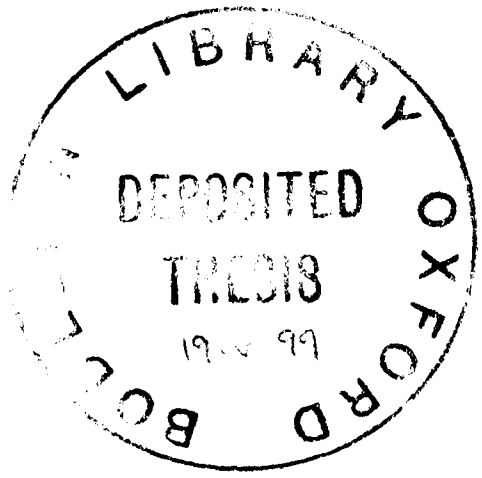
QUIXOTES, DREAMERS AND "IMAGINISTS":

DELUDING THE HEROINE

IN THE NOVEL FROM RICHARDSON TO AUSTEN



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ABSTRACT

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The following study is an examination of the deluded heroine in the novel between 1740 and 1820. Through close readings of fiction by Samuel Richardson, Charlotte Lennox, Frances Burney, Charlotte Smith, Ann Radcliffe and Jane Austen, and discussion of relevant works by other authors of the period, the reasons for the prevalence of this figure are considered. The thesis proposes that this choice of protagonist enabled the exploration of a number of the issues that most concerned contemporary novelists.

Principal amongst these was the question of identification between reader and literary protagonist. Throughout this period authors engaged in attempts to develop and control the audience's response. The desired end was the "improvement" of readers by the experience of the situations, mistakes and trials of the text's central characters. Increasingly though, the unpredictable and fluctuating nature of the readers' reactions was recognised. The result was a conflict between "text as instruction", the moral education that authors professed to offer, and "text as fiction", the attractions of story, adventure and imagination which were ostensibly valued only as they brought readers to works intended to improve them.

The connection of the latter to romance was a further source of tension. The establishment of the novel as a model for life was premised on claims to probability, but aspects of the texts remained which worked against mimetic representation. These oppositions explain the contemporary popularity of the quixotic narrative, since the quixote both enacted the "madness" of excessive imaginative involvement with literature and could also be shown learning to make a "correct" choice of genre for reading. The strategies that can be observed within the quixote novel have a wider application when they are considered alongside the patterns of imitation, influence and parody which characterise the fiction of the period. In order to examine these features, the thesis includes an analysis of two important literary dialogues: those between Richardson and Lennox, and between Radcliffe and Austen.

My focus on the heroine acknowledges the significance of gender in the period's fiction. Created by both female and male authors, such figures could be either exemplary models or quixotic warnings. They nevertheless share an experience of delusion followed by enlightenment constructed in order to benefit the "reading Misses" following their adventures. Unlike much recent criticism, however, my concern is more with the author as creative artist, text as literary process and reader as imaginative participant, than with historical or sociological contexts.

To Fiona Stafford

For her unfailing enthusiasm, encouragement and support.

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Note on Texts Used and Abbreviations

As the contemporary reception of novels published between 1740 and 1820 is significant for this thesis, it seemed appropriate to use first editions where possible. References to frequently cited works are included in the body of the text, indicated by the use of an abbreviation and volume/page number. Where there is a reliable modern edition a reference to this follows that to the first edition.

A list of abbreviations, and the editions to which they refer are given below. All other citations are included in the endnotes to each chapter, where accessible modern editions are used if available.

Abbreviations of Novel Titles

Bel — Maria Edgeworth, Belinda. 3 vols. (London, 1801).

CAD — Ann Radcliffe, The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne: A Highland Story (1789). 2nd ed. (London, 1793).
Then, The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne, ed. Alison Milbank, (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

Cam — Frances Burney, Camilla: Or, A Picture of Youth. 5 vols. (London, 1796).
Then, Camilla: Or, A Picture of Youth, eds. Edward A. and Lillian D. Bloom, (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1972).

Cec — Frances Burney, Cecilia: Or, Memoirs of an Heiress. 5 vols. (London, 1782).
Then, Cecilia: Or, Memoirs of an Heiress, eds. Peter Sabor and Margaret Anne Doody, (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

Cl — Samuel Richardson, Clarissa: Or, the History of a Young Lady. 7 vols. (London, 1747-8).
Then, Clarissa: Or, the History of a Young Lady, ed. Angus Ross, (New York: Viking Penguin Inc, 1985).

