, Mackenzie, and Epistolary Foreclosures

> "I found it a difficult task to reduce them into narrative, because they are made up of sentiment, which narrative would destroy."
> –Henry Mackenzie, *Julia de Roubigné*

The previous two chapters have argued that for Adam Smith, literary character serves as a metaphor and even a method by which the private, unsociable self might be translated into an object fit for public consumption. By studying the rhetoric of literary characters closely, thinking about how we ourselves would feel placed in a similar situation and whether we would represent ourselves in the same way, then incorporating this knowledge into our self-representations, we might learn to "feel much for others and little for ourselves" (*The Theory of Moral Sentiments* 25).[1] Employing a rhetoric of indifference to the self, Smith argues, truly can inculcate an actual selflessness. Close "identification" with characters is not the point, as indeed it was not the point for early novelists. Nor is the "realism" that has come to be closely associated with the novel since Ian Watt's influential study.[2] In fact, characters that require a bit more flexing of the imaginative or sympathetic muscles perhaps better fulfill the conditions of Smithian sympathy, with its apparent lack of interest in "real" referents.[3] The ideal Smithian novel of the type endorsed as educatory in TMS might prepare us to perform the duties of "love and friendship, and of all other private and domestic affections" (143) but it need not do so through strict adherence to realism. Smith's moral philosophy, with its insistence that we can never truly know others and that knowing too much may in fact inhibit our sympathies, aligns him theoretically (and temporally) with the rise of fictionality. Fictionality required characters who have certain realistic qualities but were conspicuously bounded by their narratives, just as "real" people were in Smith's account of how sympathy is produced and gained.[4]

The epistolary form characteristic of the mid-century novel perhaps best fulfilled some of Smith's other conditions in TMS. Smith's interest in the propriety of self-advocacy and the various ways in which hidden interlocutors circumscribe and modify it is indeed more or less the theme of both LRBL and TMS, although the latter only addresses the topic of "rhetoric" implicitly. His desire to socialize rhetoric—previously tainted as incurably selfish and self-interested[5]—was also the project of mid-century novelists like Samuel Richardson, the author of the letter-writing rhetorical manuals

that became his novels, and the object of Smith's fulsome praise in TMS. Smith's attempted reconciliation of the private interest and the public good, as I have argued, was premised on character, or the necessity of reading the public output of others, imagining the reception of other spectators, and making the necessary adjustments to one's own rhetorical character and self-presentation. It is no great exaggeration to say that in LRBL at least, character became the point of reading. Access to "interiority" was less the issue for Smith or for eighteenth-century novelists than the self that one consciously put forward in public, carefully informed by other people's presentations of the same and how we regarded them as readers and spectators. Self-advocacy was thus naturally socialized: "howsoever selfish" (9) we might be by nature, we are all forced to present our wares at the public table and with a public in mind, and a public particularly unlikely to sympathize with our worst distresses, at that. The public scene of letter reading—institutionalized by novels like *Clarissa*, where letters were shared around and written in important ways not just to their nominal subject, but to many potential and potentially less innately sympathetic readers—was the formal realization of the ever-present sociable sphere that TMS posits as the great educator and self-corrector of our moral sentiments, which helps explain why epistolary novelists are especially marked out for praise in TMS.

      Recently, however, Smith's sympathy, and especially his figure of the impartial spectator, has become aligned with the formal device of free indirect discourse (FID), a late eighteenth to early nineteenth century innovation in third-person novelistic discourse.[6] According to Rae Greiner, for instance, FID "registers moments in which narrator and character 'go along' together idiomatically while their discourse situations remain intact," which prevents the collapse of subjects that Smith's sympathetic imagination is specifically designed to render as undesirable and impossible.[7] The impartial spectator, aligned at least to some extent with the narrator, "produces not so much the fused identity of narrator and character, character and reader, but the partial, merely approximate cohabitation of individualized persons and an impersonal, virtual voice" (ibid.) The impartial spectator/FID narrator serves as the third point on a triangle, mediating interactions between characters and readers through general social consensus. He or she is allowed a certain degree of access, but not complete access; "conveying the common view" to which all can consent is the point of the narrator of FID, but not "transparent minds."[8]

      The self-advocacy of the epistolary form is (for Greiner) by the early nineteenth century partially collapsed into a figure who already performs some of the work of sympathetic judgment for (or, as she prefers, thinking along with) the reader.[9] At first glance, at least, there is something utterly un-Smithian about formulating a fictional narrator in this way. Sympathy in Smith's account is purposely laborious, and the

process of abstraction and judgment part of the education. The passage from TMS that perhaps best emblematizes this places an elocutionary emphasis on the necessity of the work, and its tutelary laboriousness:

> In order to produce this concord [between spectator and sympathetic object], as nature teaches the spectators to assume the circumstances of the person principally concerned, so she teaches this last in some measure to assume those of the spectators. As they are continually placing themselves in his situation, and thence conceiving emotions similar to what he feels; so he is as constantly placing himself in theirs, and thence conceiving some degree of that coolness about his own fortune, with which he is sensible that they will view it. As they are constantly considering what they themselves would feel, if they actually were the sufferers, so he is as constantly led to imagine in what manner he would be affected if he was only one of the spectators of his own situation. As their sympathy makes them look at it, in some measure, with his eyes, so his sympathy makes him look at it, in some measure, with theirs (22).

Some form of social consensus might indeed and eventually be derived from this process (as Smith goes onto to specify a few chapters later, when he writes for this first time of the famous "impartial spectator," as an amalgamation or abstraction of the data derived from many spectators), but it is clear that it is in a crowded and populated sphere and involves quite a bit of interactive effort. Needless to say, the FID narrator was not a figure available to Smith when he endorsed the epistolary novels of Richardson, Marivaux, and Riccoboni for tutoring away the "defect" of too stoical an apathy, especially for one's nearest connections (143). The process of sympathetic reflection and character formation in the passage quoted above seems far more congruent with how one might read a manual of letters, or a novel comprised of them. Impartial spectation, to the extent that it exists, remains something of an abstraction and a process, rather than an actual figure embodied in the narrative.

Yet it is hardly disputable that the epistolary novel declines, and declines rather precipitously, at the end of the eighteenth century: declines, in fact, just as Smith was completing his sixth and final revision to TMS. From an "impossible" apex in 1777, where 71 percent of the titles published in the United Kingdom were epistolary, the form declined rapidly, replaced first by the Gothic and then by the Austenian novel of FID.[10] One persuasive account of this decline argues for its association with the unruly feminist sentiments of Mary Wollstonecraft and the initial left radical support for the

French Revolution, tying the phenomenon to the discourse around sentiment and sympathy of which Smith was so deeply entwined.[11] The epistolary novel's association with a kind of sentiment gone amok rendered the letter itself unacceptable for the burden of moral education and tutelage in propriety that figures like Hugh Blair and Samuel Johnson were by that point placing on its shoulders.[12] The letter traveled quickly by these lights from the sociable form that made private advocacy publicly palatable and selfish sentiments moral ones, to a politically divisive, immoral, even un-sentimental form of expression.

But my purpose in this chapter is not to provide a full historical account of the reasons for epistolarity's decline, but instead to trace the fingerprints of an increasing Scottish skepticism about the novel's vision of sociable morality in Smith's revisions to TMS. This skepticism, which pervaded the Edinburgh literary circles with which Smith was a crucial part in his final years, is simultaneously reflected in an early, even *avant la lettre* criticism of the epistolary form: the third and final novel of Smith's friend and fellow Edinburgh litterateur, Henry Mackenzie, *Julia de Roubigné*. Mackenzie had previously written hugely popular and critically problematic *The Man of Feeling*, a work that sought (in Maureen Harkin's view) to "extend and to half-legitimate the pleasures of indulgence in sympathetic sorrows (pleasures quite independent of, and even opposed to, efforts to redress the source of those misfortunes) by criticizing such responses for their lack of social import" in a manner that engaged specifically with Smith's hesitations about the moral efficaciousness of sympathy.[13] *The Man of Feeling* uses its fragmentary form, long associated with the sentimental novel, to criticize the degree to which sensibility was actually capable of constructing the moral community[14] that has long been understood as one of the major aims of Scottish Enlightenment theorizing of the moral sentiments.[15] Like *The Man of Feeling*, *Julia* uses its form—in this case, its epistolary form, at that point in time naturally associated with the sentimental novel and its claim that feeling could produce the proper domestic and social sentiments—to draw attention to the ways in which the sentiments expressed in letters may indeed engage the pleasurable aesthetic sensations, but did not necessarily lead to proper moral action or properly formulated moral communities. It does this, curiously, by creating characters who are typed as almost too good for, and too superior to, their social milieu. By "too good," I reference a Smithian standard, which by the time of Smith's final revisions to TMS, seemed—in their tendency to refer all potential expressions of suffering to the impartial spectator—to inculcate not ordinary sociable commerce but a conscious repression or silence that was incompatible with letter writing.

It has long been noted (by Susan Manning, most prominently)[16] that this novel's peculiar take on letters—dialogic in that it includes multiple correspondents, but

monologic in the sense that they do not write to each other and the letters that they receive in turn are not reproduced in the volume—provides a nightmarishly closed version of the sociable correspondence and sympathetic community that earlier epistolary novels like *Clarissa* worked so hard to create, and which they tended simply to assume.[17] The degree to which Mackenzie's work is generally conversant with TMS is also well understood. But most critics thus far have focused on finding a static Smith. What I mean by this is that they consider TMS a document without its own complex evolutionary history, despite a great deal of interest in philosophical and historical circles about the nature and reasons behind Smith's frequent revisions and in what ways they were themselves in conversation with developments in his literary circle: including, very prominently, Mackenzie's fiction and non-fictional essays in the *Mirror* and the *Lounger* periodicals.

Alternatively, I will argue, we should read *Julia de Roubigné's* broken epistolarity as a commentary on the incompatibility of Smith's two sets of virtues (the sociable, associated with common propriety and economic production, and the classical, stoic, magnanimous ones emphasized in the "Character of Virtue" section), which became increasingly bifurcated across his revisions of TMS. The impartial spectator's occasional association with the narrator of free indirect discourse actually runs in some ways counter to developments within Smith's work, which emphasized a kind of exemplary silence and the signs of suffering's deliberate repression as the mode which best pleased this abstract and imaginary figure. In order to remain the moral instrument of sociable discourse and character formation in *lettres* (if not in actual letters), the novel replaces the epistolary with a different mode of narration: one in which it was less ontologically clear who was speaking, and on whose behalf.[18]

This reading of *Julia* differs from Manning's influential account by viewing the novel's "mannered, claustrophobic verbal environment" less as a moralistic warning against "indulged sentiment" and more clearly as a manifestation of what Barbara M. Benedict calls its "dialogic irony,"[19] an ability to appreciate the pleasures of a particular form of art in the very moment that one recognizes its social (and characterological) limitations. Just as Harley, the protagonist of *The Man of Feeling*, provides an extended commentary on both the aesthetic pleasures of sympathy but also the very limited degree to which novels might intervene in the social sphere (*pace* Harkin), I read *Julia* as an extended commentary on the limits of epistolary novels to socialize the self or formulate a character around standards of community consensus present in sociable reading activities, even as reading the secret letters of other people gives a *frisson* of aesthetic and even sympathetic pleasure.[20] Mackenzie famously set out to write, according to Walter Scott, a novel in which every character was "virtuous"—no Lovelace-esque seducer deliberately plots to bring others to ruin, as Sir Thomas Sindall

did in Mackenzie's *The Man of the World*—but instead, characters would be brought to heel by their own best qualities and intentions, magnified to absurd and immoderate levels.[21] In this respect, *Julia* both mourns the possibility of a social, sympathetic sphere manufactured in letters, but also suggests that it was always illusory in novels and the aesthetic experience they produced to begin with. The singular, the individual, and the exemplary were naturally marked out for consideration, and the novel was always less about socialized self-representation than it was about this very exemplarity. This required considerable revision of the idea of "character" as it had been developing in the eighteenth century on Mackenzie's part—but then again, the erasure of previous forms through mockery or even simple self-conscious testing of its forms and limitations has always been a peculiar trick of the novel.[22]

My account of *Julia* builds to some extent on David Marshall's reading of the novel. Marshall argues that the novel stands against notions of commensurability and the economic exchange that the world seems to force upon its characters: Julia in exchange for her father's debt, for instance. The letter form (by Marshall's lights) reinforces the separateness and even secretive, private nature of correspondence. While I agree with Marshall that the dangers of economic commensurability provide a theme throughout the novel, Mackenzie (fittingly for a man who wrote Harley into existence but was also himself known as a shrewd and competent businessman and a sociable, sporting fellow, to the occasional surprise of those who read *The Man of Feeling* before meeting him) was not as monolithically anti-commercial as Marshall's reading would imply. Instead, I argue, it is best to read *Julia* as an extended reflection on the question that stood in some ways unresolved at the heart of Smith's many revisions of TMS: what good do the most exquisite sensibilities do us? Is it possible to formulate, rhetorical sociable values and still possess the classical virtues of stoicism, magnanimity, and self-command? What is lost in a society where one set of virtues are prioritized over another?

Attending to what "virtue" had come to mean for both Smith and Mackenzie by the last decades of the eighteenth century gives not only clearer insight into *Julia's* complex and self-conscious use of epistolarity, but also an account of how Smith's ideas about character developed over time and were imported into later novels of free indirect discourse, despite his apparent fondness for their epistolary predecessors. The narrator of FID, I argue, most fundamentally represents a formal attempt to speak the silence of even the exemplary (ideally silent) character, who addresses him or herself to the preference of the impartial spectator for extreme restraint and self-command, but also obeys Smith's command for sociable sharing of stories. It is, in other words, a response to Smith and Mackenzie and a growing suspicion that these two aspects of the novel—the set apart nature of its characters, and their social productiveness as

objects for readers' own characters—might not be as easily reconciled as they had once been in the epistolary form most common for novels of the mid-eighteenth-century. *Julia de Roubigné* represents an early attempt, deeply conversant with the terms of Smith's work, to question whether the epistolary form—or any literary form—could truly unite the exemplary character with the demands of sociability, and issued a challenge which led to later developments in narrative technique and its new, nineteenth-century formulation of character.

The man within the breast

In the first edition of TMS (1759), the impartial spectator hardly makes an appearance at all. It wasn't until the second edition, in 1761, that Smith introduces the concept of a "tribunal within the breast," a "representative of mankind," "the supreme judge of men's sentiments," or—more importantly for this argument—the "abstract man" (TMS 128-30).[23]

The change is significant. While it is perfectly true that the impartial spectator develops out of a concept of what John Dwyer calls (employing one of Smith's own favored, musical metaphors for sympathy) "a harmonious and self-regulating human community in which public opinion played the dominant and normative function," Smith's tendency to emphasize the theoretical characteristics of his singular ethical figure amplified over time and with his revisions to TMS, reaching its peak with his final and sixth revision in 1790.[24] This is perhaps most apparent in a passage added to Book III. Smith admits that "the all-wise Author of Nature" has taught men to "respect the sentiments and judgments of his brethren" but quickly goes on to assert that although this community might be the "immediate" judge of personal conduct,

> an appeal lies from his sentence to a much higher tribunal, to the tribunal of their own consciences, to that of the supposed impartial and well-informed spectator, to that of the man within the breast, the great judge and arbiter of their conduct. The jurisdiction of these two tribunals are founded upon principles which, though in some respects resembling and akin, are, however, in reality different and distinct. The juridisdiction of the man without is founded altogether in the desire of actual praise, and in the aversion to actual blame. The jurisdiction of the man within, is founded altogether in the desire of praise-worthiness, and in the aversion to blame-worthiness (129-31).

Dwyer, for one, links Smith's own change in sentiments in this respect to two factors: developments in the Edinburgh community of popular moralists surrounding Smith (which included Mackenzie) and who had offered criticism, as well as praise, to the various editions of TMS; and Smith's growing aversion (which reached its culmination in the sixth edition of TMS) to the figure who was arguably the hero of the earliest edition of the text: the middling, even "mediocre" man whose conscience was formed by the people around him and who sought to make his way in the world by appealing to their sentiments and sensibilities. Smith went so far in the first edition as to deny that "custom and fashion" had any great impact on the "perversion of judgement…concerning the general style of character and behaviour" (209). Indeed, as I have argued in previous chapters, Smith believed at some point during his career that character and even desire were impossible without the "mirror" of society to reflect the self.

Another major change in tone and style from the first edition of TMS to the final one concerns the extent to which one is required to obtain the approbation of spectatorial others, impartial or not. Whereas the Smith of the first book and the first edition admits that social approval of actual spectators more often involves "concords" rather than "unisons," and "this is all that is wanted or required" (22), the impartial spectator of the sixth revision—perhaps because of its very abstractness and its theoretical residence in the breast—requires a sterner, more claustrophobic type of approval:

> If in the course of a day we have served in any respect from the rules which he prescribes to us; if we have either exceeded or relaxed our frugality; if we have either exceeded or relaxed in our industry; if, through passion or inadvertency, we have hurt in any respect the interest or happiness of our neighbour; if we have neglected a plain and proper opportunity of promoting that interest in happiness; it is this inmate who, in the evening, calls us to an account for all those omissions and violations, and his reproaches often make us blush inwardly both for our folly and inattention to our own happiness, and for our still greater indifference and inattention, perhaps, to that of other people (262).

The inward-turning tone of this self-assessment, both here and in the revisions that Smith made to Book I to make the two books seem more congruous, places greater emphasis than any previous edition does on a kind of majestic silence, rather than a musical concord. He speaks in Book I of the "situations which bear so hard upon human nature" that the ideal of "stifling" the suffering that they cause cannot be met

by imperfect creatures—but it is entirely clear that the impartial spectator, all things considered, would prefer something as close to perfect silence as possible (25-6). The sociable tale-telling that involves minimizing one's grief and suffering but still communicating it to potential sympathizers seems not to obtain particularly well in this situation; but it is precisely this situation which comes to distinguish the difference between "mere propriety" and actual "virtue" (25).

Dwyer may underestimate the extent to which these two moral systems—"the man without" to "the man within," as V. Hope characterized the shift[25]—were already present, even in the first edition of TMS. Specifically, they were always present around the "desire" that formed character in the episode of the man "brought up from infancy in some deserted place" (110). As Lisa Hill has recently argued, Smith left his passage on the invisible hand and its communal, sympathetic production of desires in TMS more or less untouched throughout his revisions, which brought it into a rather marked conflict with this sixth revision.[26] In refuting Ryan Patrick Hanley, who puts Smith's sixth revision of TMS front and center of a program of "the cultivation of the love of virtue"[27] that is implicitly aligned with the impartial spectator and the individual conscience, Hill notes that "intersubjectivity" and the endorsement of the material powers of sympathy that Smith leaves unchecked in Book IV suggest that Smith was at the very least conflicted up until the end about where other people and actual spectators should stand in relation to one's moral character.[28]

It is the presence of actual spectators and the deep desire to sympathize with real, specific, and very rich people that drives the engine of the economy and does the most to better the state of the poor—or at least it does in Smith's famous articulation of the invisible hand in Book IV.

> The spectator enters by sympathy into the sentiments of the master, and necessarily views the object under the same agreeable aspect. When we visit the palaces of the great, we cannot help conceiving the satisfaction we should enjoy if we ourselves were the masters, and were possessed of so much artful and ingeniously contrived accommodation (179).

However, this deforms the individual's chances for happiness and self-estimation, as Smith illustrates with the example of the "poor man's son" who has been visited by ambition and finds himself its slave, submitting "to more fatigue of body and more uneasiness of mind than he could have suffered through the whole of his life from the want of [riches]," discovering only in the last moments of his life that he "begins at last to find that wealth and greatness are mere trinkets of frivolous utility, no more adapted for procuring ease of body or tranquility of mind than the tweezer-cases of the

lover of toys" (181-2). And again, Smith dangles the possibility of a man "who was to live alone in a desolate island," who would find that these "conveniencies" do not seem very conducive to his happiness at all. But introduce him into society, where he has the opportunity to "pay more regard to the sentiments of the spectator, than to those of the person principally concerned" and the island-dweller would inevitably come to the "correct" conclusion that the trinkets were worth the effort. Social, triangulated sympathies give value even to valueless objects (181).

Society looks on the verge of becoming the villain of this tale. But the truth proves more complicated, in the passage's famous turn. In times of sickness and low humor, we are able to see through its pretenses, acquiring a sort of "splenetic philosophy" that allows us to see through to the futility of the poor man's son's quest (183). In better health, "our imagination…expands itself to every thing around us" (ibid.) Smith's association of health, vigor, and imagination with what he goes onto describe as nature's imposition (by which he means something like lie, or, more charitably, an artful illusion) has famously positive social benefits, causing the rich to "only select from the heap what is most precious and agreeable," leaving the rest to the poor and thereby bettering their condition. Unplanned, unfettered, greedy, and sympathetically deluded, the invisible hand does more than any conscious philanthropic effort: but the cost is personally high to those who do not temper the sympathetic imagination with a measure of splenetic philosophy. Over time, it seems, Smith grew more skeptical about the moral character created out of sympathy with social spectators, who would always prefer the trinkets in the tweezer case to real happiness and tranquility: good for society, less than ideal for the individual philosopher. But he also left the trinket lovers largely alone, as Hill argues, and thus participated in a kind of disciplinary disruption between his social scientific reasoning and his capacities as a "man of wisdom and virtue."[29] The former kind of disciplinary reasoning, which Smith virtually invented for the discipline of political economy, might well dictate that we should all be sympathetically expansive and imaginative in a very broad sense, sympathizing "up" instead of down[30] and cheerfully participating in communities organized, fundamentally, around avarice, which counterintuitively would do the most to raise the poor from their condition. Wisdom and virtue, on the other hand, dictated something more like impartial spectatorship: standing apart from the crowd, referring our characters to the highest, most unsociable and most exacting of judges, and, when one does engage in acts of sympathy, sympathizing "down," as for instance Harley constantly does in *The Man of Feeling*, instead of "up" to the higher ranks of society (regardless of whether it improved their condition in the slightest).

Hill's framing of this apparent contradiction in TMS helps illuminate where Smith stood in relation to the imaginative literary output of the last decade of his life,

and what influence it may have exerted on the final revisions to TMS. The "Character of Virtue" section of 1790 throws off these triangulated material desires for the pursuit of a self-command and "superior prudence" in which the impartial spectator, and not real spectators, might take part. This figure—the newly abstract and imaginary nature of which Dwyer notes (with some concern)—is in fact conspicuously set against the crowded, sociable sphere, which is pleased by the "splendid and dazzling" qualities of wealth and greatness but for Smith seems to "too little regard" the steady application and self-command that underpins this "exertion," something that only the impartial spectator sees. Smith's previous approbation for the mediocrity of the commons has turned into a disdain for the easy way that they are dazzled (they are "dazzled" at least three times within the fairly short chapter) by splendor. But it is the singular and set apart individual character who directs his attention to a less shifting and fashionable standard, unfolding gradually over time and at the length that novels have always been known for:

> No man during, either the whole of his life, or that of any considerable part of it, ever trod steadily and uniformly in the paths of prudence, of justice, or of proper beneficence, whose conduct was not principally directed by a regard to the sentiments of the supposed impartial spectator, of the great inmate of the breast, the great judge and arbiter of conduct (TMS 262-3).