Cle — Madeleine de Scudéry, Clélie, (1656-60), transl. by J. Davies and G. Havers as Clelia: An Excellent New Romance (London, 1678).

Cst — Charlotte Smith, Celestina. 2nd ed. 4 vols. (London, 1791).

DQ — Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, Don Quixote (1604, 1614), The Ormsby Translation, Revised: Backgrounds and Sources, Criticism, eds. Joseph R. Jones and Kenneth Douglas, (New York, London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1981).

Em Jane Austen, Emma. 3 vols. (London, 1816).
Then, Emma, vol. IV, The Novels of Jane Austen ed. R.W. Chapman, rev. Mary Lascelles. 3rd ed. (1933; repr. London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1966).

Eml Charlotte Smith, Emmeline: The Orphan of the Castle (1788). 3rd ed. 4 vols. (London, 1789).
Then, Emmeline: The Orphan of the Castle, ed. Anne Henry Ehrenpreis, (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1971).

Eve Frances Burney, Evelina: Or, A Young Lady's Entrance into the World. 3 vols. (London, 1778).
Then, Evelina: Or, the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World, ed. Edward A. Bloom, (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1968).

Fe Tabitha Gilman Tenney, Female Quixotism: Exhibited in the Romantic Opinions and Extravagant Adventures of Dorcasina Sheldon (1801), eds. Jean Nienkamp and Andrea Collins, (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).

FQ Charlotte Lennox, The Female Quixote: Or, the Adventures of Arabella. 2 vols. (London, 1752).
Then, The Female Quixote: Or, the Adventures of Arabella, ed. Margaret Dalziel, chronology and appendix Duncan Isles, (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1970).

GS Jane West, A Gossip's Story and A Legendary Tale (1796). 4th ed. 2 vols. (London, 1799).

Hr Eaton Stannard Barrett, The Heroine: Or, Adventures of a Fair Romance Reader. 3 vols. (London, 1813).

Ital Ann Radcliffe, The Italian: Or, the Confessional of the Black Penitents. 3 vols. (London, 1797).
Then, The Italian: Or, the Confessional of the Black Penitents, ed. Frederick Garber, (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1968).

LDR Anonymous, The Lady's Drawing-Room. (London, 1744).

MU Ann Radcliffe, The Mysteries of Udolpho. 4 vols. (London, 1794).
Then, The Mysteries of Udolpho, ed. Bonamy Dobrée, (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1966).

NA Jane Austen, Northanger Abbey. 2 vols. (London, 1818).
Then, Northanger Abbey, vol. V, The Novels of Jane Austen ed. R.W. Chapman, rev. Mary Lascelles. 3rd ed. (1933; repr. London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1969).

OMH Charlotte Smith, The Old Manor House. 4 vols. (London, 1793).
Then, The Old Manor House, ed. Anne Henry Ehrenpreis, (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1969).

Pam Samuel Richardson, Pamela: Or, Virtue Rewarded. 4 vols. (London, 1740-41).
Then, Pamela: Or, Virtue Rewarded, eds. T.C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1971).

PP Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice. 3 vols. (London, 1813).
Then, Pride and Prejudice, vol. II, The Novels of Jane Austen ed. R.W. Chapman, rev. Mary Lascelles. 3rd ed. (1932; repr. London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1967).

PR Clara Reeve, The Progress of Romance. 2 vols. (Colchester, 1785).

RF Ann Radcliffe, The Romance of the Forest. 3 vols. (London, 1791).
Then, The Romance of the Forest, ed. Chloe Chard, (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

SCG Samuel Richardson, The History of Sir Charles Grandison. 7 vols. (London, 1753-4).
Then, The History of Sir Charles Grandison, ed. Jocelyn Harris, 3 vols. (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1972).

SL Selected Letters of Samuel Richardson, ed. John Carroll, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964).

SR Ann Radcliffe, A Sicilian Romance. 2 vols. (London, 1790).
A Sicilian Romance, ed. Alison Milbank, (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

SS Jane Austen, Sense and Sensibility. 3 vols. (London, 1811).
Then, Sense and Sensibility, vol. I, The Novels of Jane Austen ed. R.W. Chapman, rev. Mary Lascelles. 3rd ed. (1933; repr. London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1967).

YP Charlotte Smith, The Young Philosopher. 4 vols. (London, 1798).

Abbreviations of Periodical Titles

The following abbreviations are used in the endnotes when reference is being made to periodicals and journals.