But Mackenzie's question in *Julia de Roubigné* is what sort of moral lesson such a creation might teach us in fiction, or whether this is even the point of fiction. At the very least, he suggests that the exemplary character is unsuited to the popular, sociable, familiar form of letters.

A hard and unbending character

Dwyer claims that Smith's newfound harshness for the striving *petit bourgeois* arose partially from his response to the Mirror Club and Mackenzie, but misunderstands Mackenzie as the representative of "exquisite sensibility,"[31] especially as it pertains to intimate family moments, and Smith as the avatar of self-command and the "man of superior prudence." Mackenzie's work was, if anything, increasingly critical of sensibility, and of literary sensibility in particular. In *Lounger* 20 (1785), he seems to criticize his own *Julia* after the fact when he writes that "that species [of novel] called *Sentimental*…borrowed from our neighbours the French" fails specifically by replacing "impulses and feelings…of a visionary kind" for "real practical duties."[32]

Julia was nothing if not conspicuously French; it is set in France, makes use of French politics and economic conditions, and its melancholic paratext ("As, from age and situation, it is likely I shall address the public no more," complains the editor [5]) employs the same fragmentary strategies of compilation and selection for which Mackenzie had become notorious in *The Man of Feeling,* but with a French provenance.[33] This time, the "editor" (who ought not to be confused with Mackenzie himself, although he frequently is)[34] tells the story of how the son of a former French acquaintance rescued the letters which comprise the manuscript from a butcher, who had been intending them for the wrapping of raw meat. The son requests that the editor perform the same task of "digestion" that he had for *The Man of the World*, where Mackenzie's editor supposedly narrativized another set of found letters about the attempted corruption and seduction of the two Annesly siblings (4-5).

The subject of form had, of course, also come up for Richardson, whose editor similarly dangles the possibility that he might have put the hundreds of epistles that make up *Clarissa* into "the narrative way" so as not to "retard…its progress," but reasons that "warmth and its efficacy" would be lost in the process.[35] Mackenzie's similar eschewing of the same opportunity—"I had perhaps, treated them as I did the letters he mentioned; but I found it a difficult task to reduce them into narrative, because they are made up of sentiment, which narrative would destroy" (5)—reads as a reference to both *Clarissa* and to the sentimental convention of narrators defending their formal choices as quasi-moral choices in paratexts. Notably, however, Mackenzie is far more critical of sentiment and what it represents in his own text than Richardson—who appears to take it as a given that reading his novels would cultivate correct moral character by prompting readers to imitate Clarissa's exemplary virtues in their own communiques—ever was, and his choice of epistolarity must be read through this heavily ironized context.[36] Narrativization of the kind that he chose for *The Man of the World* may have (at least in his own mind) eliminated "sentiment," but then again, the Annesly siblings were also ultimately redeemed: Bill Annesly, most notably, by an application of native American stoicism of the type which Smith commented on favorably in TMS.[37] When perfectly united with the kindness and sensibility that he learns in the bosom of his family, he falls neither into the trap of a stoicism that made him feel too little for others, nor a sociability that, with the encouragement of the rakish Sir Thomas, made him feel too much for himself.

The overwhelming theme of *Julia* is conflict, however: conflict between virtues and duties, or even virtues and other virtues, which is why Manning reads *Lounger* 20 as Mackenzie's critique of his own earlier work (xv). The conflict is typically identified as Julia's forced marriage to le Comte de Montauban, because he rescues her father from further ramifications (imprisonment, the novel suggests) of a lawsuit that has

already impoverished him and forced the Roubigné family to move to a small estate in the country, the last remaining part of their once large holdings. Less frequently noted is its Smithian conflict of the virtues of sociability and commerce with the world, on the one hand, and magnanimity, greatness, and aesthetic spectatorship on the other, and the extent to which the novel specifically references the invisible hand episode from TMS to articulate this conflict. Julia's first letter to her "correspondent" (I put the word in quotation marks because very little actual correspondence occurs) Maria de Roncilles takes up the terms of the conflict between sociability and the kind of superior prudence that Smith later advocates in the "Character of Virtue" section but articulates at least in nascent form in his "philosophical" character even as far back as the poor man's son anecdote, which appeared in all versions of TMS.

Julia generally follows a pattern of degeneration: it is much easier to reconstruct what Maria might have said earlier in the novel than in any of Julia's later letters. One gathers from the novel's first letter, for instance, that Maria has been accusing her of inhabiting the position of Smith's splenetic philosopher about the reduction in her circumstances. Julia replies:

> If it be philosophy to feel no violent distress from that change which the ill fortune of our family has made in its circumstances, I do not claim much merit from being that way a philosopher. From my earliest days I found myself unambitious of wealth or grandeur, contented with the enjoyment of sequestered life, and fearful of the dangerous which attend an exalted station (7).

Julia's splenetic philosophy causes her to see through these pretenses to the "real tranquility" she enjoys: she identifies Paris with "tumult" and her new home in the country with "the peaceful, the truly happy scenes" that are formulated against what Hill calls (in her claim that Smith never quite eschewed them or revised them out of his social scientist's account of wealth) the scenes of "commercial busyness"[38] that pose a threat to tranquility that is at all times within our power.[39] In Smith's view, of course, this is perhaps the best decision for the moral, individual actor, but less productive for society as a whole. Julia's plaintive question to Maria at the end of Letter II puts the matter rather starkly: are they happy, she asks, "who can look back on their past life, not as the chronicle of pleasure, but as the record of virtue?" (13)

Julia's relationship with impartial spectation—as opposed to actual spectation of the socially modifying variety—is also established early, at the beginning of the first

letter. The Roubigné household is a place of unsociable silences—Roubigné *père* "broods" in monosyllables (13), greets his wife and child in a fit of pique "without speaking a word" (15), and resists most attempts at conversation, even after his daughter is sure that some kindness she has done him will prompt him to ask "who had trimmed it so nicely?" and thus initiate a conversation (ibid.)—but Julia places Maria less in the place of friend and interlocutor to fill the silences and more as someone who offers the perspective of an outsider a "third person" whose "intervention" will be beneficial for "the members [of a society] who are afraid to think one another's thoughts" (9), as ordinary sociable friends and relatives in domestic situations must do.

The novel's early typing of Julia as a representative of exemplary unsociability carries through to its other major players, especially Montauban. Julia's first characterization of him is itself a piece of social science/economic analysis: "Though, in France, a man of fortune's residence at his country-seat is so unusual, that it might be supposed to enhance the value of such a neighbour," Montauban deliberately chooses the route of residence at his own estate after returning from service in the Spanish military. His purpose is to put the estate's affairs in order—which he in fact does, and in very short order—but afterward, he remains by choice and misanthropy, necessitating the correspondence with Segarva, an old friend and ally *de combat*. Whereas earlier epistolary novels like *Clarissa* might have involved involuntary separation between friends (like the eponymous heroine and Anna Howe), at least part of the reason for that correspondence is quite specifically social: the defense of the heroine's honor via letters that will circulate among members of her circle, turning unwilling isolation into productive correspondence aimed at the heroine's eventual social recuperation—even if this occurs only after death.

The logic of the epistolary looks and behaves much differently in *Julia*: in Montauban's case, he "thinks lightly of the world from principle" (18) and has consciously eschewed it even after his bit of home economics is finished, and this is the reason that he must write to Segarva to long for his presence but never make any deliberate effort to seek it out. Julia holds Montauban's social isolation in contrast to her father's version, which proceeds from "ill-usage" and causes him to hold the world "in disgust" as a natural and unchosen consequence (19). Julia's unsociability, as a dependent daughter of a newly poor man, may not be entirely freely chosen, but her "philosophical" response to it formulates it after the fact as a choice continuous with her moral character. In this respect, Julia and Montauban are both aligned from the beginning with a constellation of loosely related virtues: unsociability, the superior economic prudence not to be taken in by the spectacle of society and its demands to

sympathize with the lifestyles of the rich and powerful, exemplarity and self-possession in the face of the (financially generative, even philanthropic) weaknesses of others.

As was the case for the man of feeling in Mackenzie's earlier novel, whose acts of sensibility and "exquisite fellow-feeling" made for a pleasant reading experience but had little real social or philanthropic effect, Montauban's sensibilities are of the most delicate sort but conspicuously do little actual good. Instead of buying a piece of land from the cash-poor Roubignés that would make his estate whole and enrich them, he designs instead to "flatter" old Monsieur de Roubigné by asking for "leave to open a passage through an old wall, by which it was inclosed, that he might enjoy a continuation of that romantic path" (18), at no financial cost to himself. Although social intercourse between Montauban and the Roubignés opens as a result of Montauban's recognition that it is better not to come to the proud elder Roubigné "offering favours, but by asking for one" (ibid.), the real economic benefit that he might have done the poverty-stricken Roubignés through the purchase of the land is effectively exchanged for a less tangible, "romantic," fundamentally aesthetic benefit that starts with the garden path but comes to encompass Montauban's ultimately destructive aestheticized appreciation of Julia's virtues. Linda Zionkowski's description of the eighteenth-century economy of gifting and favors aligns this type of transaction explicitly with aesthetic approbation; for Smith "the primary components of gift exchange—beneficence and gratitude—engage the approval and sympathy of spectators but still remain tangential to the survival of community life."[40] Indeed, trade, barter, and the impersonal distribution made by the invisible hand are meant to render such acts superfluous in the social scientific sense, substituting a real benefit for something that might be pleasing to the eye, but ultimately does very little to improve anyone's real condition:

> Society may subsist among different men, as among different merchants, from a sense of utility, without any mutual love or affection, and though no man in it should owe any obligation, or be bound in gratitude to any other, it may still be upheld by a mercenary exchange of good offices according to an agreed valuation (TMS 86).

By the time of Smith's 1790 revisions to TMS, however, the pleasant aesthetic approbation of multiple "spectators" (regardless of any good it might or might not do) became straitened to the appreciation of a single, impartial spectator, aligned with the stereotypically "manly" virtues of self-command and magnanimity, which stood in some ways against those of commercial modernity, in precisely the way that Hanley describes. It is difficult not to read Montauban's characterization as addressed

primarily to the impartial spectator/demigod within the breast of "The Character of Virtue," who approves of restraint and uncommunicativeness about one's personal suffering above all, from the act of prudence that dictates his return to his country estate, to the pride and self-command of the former solider that war, "the great school both for acquiring and exercising this species of magnanimity" (239), has instilled in him. Harley's unproductive, feminized sensibilities receive a masculine turn of phrase in Montauban; Julia describes "something hard and unbending in the character of the count," adding that her father "applauds it under the title magnanimity," but that her own "womanish" feelings recoil from it (Mackenzie 19). In fact, when it comes to Montauban, Julia seems to require dividing herself into two persons (as it were): one herself, noticeably feminine, who finds in "an yielding weakness" something more "amiable than the inflexible right"; on the other hand, "it is an act of my reason to approve of the last" while it is her heart that "gives its suffrage to the first [feminine self], without pausing to enquire for a cause" (ibid).

 As I have been describing them, the feminized novels of sociable epistolarity required no such gendered bifurcation in formulating their characters. The authors that Smith mentions in TMS were all best known for their female heroines, from Richardson's Clarissa Harlowe and Pamela Andrews and Marivaux's Marianne to Riccoboni's Fanni Butlerd. But war as the "great school" of magnanimity (TMS 239) rather noticeably excludes women from the ranks of the virtuous—or at least as far as that particular virtue is concerned—and Julia is required to un-woman herself to perceive them. Julia performs this imaginary change of situations haltingly and incompletely throughout the novel, as when upon Montauban's first proposal she "own[s] his virtues" to Maria but is unable to participate on anything but a highly aestheticized, spectatorial level in her assessment of Montauban as a potential future husband (32). She describes his virtues once again of the "unbending kind," and adds that they do "not easily stoop to the opinion of the world" but by the end of the letter has talked herself into esteeming him less "from the preposterous reason, that he loves me when I would not have him" (36-41). Even in the earliest versions of TMS, Smith was contemptuous of "the passion by which Nature unites the two sexes"—or, rather, "all strong expressions of it" which were "upon every occasion indecent" because of the obvious inability of spectators who were necessarily impartial about the object to participate in it (TMS 28). Julia is so impartial that she is impartial even to herself in this instance: she is unable to approve of Montauban's sentiments because a) impartially speaking, she can assign herself no value; and b) she appears to find the expression of strong emotion repugnant. Her absorption of the view of the impartial spectator has become so complete that she truly has learned to regard herself with the kind of ideal indifference that Smith recommends. As Smith's spectator becomes more

impartial with subsequent editions, the problem intensifies. Romantic love, the private and domestic affections, have dropped out almost entirely by the "Character of Virtue," although filial love and duty remain, albeit perhaps more in the breach than in the honoring.

It is ultimately filial love for her father which prompts Julia to accept Montauban's suit, recalling to Maria a memory of "a movement of admiration" for his articulate claim to her "sacred friendship" and the masculine "firmness" of his self-command, which is alone enough to prompt, finally, a well-earned tear of pity from her (58). Still, her approbation is entirely and conspicuously referred to an absent spectator: she exclaims "How happy might this man make another!" but notes her own continuing misery, against her will, reason, and judgment (59). Although Julia's conflict at this moment is often read in the context of *Lounger* 20's admonition against the "rivalship of virtues and duties" and her apparently insufficient trust to the "truths of Reason" over sensibility or sentiment,[41] Julia is not deficient in reason but rather undone by her perfect propriety and referral of her every emotion to the impartial spectator, almost against her own better judgment and certainly against the sociable characteristics associated with her sex. Obtaining the approbation of the impartial spectator here seems to particularly ill-equip one for the performance of the ordinary duties of private life, as it ill-equips Julia to role of wife. Once she marries Montauban, she (who once taught him to do a country dance) is barely able to hold a conversation with him at meals; her thoughts take that particularly dangerous, stoical turn where she finds herself learning "to look on death as a friend" (84).

It is with Montauban's letters that the novel's general criticism of the epistolary form becomes more obvious, however, and acquires an additional gendered dimension. The desired goal of letter writing in Clarissa is to achieve a degree of common consensus, even if it is only achieved by a reading and communal interpretation of her last will and testament.[42] In the affective distribution of her death goods, Clarissa also manages to unite real philanthropy and good for others with the pleasures of spectation for the novel's internal readers, in precisely the way that Montauban does not quite manage it when he trades real social and economic benefits for aesthetic sympathies in the case of Roubigné's real estate. In Mackenzie's novels, the character of virtue, like the impartial spectator himself, is a necessarily singular and set apart creation, markedly unconcerned with his real effects in the sociable sphere. Julia, as we saw, types Montauban as somewhat beyond the ability of the common to appreciate. In his letters to Segarva, this is also how Montauban is eager to portray Julia, and he does so by unsexing her, just as she already unsexed herself to see Montauban. "She has grown up…unschooled in the practices of her sex…those arts of delusion" which are taught "by the society of women of the world" (36), Montauban writes, making an easy

association between women and society. Montauban's epistolary "conversation" with Segarva in this letter is playfully adversarial: he anticipates Segarva's objections as a spectatorial "He" who has previously expressed skepticism of all strong expressions of romantic love. In seeking to make Segarva "know" and "see" (35) Julia as he knows and sees her, Montauban attempts to turn Segarva into yet another impartial spectator, capable of approving of the superiority of his chosen bride against the practical objections of the difference in their ages and fortunes, although the defense is notably not mounted on the strength of his affections, but rather on the grounds of Julia's moral superiority. His incorporation of Segarva's objections is clearly imaginatively reconstructed, a fact on which he remarks himself—"forgive me for supposing you to make them" (37)—and the plaintive note on which he closes the letter—"let me hear then that my Segerva [sic] enjoys it too" (ibid.)—emphasizes the aesthetic dimension of enjoyment, suggesting that Montauban will be pleased with nothing but the approbation of his personally constructed, abstracted spectator. When faced with the reality of Segarva's objections, which appear much later in Letter XX, he repeats his assessment of Julia's ability to stand apart from other "women…whose heads are giddy with the follies of fashion" (70), but fails to answer what are Segarva's real, reasonable arguments against the match, which have far more to do with the state of the bride's affections and her reasons for accepting the match. Confronted with the specter of an actual Segarva with actual reasons to believe that he should disentangle himself from Julia, Montauban resorts to reading "modesty and fear, esteem and gratitude" in the "silent tears" that Julia sheds at their formal engagement (71). His demand is essentially for Segarva to "reverence that reserved, that silent and majestic sorrow, which discovers itself only in the swelling of the eyes, in the quivering of the lips and cheeks, and in the distant, but affecting coldness of the entire behavior" (TMS 25) that he himself reads into Julia's behavior, and which he then references to "the greatest degree of self-government…in which the impartial spectator can entirely enter into them" (25-6). Segarva's implicit, read-between-the-lines suggestion—that "the common and ordinary degree of sensibility" (25) would do just fine for a marriage contract—goes unheeded.

With Montauban and Julia, Mackenzie consciously runs up against the difficulties of novelistic characterization when stoic silence in suffering and magnanimity are the matter of the impartial spectator's approval. Montauban describes himself as unable to get along in society, and conscious of the problem, admits to Segarva that "the little cordialities of life are more frequently in use than its greater and more important duties" (120). But he is never quite able to bring himself to regard them as such, let alone employ them.

The metaphor to which he resorts to demonstrate the point is one of monetary circulation, only underscoring the economic themes of the demands of society and sociality vs. real superiority of character that Julia's initial characterization of both herself and Montauban initially raised:

> Somebody…has compared them to small pieces of coin, which, though of less value than the large, are more current amongst them: but the parallel fails in one respect; a thousand of those *livres* do not constitute a *louis*; and I have known many characters possessed of all that the first could give, whose minds were incapable of the last (ibid.)

In fact, the value of the *livre* in relation to the *louis* fluctuated considerably, but the metaphor is a pun on Montauban's given name, Louis. Montauban is practically the prototype for the "splendid characters in which we observe a great and distinguished superiority above the common level of mankind," which we call "spirited, magnanimous, and high-minded; words which all involve in their meaning a considerable degree of praise and admiration" (TMS 255). His self-regard, because it is directed to a standard well above the common and ordinary, allows us to forgive him his slight overestimation of himself. Montauban's metaphor of a circulation that does not quite obtain and the nature of which cannot really be judged according to common monetary standards of equivalency and exchange highlights the extent to which even Smith struggles with how we should evaluate this kind of character. On the one hand, we admire this kind of character, even when it is coupled to pride and vanity; on the other, "even the extravagant pretensions of the man of real magnanimity, though, when supported by splendid abilities and virtues" do not fool the wisest of men, the most impartial of spectators, whom this man constantly seeks to please (261). On the third hand, "in almost all cases, it is better to be a little too proud, than, in any respect, too humble" (261-2).

As the novel progresses towards its concluding murder-suicide, the problems of characterization as they confront the ideal silence of the impartial spectator become only more pronounced. By the time of Montauban's interception of Julia's letters, these problems are hermeneutic, rehashing (albeit in more deadly form) the skepticism with which people like Henry Fielding greeted the letters of Pamela Andrews. A lack of ordinary sociable commerce in marriage pushes Montauban towards overwrought, sensate interpretations of his wife's tears as they are shed on sheet music and portrait miniatures, and disconnected, ungrammatical words she mutters indistinctly in her sleep; but in the end, Montauban's moody, romantic, singular interpretations extend even to the supposedly sociable, explanatory form of Julia's letters. His perusal of them

becomes an object lesson in what Harkin called, about *The Man of Feeling,* "the failure of sentiment to effect the production of community,"[43] although this time in its most basic and fundamental unit of the domestic couple, a unit of social organization that the sixth revisions to TMS conspicuously ignore.[44] This is a notable revision of the usual outcome of epistolary correspondence in the novels of the prior few decades: in the paradigmatic, Richardsonian examples, the whole of the case, when it is laid out, leads even previously unsympathetic and even physically distant readers to appreciate the justness of the protagonist's cause, as well as the broad appeal of her representation of it to a general society of mostly indifferent observers. Although this sometimes failed in reality, novels like *Clarissa* performed its success within the fiction itself. Montauban's reading of Julia's letters, distinguished already by its clandestine, decidedly non-communal qualities—he claims to reproduce it in its entirety so that Segarva might read it, but does so in a fragmentary way, interspersed with his own judgments—has the air of a foregone conclusion about it. In fact, his sentiments were formed when he first saw Julia's silent but oddly expressive tears on Savillon's portrait. His only consolation is that "it is something to be satisfied of the worst—Enquiry is at an end, and vengeance is the only business I have left" (140). Significantly, although he writes ostensibly seeking Segarva's counsel, he announces at the very beginning of this letter that "Before [Segarva] can answer this—the infamy of your friend cannot be erased, but it shall be washed in blood" (ibid.) Erasure is in fact the mood and substance of the letter, which takes a rather mundane, even inexpressive or excessively formal epistle from Julia to Savillon and twists it until the point that its very "air of prudery" Montauban takes as evidence of the reverse (141). The reading Montauban performs in his letter to Segarva recalls to some extent the unsympathetic, skeptical readings of James, Antony, and Arabella Harlowe in *Clarissa,* with an essential difference: Montauban does not fear the persuasive power of Julia's rhetoric or the sympathetic processes by which spectators will imagine themselves in her terrible situation and become impressed by her coldness and reserve in the midst of passion, but believes that he sees in her Smithian tamping down of passion to the level in which the spectator can approve of it "the trick of voluptuous vice to give pleasure the zest of nicety and reluctance" (ibid.) He misreads with romantic sensibility and the man of magnanimity's utmost concern for his honor what he ought to have seen by the more sociable lights of propriety and with rose-colored glasses of the "private and domestic affections," which would have allowed him to treat his wife conversationally, not with the sterner, silent sentiments of the impartial spectator in mind. Montauban's mind has long been made up before he reads the letter: silent tears are more expressive to him than anything that Julia might say or write in her defense. *Julia de Roubigné's* culmination suggests that the novel's creation of exemplary characters will always be at

loggerheads with its duty to teach us how to act within the ordinary social situations we encounter every day. Letters that ought to be communicative, and ought to teach us about domestic social duties, merely serve to reinforce private sensibilities and unsocial passions in their destructive—but also somehow exemplary—characters. Morality is located somewhere besides the effective use of rhetoric, in other words.