AUMLA	Journal of the Australasian Universities Language and Literature Association
CompL	Comparative Literature
CritI	Critical Inquiry
DUJ	The Durham University Journal
ECF	Eighteenth-Century Fiction
ECL	Eighteenth-Century Life
ECS	Eighteenth-Century Studies
EI	Etudes Irlandaises
EIL	Essays in Literature (Western Illinois University)
ELN	English Language Notes
HLB	Harvard Library Bulletin
JELH	Journal of English Literary History
JHI	Journal of the History of Ideas
JNT	The Journal of Narrative Technique
LP	Literature and Psychology
MLR	Modern Language Review
MP	Modern Philology
NCF	Nineteenth-Century Fiction
NCL	Nineteenth-Century Literature
Pers	Persuasions: The Jane Austen Society of North America
PMASAL	Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts and Letters
PMLA	Publications of the Modern Language Association of America

PQ	Philological Quarterly
RES	The Review of English Studies
SECC	Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture
SEL	Studies in English Literature 1500-1900
SN	Studies in the Novel
SP	Studies in Philology
TSJSN	Transactions of the Samuel Johnson Society of the Northwest
YR	The Yale Review

INTRODUCTION

The years between 1740 and 1820 represent a period in the history of the British novel with which, for dynamism and significance, it is difficult to find a parallel. To a modern perspective, aware of later nineteenth- and twentieth-century developments in the genre, this is the era when the novel emerged, consolidated itself, and stabilised into what was perhaps the most characteristic form of literary expression in the Victorian age. The eighteenth-century cultural establishment however, unassisted by the distancing effect of hindsight, responded with urgency and concern to contemporary innovations in prose fiction. From the debate over the genre which ensued - fuelled by the writings of essayists, reviewers and moralists, the manifestos and self-defences of the novelists and, most importantly, by the interaction between contemporary fictions (often composed to "answer", critique, and parody each other) - a number of central issues emerged that retained their currency throughout the period, despite changes of emphasis resulting from shifts in attitude towards aesthetic, moral and political questions over time.

These issues, and their manifestation in contemporary art, are the subject of this thesis. However, as the outline given in this introduction will show, such a broad field of enquiry, featuring areas of controversy still very much alive in the present day, could not be comprehensively dealt with here. Instead a particular focus has been chosen: the depiction of the heroine in fiction between Samuel Richardson and Jane Austen. The reason for this choice is that, during these years, the literary heroine stands as a barometer to the authorial motivations informing the novel in which she figures. Usually conceived of in terms of her influence on the reader, the heroine is the point where all the cross-currents of the text meet. So, when "morality", "judgement" and "education"

are set up to counterpoint "imagination" and "romance", when a turn is to be made from the realm of quixotism to what the text has constructed as probable and "real", it is the heroine who occupies the space within which such oppositions are worked through. A further purpose of this introduction is to explain why this should have been the case.

An appropriate starting place is provided by a subject touched upon above: the contemporary perceptions of the relationship between author, character, and reader. The purpose of literature, and the nature of its influence, has been a preoccupation of the civilised world from ancient times to modern; the proliferation of critical theories in recent decades of the twentieth century show that neither has the fascination of such study diminished nor a consensus resolution come nearer. However, in terms of relevance to the eighteenth-century novel, what is most noteworthy is the relative simplicity and stability of the "model" proposed and upheld at the time. Its basis was faith in the existence of a direct and immediate correspondence between the meaning encoded by an author in a work of art and the effect this had upon the individual who experienced the text. While this belief underpinned value judgments of creative literature generally, it was the increasing popularity of the novel, a genre perceived as requiring the minimum of cultural and educational preparation from the audience, which necessitated its articulation.

The consequences for the contemporary novel cannot be overestimated. Authors felt a responsibility upon them to justify their reasons for writing and to try to control the influence of the text on the reader. Encasing the fictional narrative within a frame of prefatory material and authorial commentary was one way of attempting this, but the most powerful weapon at the novelist's disposal was the affective potential of the literary character. The text's protagonist

was the focal point where the desires of the author and reader were brought into their closest conjunction, and the repetition of certain "types" of lead character reveal the ways in which this was exploited. For the purposes of this thesis, two such varieties are of chief concern, the heroine as model and the heroine as caution or warning.