Savillon's planned obsolescence

My reading of *Julia de Roubigné's* unsociability—economic and otherwise—is precisely the opposite of David Marshall's in *The Frame of Art,* where he suggests that Mackenzie and other epistolary novels used the framing device of fictionalized familiar correspondences to "deny the place of their books in the public, commercial sphere of books published for readers."[45] I think Marshall's interpretation does considerable violence to the mixed personal, commercial nature of the correspondence manuals out of which epistolary novels were born,[46] but my primary consideration in this project is in using these novels to read Smith. For Smith's earlier editions of TMS, as I have argued, the sociable, commercial, and sympathetic sentiments are of a piece; I note again as well Hill's argument, namely, that Smith never revised the apparent paradox of the invisible hand out of his work, even as he may have sought to inculcate the inward-turning, non-economic values of the splenetic philosopher in his "Character of Virtue" revisions.

Marshall's argument—that the novel consciously plays with an economic language of commensurability and exchange to comment on the fact that readers are literally purchasing private sentiments—relies mostly on an apparent language of accounting that occurs in some of the letters: Julia writes an "account of correspondence" that finds Maria "deep in [her] debt"; Montauban finds himself "three letters in [Segarva's] debt; yet the account of correspondence used formerly to be in my favor," and so on. More seriously, perhaps, Roubigné and Montauban frame the exchange of Julia as one of obligation and debt. Julia is Roubigné's "last treasure"; the count "knows its value"; Julia understands from this that she is "Montauban's forever" (69). In fact, however, Montauban specifically seeks in his next letter to dismiss the charge that Julia's "hand became rather a debt of gratitude, than a gift of love" as a "deception" by giving Julia back her agency: "If they allow a woman reasonable motives for her attachment, what can be stronger than those sentiments which excite her esteem, and those proofs of them which produce her gratitude?" (71). The alternative for Montauban is that mere affections "degrade us to machines, which are blindly actuated by some uncontrollable power" (ibid.)[47] It is important to Montauban that Julia retain her agency, judgment, reason, and fine character that understands the

worth of another such; if she does not, her choice really does become a matter of him bribing and buying her, of her becoming an objectified machine or easily exchangeable trinket, as he fears in Letter XXXIX (136). The fear that his widely admired virtues "do not impose upon those wise men whose approbation he can only value, whose esteem he is most anxious to acquire" (TMS 261) is the specter that haunts the man of magnanimity, no matter how high his virtues or station; it is not any spectator that he seeks to please, but the discerning, virtuous one. While he is willing to attribute the kind of superior prudence found in the "Character of Virtue" section to Julia, under the heading of "reasonableness," Montauban's fear that commercial transactions have entered the realm of virtuous ones—that Julia really does see herself as an insensate object exchanged for the betterment of her father's financial situation, and therefore cannot admire his virtues as a wife ought—is ultimately the driver of his desire to destroy Julia, and then himself.

This moment, however much it fails by the standards of the soon-to-be-traditional marriage plot, tracks a well-known social transition in the later eighteenth-century, from marriages that were mostly made with prudential motives in mind (such as the one that the Harlowes wish Clarissa to make and which she adamantly resists unto death itself) to ones that were theoretically formed on the basis of esteem, attachment, and romantic love. Deidre Shauna Lynch's account of character argues that the motivation for literary character's inward turn in the Romantic period was a resistance to the idea of a marriage "market." The early nineteenth century novel's heroines performed for younger readers eager to assert the incommensurate and uncommodifiable worth of themselves and their affections the function of sympathetic rebels, which aligns this historical account well with my argument here.[48]

But the character of Savillon, Julia's childhood friend and the man she really wishes to marry, seems (at least at first) to present a possibility for uniting the best part of sentimental aestheticism with beneficial commercial activity. Disinherited in France, he is another eighteenth-century figure potentially isolated on an island (colonial Martinique), where he travels to pursue an apprenticeship in plantation ownership and slaveholding from a wealthy uncle, with possible hopes of inheriting the estate and returning to France to marry where he pleases. His early letters to Beauvaris, a friend and much beloved correspondent back in France proper, are marked out in the novel with a rare editorial aside from Mackenzie's narrator, which reminds us that "story" is not the point of including the letters from Savillon to Beauvaris, but, rather, and once again, "sentiment" (85). In Savillon's particular case, the claim to sentiment in the Smithian tradition—a sensibility well-regulated by the society around him, especially that "society" as manifest in his epistolary interlocutor Beauvaris—makes sense. Beauvaris is the "brother" of Savillon's soul, and their souls "mingle…as with a

part of itself" (86): but significantly, only part. Beauvaris never plays the role of claustrophobic "another self" that Maria, for instance, plays for Julia (8), and there are hints—as there rarely are with the other characters—of actual discussions and disagreements. Conversation with others is more important to the physically isolated Savillon—who has not undertaken his exile out of choice, but necessity—than it is for any of the novel's other silent characters. Savillon describes to Beauvaris the loss of his only other friend on the island "a sort of proxy" for Beauvaris, as a loss of "common language" and "the dearest intercourse of society" (110): what he seems to mean truly is that Beauvaris' letters serve as a proxy for the absent Herbert and Savillon's Harley-like sympathetic interest in the tale of Herbert's suffering.

But Savillon is in key respects not much like Harley at all. Although they both seek fortunes in foreign yet familiar lands (Harley as a Scot in the greater "British" empire that is not quite his own, Savillon as a Frenchman in a French colony whose customs he initially barely recognizes as French), Savillon's efforts are noticeably more fruitful, and it is because of his proper sentiments, not in spite of them. His uncle is at considerable trouble to manage the slaves of his plantation, and one in particular: a man who bears an aspect of "gloomy fortitude" that greatly interests Savillon,[49] but whose "worth [is] less money than almost any other in [his] uncle's possessions" because of he is regarded as intractable (97). Savillon sends for him—Yambu responds to his initial overtures with "an eye of perfect indifference" (98)—but in the end, Savillon wins him over through an expression of sympathy with the man's plight, acquired by working alongside him for an afternoon. The expression of this sympathy takes the curious form of re-establishing the social hierarchies—as opposed to the racialized ones of Martinique, which flattens all prior, complex social arrangements into one of white slavers and black slaves—and puts Yambu, a prince among his own people, back in charge of those who came with him from his own distant nation. Savillon makes his direct appeal to the slaves on these grounds, sentiment and hierarchy united with a defense of "raising sugars for the good of us all" (100) in which one cannot help but hear echoes of Smith's defense of commercial modernity, whose hierarchies and social inequalities he also acknowledges but seems to regard as sometimes beneficial, in a way that has certainly annoyed its share of Marxist critics. It seems to work for Savillon, however: his uncle's "worthless" slave acquires worth by finding a proper and natural place, and the "idea of liberty" that Savillon has sentimentally communicated to them through his own labors and persuasive arts causes them to "double their number" every day (ibid.)

The presence of this subplot in the book is indeed one of sentiment: it bears little on the drama of Montauban and Julia's relationship, but does much to establish Savillon's character. To a modern eye, Savillon's reflections on slavery and sentiment

highlight a degree of callousness and inextricably mixed motives. He gloats that his troupe of slaves under Yambu's command "work with the willingness of freedom, yet are mine with more than the obligation of slavery" (ibid.) and reflects in a highly mercenary way on the economic failures of "the whole plan of Negro servitude," in which "it would astonish" Beauvaris to learn how many slaves were idle and inactive due to illness and injury (101). *Wouldn't it be much better simply to replace them with cattle or other capital or technological improvements?* Savillon wonders out loud. He catches himself "speaking as a merchant" and shifts to speaking "as a man" (ibid.), giving full vent to moral frustration as the thought of "the many thousands of my fellow-creatures groaning under servitude and misery!" (ibid.) Here follows Savillon's taxonomy of the soul of the slaveholder, which closely follows Smith's in the *Lectures on Jurisprudence*: whatever its economic inefficiencies, children are taught to love command "for the sake of commanding; to beat and torture, for pure amusement" (ibid.), which needs naturally to the state of Martinique. Savillon sentimentally mourns the situation but finds that there is little he might do about it: his uncle would condemn him for a "romantic" (ibid.) His final argument against the institution is a sentimental one: recalling that his old friend Roubigné was abandoned in his troubles by all but his faithful (paid) domestics, Savillon remarks on the loss of the "connection" and support that the slaveholder forgoes when his relationships are all involuntary.

Savillon is throughout a character who cannot quite seem to decide whether he belongs to the sociable, commercial mode, or the brooding, moral one that in earlier drafts Smith condemned; he seeks social intercourse, uses sympathy with a slave to achieve the commercial end of improving Yambu's "price some hundreds of livres" (98), but also admits to Beauvaris that he sometimes sits alone, growing sick of the world, hating the part that he is "obliged to perform in it" (102). He vacillates between the character of the poor man's son and that of the splenetic philosopher, and it is his prospect as overseer (a kind of literalized spectator in the miserable economy of slavery) that acquaints him with the contradictions and untenable nature of his position. If it is not quite true, as Marshall suggests, that his sympathies for Martinique's slaves result in nothing[50], his compromises with his own, nightmare version of commercial modernity where everyone has a quantifiable value are schizophrenic and partial and do not do much to ensure either his tranquility or prosperity.[51] The logic of Savillon's epistolarity begins in involuntary separation and longing for life and acquaintances back in France, but ends—as Julia's and Montauban's do—in an acceptance of solitude and even a looking forward, "without emotion" (148), in a way sure to please the impartial spectator, to his own death. His last letter adopts a more Montauban- and Julia-esque attitude towards his suffering,

speaking of the "necessity of a manly composure" and a "stifled sigh" that is the "last sacrifice" of his weakness (148).

Savillon's return to his deserted island—this time an exile by choice—and his presence in the novel becomes increasingly typed not just as absent, but anachronistic. Julia's weeping over the miniature that once held for her the real and immediate presence of Savillon—"he is gazing thus on the resemblance of one, whose ill-fated rashness has undone herself and her" (132)—turns in Savillon's own hands to "memorial," (148) a will that bequeaths his fortune to a woman who will not be alive to inherit it once he is dead, perhaps the book's closing reference to its differences with *Clarissa*. Savillon's final letter to Herbert, in its request that the latter seek out a certain merchant in London to settle some of Savillon's affairs, looks back to a time, which already seems to belong to a prior century, when a banker "was not altogether a man of business" and gives Herbert the task of inventing a sympathetic, sentimental story about his return to Martinique to please the man (149). "It is peculiar to a misery like mine to be incapable of being told," he says at the end of the narrative of his misery (ibid). The conventional wisdom about Mackenzie's *oeuvre*, and about *Julia* in particular, is that it "is less a glance back to Rousseau than a forward glimpse" to later novels of disintegration and profound self-alienation, like James Hogg's *The Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (xxiv), but it is Julia herself who points out another problem of the novel in which she finds herself: "Comedies and romances, you know, always end with a marriage, because, after that, there is nothing to be said" (116).

The novel's persistent discourse on what can and cannot be told (especially in letters) is also the site of its engagement with Smith, who became increasingly committed to the silence that best pleases the impartial spectator throughout his life and work, culminating in the 1790 edition of TMS. *Julia's* version of the "half-legitimation" of the sentimental novel's pleasures is an epistolary format that fails to fulfill its function as a fully socialized, public discourse, but not because its characters engage in a mendacious form of self-advocacy masquerading as something else, of the sort of which Pamela Andrews was accused. Rather, its highly exemplary, even noble figures point to a deeper problem in using novels and the sympathies that they produced as socially productive, a contradiction with which Mackenzie's essays continued to struggle throughout the next several decades. The silence and stifling that the most perfect Scottish morality seemed to demand could not be characterologically socialized through any form of first-person discourse, let alone one associated as closely as the epistolary was with business and markets through the novel's early association with letter writing manuals. It would be up to free indirect discourse and its most notable practitioners, Jane Austen among them, to reinvent a method of

narration that could speak sympathetically about characters who were extraordinary and sociable both, without the pregnant silences of *Julia*. Austen frequently did so by creating failed epistolary novels-within-novels, as I argue next.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

[1] As in previous chapters, subsequent in-text references to *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* refer to page numbers in the Glasgow edition (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 1982), and are where necessary denominated TMS to distinguish them from in-text references to Mackenzie's work.

[2] Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001; original edition 1957). It has become so fashionable to re-invent the study of the novel that Watt inaugurated that my in-text summary of the wrongness of his position requires an obligatory footnote correction. Watt, of course, was not as naïve as to believe that the novel was perfectly realistic; he invents instead the category of "formal realism," which encompasses the novel's convention for giving its characters proper names and a language "more referential" to that spoken in the time and period in which they were written. It also seems to include the novel's sometimes dogged insistence on its own reality, which was conventional, not mimetic. Watt also notes that Defoe and Richardson did not discover these conventions so much as they applied them "much more completely than had bee done before" (32-33).

[3] This observation appears in part in Rae Greiner's *Sympathetic Realism in Nineteenth-Century British Fiction* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), which argues that Smith seems to be fairly uninterested in the "real" things that other people might be feeling, as he regards them as wholly inaccessible (14).

[4] I owe the term "rise of fictionality" to Catherine Gallagher's essay of the same name (in The *Novel, Vol. I: History, Geography, and Culture*; ed. Franco Moretti; Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006; 337-363). Gallagher argues that the incompleteness of fictional characters, far from inhibiting our sympathies with them, rather causes us to construct ourselves as ontologically and contrastingly "complete," real and not bounded by our narratives (356-7).

[5] The interesting history of the Augustan anti-rhetorical movement is outside the scope of both this chapter and mostly outside the scope of this project, but for a specific discussion of how it was taken up in one of the novels I wrote about earlier in this project, see W.B. Carnochon's classic *Lemuel Gulliver's Mirror for Man* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), especially his second chapter, "The Context of

Satiric Theory." Carnochon has issues with the term "anti-rhetorical movement," but usefully summarizes it as the tendency of Augustans to believe that first-person rhetoric of the passionate sort "cheats" the hearer's (or, as was more like the case, the reader's) faculties of judgment (31) and reads satire as a form of distancing that makes way for judgment even as it concerns the passions.

[6] Frances Ferguson rather famously called free indirect discourse the novel's one formal innovation. The full context of her remarks is worth noting, for it bears on the question of Smith's implication in the development of this form. Citing Smith, she notes that the communal nature of the voice of free indirect discourse is allied with gossip and community consensus, makes space for characters like Emma Woodhouse, who is often incorrect but also the heroine of her eponymous novel, because we realize that the judgment of the community prefigures and socializes her own transformation. Ferguson also notes that the formal innovation "shares a deep affinity with the basic procedures of the social sciences" ("Jane Austen, *Emma,* and the Impact of Form," *MLQ,* 61.1, 2000), 165, a subject that I will address at least in part at a later point in this chapter.

[7] Greiner 41. Greiner's historicist reading of FID differs considerably from the usual interpretation, which she admits ("FID is commonly thought to pull us more closely into characters so that we can see ourselves reflected in them and thus better understand what makes them tick" [40]). Her claim is that Smith's version of sympathy, and its filtering into the general cultural zeitgeist, influenced the development of FID and thus requires a rethinking of what FID is and is meant to do for the reader. The argument is persuasive, if occasionally question-begging, for that reason: although there is little direct or tangible evidence that Smith's version of sympathy had larger literary impact, FID indeed does not seem to involve the head-prying function that many critics have attributed to it over the years, and it is at least plausible that Smith's influential work of public morality had a wider if more diffuse reach than in moral philosophers' circles.

[8] Greiner 43.

[9] This is similar to the function of community and gossip in Ferguson (2000), 163.

[10] Franco Moretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for Literary History* (Brooklyn, NY: Verso, 2005), 15.

[11] See Nicola Watson's *Revolution and the Form of the British Novel, 1790-1825: Intercepted Letters, Interrupted Seductions* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon, 1994). Watson makes a similar point to the one that this project's coda will (albeit about different literary texts), which is that the death of the epistolary requires its conscious and continuous burying and denigration in later novels (21-22).

[12] By the time of his 1759 *Lectures on Rhetoric and* Belles Lettres, Blair was already taking issue with the condemnation of novels on distinctly Smithian terms, calling the form useful "for conveying instruction, for painting human life and manners, for showing the errors into which we are betrayed by our passions" (Vol. II, 303), although he was careful to distinguish them from "romances of knight errancy" which could not, as the novel did, capture the obligation of everyday life. Specifically, he praises Richardson "the Author of Clarissa, and of very considerable capacity and genius" (304). If Johnson's similar (and of course highly influential) *Rambler* 4 was any indication, much of this early praise for novels relied on distinguishing the good from the bad. Johnson admits that "familiar histories" may be more useful as moral documents than either actual works of morality or the romances of old, which were not close enough to real life experience to produce moral congruities, but highlights the possible danger as too real a realism: "It is therefore not a sufficient vindication of a character, that it is drawn as it appears, for many characters ought never to be drawn; nor of a narrative, that the train of events is agreeable to observation and experience, for that observation which is called knowledge of the world, will be found much more frequently to make men cunning than good. The purpose of these writings is surely not only to show mankind, but to provide that they may be seen hereafter with less hazard; to teach the means of avoiding the snares which are laid by Treachery for Innocence, without infusing any wish for that superiority with which the betrayer flatters his vanity; to give the power of counteracting fraud, without the temptation to practise it; to initiate the youth by mock encounters in the art of necessary defense, and to increase prudence without impairing virtue."

[13] Maureen Harkin, "Mackenzie's Man of Feeling: Embalming Sensibility" (*ELH*, vol. 61 no. 2, 1994, pp. 317-340, 337). See also note 2, which quotes TMS: "Humanity consists merely in... exquisite fellow-feeling.... The most humane action requires no self-denial, no self-command, no great exertion... They consist only in doing what this exquisite sympathy would of its own accord prompt us to do" (190-1).

[14] See, for instance, John Mullan, "The Language of Sentiment: Hume, Smith and Henry Mackenzie," in *The History of Scottish Literature*, ed. Andrew Hook, Vol. 2 (Aberdeen: Aberdeen Univ. Press, 1987) and *Sentiment and Sociability: The Language of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1988); Nicholas Phillipson, "Adam Smith as Civic Moralist," in *Wealth and Virtue: The Shaping of Political Economy in the Scottish Enlightenment*, ed. Istvan Hont and Michael Ignatieff (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1983); and John Dwyer, *Virtuous Discourse: Sensibility and Community in Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, Ltd., 1987).

[15] The degree to which the terms "sensibility," "sentiment" and "moral sentiment" were used in interchangeable ways varied considerably across authors. Mackenzie, as Susan Manning points out, has a tendency to mix them rather freely. See her introduction to *Julia de Roubigné* (Edinburgh: Tuckwell Press, 1999), note 13 (xvi). Smith, according to Eric Schleisser, was more careful to distinguish the two (*Adam Smith: Systematic Thinker and Public Philosopher,* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2017), 56.

[16] In her introduction to the only currently in print edition of *Julia,* and in an article that expands on this introduction, "Julia de *Roubigné:* Last Gasp or First Fruits?" (*Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies,* 24.2, Sept. 2001, 161-73).

[17] See Manning's introduction to *Julia de Roubigné,* where she remarks that the letters "fail to converge in an agreed or shareable version of reality" (ibid. xix). My previous chapter argued that Richardson launches a more comprehensive defense of epistolarity and rhetoric in *Clarissa* partially in response to the bifurcated response to Pamela Andrews' sympathetic qualities.

[18] See also note 6. "The collective force of communal gossip achieves its force by taking over the internal vocal chords of individuals without making them available as individuals" (Ferguson 162).

[19] Barbara M. Benedict, *Framing Feeling: Sentiment and Style in English Prose Fiction, 1745-1800* (New York: AMS Press, 1994), 126.

[20] This is perhaps a good point for a reminder that Hugh Blair, an important successor to Adam Smith on the question of rhetoric and the arts, thought it patently absurd that in epistolary productions, fictional or non-, that "we find the whole Heart of the Author unveiled," although he praised them for showing the "character" of a writer at his or "ease," as much as that was possible in a rhetorical performance (Vol. II, 297).

[21] 'Henry Mackenzie' in *Lives of the British Novelists,* Vol. I; reprinted in *Sir Walter Scott on Novelists and Fiction,* ed. Ioan Williams (London: Routledge, 1968), 77.

[22] See note 12 for the ways in which Blair's and Johnson's defenses of the novel were formulated on the grounds of romance's obsolescence; this is also Gallagher's argument about *The Female Quixote* and its romance-reading heroine in *Nobody's Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace 1670-1820* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994). Mackenzie himself indulged this tendency in *The Man of Feeling,* where Harley encounters a character whose uncritical reading of romances leads her to ruin at the hands of an unscrupulous lover and, inevitably, into prostitution. Mackenzie's case proves something of the exception that proves the rule, however, as the purpose of Charlotte Lennox's novel was the legitimization of its own genre over an earlier one that it hoped to supersede. Mackenzie's project was somewhat different,

as, by Harkin's account at least, he was not attempting to legitimize the novel but point to its limitations for right action and formulating character. In that case, it hardly matters whether the subject of Miss Atkins' fanciful reading practice was a novel or a romance.

[23] See also D.D. Raphael, "The Impartial Spectator" in *Essays on Adam Smith,* ed. Andrew Skinner and Thomas Wilson (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1975), 89-90.

[24] John Dwyer, *Virtuous Discourse: Sensibility and Community in at Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Edinburgh, UK: John Donald Publishers, Ltd., 1987), 170. Much of the argument of this section closely follows Dwyer's account in *Virtuous Discourse*: an account that I think has been sadly neglected since the book's publication. The reasons for this neglect are likely complex but almost certainly have something to do with the famous Das Adam Smith Problem of nineteenth-century German scholars, who could hardly believe that the Adam Smith who wrote what was by their lights the textbook account of selfish enterprise was the selfsame author of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments.* While of course—equally famously—it turned out that they hadn't really read TMS thoroughly enough to see the obvious congruities, an alarming amount of Smith scholarship has since been devoted to the proposition of Smith's eternal sameness and consistency, as Vivienne Brown points out and critiques in her *Adam Smith's Discourse: Canonicity, Commerce, and Conscience* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

[25] V. Hope, "Smith's Demigod," *Philosophers of the Scottish Enlightenment,* ed. V. Hope (Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 1984), 161.

[26] Lisa Hill, "'The Poor Man's Son' and the Corruption of Our Moral Sentiments: Commerce, Virtue and Happiness in Adam Smith" (*Journal of Scottish Philosophy*, 15.1, March 2017, 9-25).

[27] Ryan Patrick Hanley, *Adam Smith and the Character of Virtue* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 99.

[28] Hill 11. In contrast to both Hanley and Brown (1994), Hill's reading of the poor man's son anecdote suggests "that there are unresolved tensions around this issue in Smith's thought that do not seem to be resolvable without either an unwarranted degree of logical reconstruction or a determined neglect of some important passages…these passages are not easily dismissed as extraneous or inconsistent with the general trend of Smith's thinking on the topic, but rather, are substantially representative of it" (9).

[29] Ibid. 9. Hill's comments here align in interesting ways with Ferguson's in her essay on *Emma,* where she remarks that free indirect discourse adopts the style of the social sciences.

[30] I borrow this formulation from Maria Pia Paganelli's "The Moralizing Role of Distance in Adam Smith: *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* as Possible Praise of Commerce" (*History of Political Economy* 42.3, 2010, 425-441). Paganelli notes that the moral danger of Smith's often rather positive view of commerce is that it seems to encourage us to sympathize up, with the trinkets of the rich, rather than sympathizing down, with the plight of the poor.

[31] Dwyer 163.

[32] *The Works of Henry Mackenzie* (based on the 1808 edition), ed. Susan Manning (London: Routledge/Thommes Press), Vol. VI, 181.

[33] All subsequent in-text references are to *Julia de Roubigné.*, ed. Susan Manning (Edinburgh, UK: Tuckwell Press Ltd., 1999).

[34] Rather notoriously, people were shocked to meet the real Mackenzie behind the equally melancholic and romantic "editor" of *The Man of Feeling,* who had been dubbed—of course—"the man of feeling." Mackenzie was in real life a practical businessman, a sportsman, and a jovial companion, according to Walter Scott (*The Journal of Walter Scott,* ed. W.E.K. Anderson [Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1972], 26), and did not do much to earn his sentimental sobriquet.

[35] Richardson, *Clarissa* 36.

[36] As Juliet Shields points out—albeit about *The Man of Feeling*—Mackenzie on the other hand was clear to differentiate "the appreciation of virtue from virtuous action": the aesthetic on the one hand, at least when it came to art and novels, and the community-building, beneficially philanthropic action on the other (*Sentimental Literature and Anglo-Scottish Identity, 1745-1820;* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 74.

[37] "The savages in North America, we are told, assume upon all occasions the greatest indifference, and would think themselves degraded if they should ever appear in any respect to be overcome, either by love, or grief, or resentment. Their magnanimity and self-command, in this respect, are almost beyond the conception of Europeans" (205). Smith does go on to add that, "Before we can feel much for others, we must in some measure be at ease ourselves" (ibid.), a stance that seems to inform his comments on the novel earlier in the text. It is novels, after all, that tutor out this stoical apathy. In the case of Bill Annesly, it is not quite explicitly novels that provide him with the perfect combination of feeling much for others and little for himself, but it is a program of literature and rehabilitation within his domestic family circle.

[38] Hill 12.

[39] For Smith, happiness, tranquility, and a certain stagnation or silence seem to be always of a piece, perhaps a commentary on his own, often sequestered existence (he seemingly automatically refused David Hume's frequent suggestion that he should

travel across the Firth from Kirkcaldy to Edinburgh). He writes frequently in TMS of the fact that unhappiness often derives from the inability "to sit still and to be contented." Furthermore, it is not 'always certain that, in the splendid situation which we aim at, those real and satisfactory pleasures can be enjoyed with the same security as in the humble one which we are so very eager to abandon" (149).

[40] Linda Zionkowski, *Women and Gift Exchange in Eighteenth-Century Fiction: Richardson, Burney, Austen* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 12.

[41] Mackenzie, *Works*, 181.

[42] Zionkowski notes the economic weight of epistolary address in Clarissa's will and how it overturns traditional patriarchal family structures by forcing the male members of the Harlowe family to respond and imitate her own self-characterizations, even as they are forced to accept her money: "Rather than remaining an object whose exchange solidifies relationships among men and reproduces their social power, Clarissa establishes herself as a participant in the 'skillful game' of giving, and thus forces the other players to reconsider the identities that they themselves inhabit" (55-6). Although this moral didactic role is purchased, of course, at the cost of her own life, her letters and will survive her and continue to provide their intended lesson and character model for others.

[43] Harkin 319.

[44] Later in his non-fictional career, Mackenzie was to define heterosexual, companionate marriage as the fundamental unit upon which all societies were built (Dwyer 162).

[45] David Marshall, *The Frame of Art: Fictions of Aesthetic Experience, 1750-1815* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 130.

[46] See my previous chapter, and also Eve Tavor Bannet's *Empire of Letters: Letter Manuals and Transatlantic Correspondence,* 1680-1820 (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

[47] The language recalls in interesting and surprising ways the notion of the invisible hand, which seems to move us almost against our will towards the betterment of the social condition. Automation is what Montauban seems to resist.

[48] Deidre Shauna Lynch, *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture, and the Business of Inner Meaning* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

[49] There are strong echoes in this episode of Smith's respect for rank over race, as expressed in Book V: "There is not a negro from the coast of Africa who does not, in this respect, possess a degree of magnanimity which the soul of his sordid master is too often scarce capable of conceiving. Fortune never exerted more cruelly her empire over mankind, than when she subjected those nations of heroes to the refuse of the

jails of Europe, to wretches who possess the virtues of neither of the countries which they come from, nor of those which they go to, and whose levity, brutality, and baseness, so justly expose them to the contempt of the vanquished" (206-7).

[50] Marshall 144.

[51] This was also true for Harley in *The Man of Feeling*. As much as Mackenzie appears to condemn the trickery and self-serving baseness of the commercial society into which sensitive Harley enters, Harley's moral isolation from it and the splenetic philosophy that he adopts in relation to it also does little conspicuous good, and is really no alternative at all.

Coda: Austen's Averted Epistolary Novels

>"'Strange if it would!' cried Marianne. "What have wealth or grandeur to do with happiness?'
>"'Grandeur has but little,'" said Elinor, "'but wealth has much to do with it.'"
>
>"Marianne's abilities were, in many respects, quite equal to Elinor's. She was sensible and clever; but eager in everything; her sorrows, her joys, could have no moderation. She was generous, amiable, interesting: she was every thing but prudent."[1]

Sense and Sensibility began its life as an epistolary novel called *Elinor and Marianne*, principally a correspondence between its two eponymous sisters, drafted around 1795. Two years later, it was redrafted into something nearer to the text published in 1811. We know this, fittingly, from letters: Jane Austen's to her sister Cassandra, and another from her niece Caroline Austen to James Edward Austen Leigh.[2] Austen's correspondence, especially with Cassandra Austen, was voluminous and persisted throughout her lifetime.

Despite her typically prodigious eighteenth-century correspondence habits, and the fact that much of her juvenilia began in epistolary novel form, Austen's six major novels are more often read as epistolary foreclosures: deliberate challenges, in fact, to the social wholesomeness of the novel-in-letters form. The most notable and comprehensive of these readings is still Nicola J. Watson's in *Revolution and the Form of the British Novel, 1790-1825*. She is particularly focused on *Emma*, which she notes has thus far "proved highly resistant to an explicitly political reading," but which she sees as an effort to indict "clandestine correspondence," valorizing the "circuit of the 'Highbury gossips'" and their collectivized, public forms of knowledge-making and interpretation over the scandals, rumors, and secretive letters exchanged between Jane Fairfax and Frank Churchill in particular, which she reads as an extended anti-Jacobin, post-French Revolution plot of seduction averted and suppressed.[3] In this last interpretation in particular, she follows Mary Favret's treatment of the post office in *Emma* as a type of alternate omniscient narrator, in competition with Austen herself for the role of tale teller and social commentator.[4]

There are good reasons—as I argued in an earlier part of this project—to resist identifying the third person narrator of free indirect discourse with "omniscience" or to even regard omniscience as a desirable narrative end for which there ought to be stiff competition. Nonetheless, Watson's and Favret's readings stand in a long tradition of noticing that letters tend to fare badly in Austen, and, indeed, after 1790 in novels, generally.

But they are worth one more look in Austen, at least to conclude this particular project, because of another well-known tradition in Austen interpretation: deciphering her engagement with the moral philosophy and economics of Adam Smith. Peter Knox-Shaw's *Jane Austen and the Enlightenment* is the most comprehensive study to argue for the fingerprints of the Scottish skeptical tradition on Austen's novels, but hardly the only attempt.[5]

The larger arc of Watson's narrative traces Austen's apparent contempt for letters—and her desire to incorporate them into a more public and sociable discourse—to anti-French sentiments, a trope that Henry Mackenzie seems to anticipate almost before it enters public consciousness in his novel about a seduction plot that hardly involves any seduction at all. This is certainly a possibility, even as it rehearses a debate that Knox-Shaw's study seeks to close: the question of Austen's own political feelings and opinions. Knox-Shaw argues that Austen was neither a conservative nor a Jacobin sympathizer, but a skeptical liberal in the Scottish tradition, and cannot be read otherwise.

My purpose in this short coda is far simpler than adjudicating that quarrel, or even "solving" the problem of letters in Austen's novels in general. Rather, I want to re-read the debate about wealth and virtue, sense and sensibility, Elinor and Marianne, onto the question of letters and sociability in Austen's first published novel.

I noted elsewhere the Smithian terms of a curious debate that occurs in the middle of the novel;[6] but it is worth recalling here, at least in brief. Edward Ferrars, Elinor Dashwood's prospective *beau* and subject of much speculation in the house of the Dashwoods' wealthy benefactors the Middletons, has finally arrived at the Dashwoods' new residence to pay a long-obligated visit. Mrs Dashwood, who is still thinking of him as a prospect for Elinor, opens a conversation about his future plans, or, more to the point, his family's plans for him. Edward speaks of his abhorrence of public life, his disdain for personal "greatness," which the romantic Marianne seizes upon to ask her famous rhetorical question: "What have wealth or grandeur to do with happiness?" (78).

Elinor's retort, that grandeur may have little to do with it but wealth a great deal with it, is not allowed to stand for long, at least not as a defense of the virtues of the pursuit of wealth (at least as two young, unmarried women might reasonably pursue it in Regency England). As it turns out, Marianne's "competence" of "about eighteen

hundred or two thousand a year" is equal to exactly half of Elinor's notion of wealth. Marianne goes onto defend her figure according to the standard of living at the family seat of her own potential lover, John Willoughby, a transparent ruse through which Elinor—by way of the narrator—sees straight through: "she smiled again, to hear her sister describing so accurately their future expenses at Combe Magna" (78-9).

The sentence is an example of classic Austenian narration, partially inside and partially outside of the character it delineates, describing Elinor as a spectator would and then revealing the cause of her smile by tripping delicately into Elinor's ironic consciousness of Marianne's motivations, a fellow observer's consciousness that the reader now partially shares. Elinor's superior prudence, as it is on display in her moderated good sense about wealth—not too much, not too little—is underscored by her relationship to the narrator of free indirect discourse, who invites readers to see and think along with Elinor. Readers—already observers in the text, and trained to regard Marianne as flighty and imprudent—very naturally adopt the subject position of Elinor, but also feel validated by the more universal, communal voice of the narrator, which has to some extent already condoned Elinor's good judgment and acquitted it of anything too sharp or unjust.

Marianne's preferred form of self-expression, on the other hand, is the letter. Watson notes that we never actually see any of Marianne's letters to Willoughby, as she slaves over them in London; the novel "will favour the 'setting' of the letter over its content; that is to say, it will largely erase the expression of private feeling, and will do so by considering the letter solely as it physically enters social circulation."[7] In the context of the novel's discussion of wealth and virtue, Marianne's letter writing activity is her pursuit of wealth (or a mere competence, as she would have it). This is not to say that she does not feel affection for Willoughby, but—as Elinor's commentary makes clear—she also, like a certain other Austenian heroine, does seem to fall in love with the house and grounds at the same time as the man himself. A central part of the story of Elinor's growing worries about the relationship between her sister and Willoughby involves Marianne's illicit, scandalous excursion to tour Willoughby's estate at Allenham, which results in the following report to Elinor:

> Perhaps, Elinor, it was rather ill-judged in me to go to Allenham; but Mr. Willoughby wanted particularly to shew me the place; and it is a charming house I assure you.—There is one remarkably pretty sitting room up stairs; of a nice comfortable size for constant use, and with modern furniture it would be delightful (59).

Marianne's artistic, romantic, and—it must be said, sympathetic—imagination does not stop at this bare description, however. She continues to elaborate on the property in a way that puts herself more directly in the scene:

> It is a corner room, and has windows on two sides. On one side you look across the bowling-green, behind the house to a beautiful hanging wood, and on the other you have a view of the church and village, and beyond them, of those fine bold hills that we have so often admired. I did not see it to advantage, for nothing could be more forlorn than the furniture,— but if it were newly fitted up—a couple of hundred pounds, Willoughby says, would make it one of the pleasantest summer-rooms in England (ibid.)

Marianne's letters are effectively a pursuit of this highly particularized and imaginative scene of apparent tranquility and repose: but Marianne's labors themselves are typed in terms of "alacrity" and "eager rapidity" once she arrives in London and has access to a post that does not travel under Sir John Middleton's prying eyes (138-9). Later, as her efforts yield no response from the man who would help Marianne access this vision, her efforts become noticeably more physically and psychically draining:

> Marianne, only half dressed, was kneeling against one of the window-seats for the sake of all the little light she could command from it, and writing as fast as a continual flow of tears would permit her…It was some minutes before she could go on with her letter, and the frequent bursts of grief which still obliged her, at intervals, to withhold her pen, were proof enough of her feeling how more than probably it was that she was writing for the last time to Willoughby (155-6).

Marianne, as I have noted elsewhere, maps well in this respect onto the character of the "poor man's son" in TMS's famous invisible hand anecdote.[8] Like Marianne, his imaginative sympathies with the rich cause him to pursue, at the expense of "more fatigue of body and more uneasiness of mind than he could have suffered throughout the whole of his life from the want of" the coveted objects of his imagination (TMS 183). For his pursuit of "wealth and greatness," which he imaginatively recreates out of his sympathetic (but incorrect) vision of the "ease" of the rich, he "sacrifices a real tranquility hat is at all times in his power" (ibid.) Elinor's and Marianne's discussion of wealth and competence makes this fact plain and clear up front, in typically frank Austenian accounting practices: the two thousand a year that Marianne craves corresponds exactly with what Colonel Brandon, her other potential lover, happens to

have from his own, less glamorous estate per year. Like the poor man's son, Marianne's letter-writing labors have a certain circular quality about them: she ends up where she might have begun in the first place, if only she had had the self-awareness to see it.

The relationship between Marianne and Willoughby has been almost entirely characterized thus far in terms of their mutual aesthetic sympathies: they appreciate the same plays, the same poems, the same architecture, the same wild and unsuppressed nature (viewed, of course, from the ease and comfort of a tastefully and expensively decorated bower), which stands as shorthand for their romantic excesses. At her first encounter with Willoughby, Marianne's "imagination was busy, her reflections were pleasant, and the pain of a sprained ancle was disregarded" (37). Her imaginative sympathies with what it would be like to be Willoughby's bride, to participate continually in this circuit of mutual aesthetic appreciation and improvement, carries her through most of the rest of the novel, generating most of the movement of its plot. It is Marianne's desire to see Willoughby again that removes the Dashwood sisters to London, the scene of her frantic correspondence and disappointment; it prompts Colonel Brandon to tell his story of the two woeful Elizas; it carries them back again to the Palmers' estate at Cleveland, which is close enough by Willoughby's seat at Combe Magna that Marianne can retire to its Grecian temple, not even for one longing look at Willoughby's home and what she might have enjoyed with him there, but the merest "*fancy* that from [the summits of nearby hills] Combe Magna might be seen" (264, emphasis mine).

Smith's passage from TMS takes, of course, the unexpected turn of fully copping to all of the personal moral peril entailed in the pursuit of wealth, but then associating this "abstract and philosophical view" with spleen, or "the time of sickness of low spirits" in which the objects that we have, like Marianne, pursued with such wheel spinning vigor, present themselves in the true light of the "imposition" that they are on our sympathetic faculties (TMS 183). Marianne's twisted ankle and initial sight of the actual embodied Willoughby having apparently been not quite enough to trigger this more realistic view, it takes her desire to imagine herself seeing Combe Magna from the prospect of a distant mountain view to bring on the sickness and "splenetic philosophy" she requires for moral reform (ibid). In TMS, Smith goes slightly further than this, even, for he is willing to declare that, "it is well that nature imposes upon us in this manner" (ibid.) Our imaginative sympathies are what motivate us to "cultivate the ground, to build houses, to found cities and commonwealths, and to invent and improve all the sciences and arts, which ennoble and embellish human life" and, most famously of all, "make nearly the same distribution of the necessaries of life, which would have been made, had the earth been divided into equal portions among all its inhabitants" (183-4). Edward's reply to Marianne's comment about wealth and grandeur and what she would do with her fortune—"What magnificent orders would

travel from this family to London…What a happy day for booksellers, for music-sellers, and print-shops!" (79)—rather confirms Smith's assessment (or at the very least Austen's familiarity with his theories of wealth and the sympathetic imagination).

But what enables all of this wealth generation for the nation of booksellers and music-sellers is Marianne's idea of marrying into Willoughby's grandeur. The price of her sympathetic imagination is her labors at her letters. Less obviously, the price of the novel—of its generative action, of the plot that propels it through to its conclusion—is Marianne's labored letters and what they symbolize: her unsettled body and mind, her restless sympathetic imagination, tamed only in the end by illness to realize that her repose was at all times already within her grasp. But just as without nature's imposition, the arts "which ennoble and embellish human life" would cease to exist, Marianne's correspondence with Willoughby enables this particular art form. Elinor, for all of her superior prudence and the apparent approbation of the narrator, fails to generate plot in precisely the way that the splenetic philosopher fails to generate wealth. In Edward Ferrars, she meets her twin in unimaginativeness. "Remember, Marianne," he reminds us,

> I have no knowledge of the picturesque, and I shall offend you by my ignorance and want of taste if we come to particulars. I shall call hills step, which ought to be bold; surfaces strange and uncouth, which ought to be irregular and rugged; and distant objects out of sight, which ought only to be indistinct through the soft medium of a hazy atmosphere (83).

Little danger of Edward imagining himself taking the prospect of the Dashwood's cottage on some distant hill, or of Elinor approving of such a view. Their mutual good sense (Edward's folly with Lucy Steele having been safely put down to a youthful indiscretion) causes them to value everything exactly for what it is, including each other. They are in little danger of triggering Smith's TMS warning that "all strong expressions" of the passions, but especially the ones "between persons in whom its most complete indulgence is acknowledged by all laws" are thoroughly repugnant and should not be drawn or even mentioned (TMS 28).

In my last chapter, I argued that what applied to these strong expressions of romantic love in Smith's first drafts of TMS came more broadly to apply to all characters of superior virtue in his sixth revision. Elinor's alignment with "superior prudence"—although it once again feminizes what I argued became a masculine virtue in the sixth revision—inheres in her silences and spectatorship and is formalized in her alignment with the impartial collectivity of free indirect discourse. But just as this kind of superior character proved economically non-generative in *Julia de Roubigné,* Elinor's and Edward's romance generates little of its own plot, even for all that it is thwarted by

Edward's promises to Lucy Steele. Elinor's role is to endure in silence until Lucy changes her mind and transfers her affections to Edward's brother Robert. It is Marianne's pursuit of her imaginative sympathies through sociable letters—for all that they fail on one level—that keeps in continual motion the industry of the Austen plot.

Their existence but simultaneous opacity (to the reader, at least) preserves Marianne for her eventual redemption, figured late in the novel as passive silence ("she said little…and though a sigh sometimes escaped her, it never passed away without the atonement of a smile" [300]) and, curiously, as reading. "By reading only six hours a-day, I shall gain in the course of a twelvemonth a great deal of instruction which I now feel myself to want," she declares to Elinor in the short space after her recovery but before she is wed to Colonel Brandon (301). Marianne becomes a silent reader and a muted writer in a moral redemption left open to her because we have never seen her extravagant correspondence with Willoughby.

But the ambiguity that I described for TMS in my last chapter—one that critics who are less insistent on seeing perfect consistency in Smith's work, or even within one of Smith's work increasingly note—persists in *Sense and Sensibility's* thwarted epistolary plot. Marianne's arc has been the one charted by this project. In Smith's *Lectures on Rhetoric and* Belles Lettres, reading was merely the first step in a rhetorically-formulated morality that directed itself towards mastering a form of speech or writing that gained its ethical import through displaying an understanding of one's readers, finally merging the (private) civil and the (public) civic virtues and redeeming even a self-interested rhetoric for moral ends. By the time of *Sense and Sensibility*—Austen's most Smithian novel, in many ways—speaking for oneself is a task best outsourced to a collective voice to which one's own (silent) sentiments are conformable. But Marianne remains, stubbornly preserved between the eighteenth-century epistolary heroine and her nineteenth-century successor. When she lapses into silence, so does the novel. Its narrator speaks of the "constant communication" between Elinor and Marianne, but observes that the content of it is really best left to our imagination.

NOTES TO CODA

[1] Jane Austen, *Sense and Sensibility* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 78, 5. All subsequent in-text references refer to this edition.

[2] See Peter Sabor, "Good, Bad, and Ugly Letters in *Sense and Sensibility*" (*Persuasions* On-Line 32.1, Winter 2011; http://www.jasna.org/persuasions/on-line/vol32no1/sabor.html#6; accessed 15 November 2017); n6.

[3] Nicola J. Watson, *Revolution and the Form of the British Novels, 1790-1825: Intercepted Letters, Interrupted Seductions* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 101-3.

[4] Mary Favret, "The Idea of Correspondence in British Romantic Literature" (Ph.D. thesis, Stanford University, 1988). As cited by Watson 103, n44.

[5] Peter Knox-Shaw, *Jane Austen and the Enlightenment* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004). Any even partial bibliography should likely not be attempted here in an endnote, but most relevant to the discussion going forward is Elsie B. Michie, "Austen's Powers: Engaging with Adam Smith in Debates About Wealth and Virtue" (*Novel*, 34.1, Autumn 2000, 5-27) and, Cecil E. Bohanon and Michelle Albert Vachris, *Pride and Profit: The Intersection of Jane Austen and Adam Smith* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2015).

[6] See Shannon Chamberlain, "John Willoughby, Luxury Good: Sense and Sensibility's Economic Curriculum" (*Persuasions* 34, 2012, 157-63).

[7] Watson 88.

[8] "For Smith, sympathy is always an imaginative act based upon our ability to enter creatively into the perceptions and feelings of another person…Our ability to sympathize with 'the condition of the rich' too well, vividly, and easily is what causes us to venture out into the world to make our own fortunes" (Chamberlain 158).

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