Versions of these two "character types" are portrayed by every author discussed in the chapters which follow. There are no straightforward lines of demarcation; while the "exemplary" heroine is more often associated with Richardson, Burney and Radcliffe and her "deluded" counterpart with Lennox and Austen, it is easy to cite instances where this generalisation does not apply.[1] An added complication is that protagonists who seem archetypal instances of one mode, contain aspects of the other; Richardson's Clarissa for instance, refuses to be interpreted as a model, seeing her story more as a cautionary tale, while Lennox's Arabella even in her quixotism has moments when she takes upon the mantle of the exemplary heroine. It should also be stressed that delusion is practically an universal state of mind for the eighteenth-century heroine. Those represented as quixotic or mistaken are more appropriately termed self-deluded; the exemplary heroine, on the other hand, tends to be deluded by those responsible for her trial, the paradigmatic illustration of this being Clarissa and Lovelace.

The significant question though is not how distinctions can be made but why such figures were so frequently represented as the emotional centre of contemporary fiction. In effect, whether an author showed a heroine defending her identity under trial, or gradually educating herself through the consequences of her own mistakes, the assumption was that, by engagement and identification, this would have a formative effect on the reader. Once the novel was in the public domain the author had few further means of control over such reader response, and

awareness of this partially explains the frequent treatments of quixotism in fiction during the period.

Quixotism is both a tribute to, and a warning about, the potential of the literary influence on the mind. By its representation, illustrating "extreme" responses to the "wrong" kinds of literature, eighteenth-century authors could claim to be instructing their readers while they also defended their own texts from similar accusations. Such strategies were thought necessary, as it was precisely this excessive identification between literary character and the audience for fiction which caused most contemporary concern. The fate of the novel in criticism was inextricably linked to that of the "reading Misses" it was believed to have spawned.

The gendering of the readership for fiction as female is one of the most obvious reasons why the heroine's role assumed such significance at the time. This thesis will consider the hero in the light of his relationship (and, as the century progresses, increasing similarity) to his female counterpart, and the third chapter draws in the famous eighteenth-century instances of male quixotism in the work of Fielding, Smollett and Sterne. But the privileged position is afforded to the novelistic heroine and this is intended to reflect the status she acquired after 1740 and retained throughout the period. It should however be made clear here that, although evidence exists to support these impressions of the heroine's primacy and of a co-existing expansion in female participation in the consumption and production of fiction, the discussions given of the "feminisation" of the novel in the eighteenth century were as much a product of contemporary perceptions and prejudices as of objective fact.

Numerous twentieth-century studies have attempted to account for these associations between women and the novel.[2]

Ian Watt's highly influential thesis that the "rise of the novel" was concomitant with the "rise of the middle class", the two sharing the same set of bourgeois values, has been expanded in works such as Nancy Armstrong's Desire and Domestic Fiction, in order to claim female authority over the domestic arena both as it existed in life and was represented by the novel.[3] Watt's concept of leisured middle class ladies, released from employment by prosperity and hence with the time to provide an audience for fiction (and, as The Rise of the Novel notoriously tended to overlook,[4] to become authors themselves), has proved particularly enduring and is often re-examined to assess whether female literacy did increase in the eighteenth century to a point where women represented a sizable enough proportion of the reading population to have influenced the literary marketplace.[5] Most significant of all has been the feminist scholarship of recent decades and its endeavour to recognise the achievement of contemporary woman writers and encourage familiarity with their publications.

This doctorate will not go over ground so exhaustively covered elsewhere. The emphasis here is upon the relationship between fiction and the female reader which emerges through the novels themselves and the contemporary writings directly relating to them. From such a perspective, while it is far from being the case that all the novels at the time were heroine-centred or, whatever Catherine Morland may have believed, all readers of fiction were women, the salient point is that this is what the conventional wisdom surrounding "the novel" implied. Once such attitudes and assumptions had been formed, they proceeded to have a palpable influence on each generation of authors, readers and critics.

By concentrating on the novels and the way they were criticised, the areas where the impact of these works diverged from the intentions professed by their authors quickly become

apparent. One such area involves the issue of identification mentioned previously. Particularly in the wake of Richardson's success, the assumption that the heroine - whether exemplary or deluded - could provide a "lesson" for the audience was commonplace. The novel, as it had constructed itself as a genre at the mid-century, claimed to be defined by its approximation to common life and nature, so it followed that the "realistic" heroine possessed a direct correspondence to the real reader. However this position was subjected to increasing scrutiny as the eighteenth century progressed.

As critics in recent years, such as Rachel Brownstein and Deborah Ross, have capably demonstrated,[6] the literary heroine is founded upon a paradox; on the one hand she represents the women of the society which engendered her, on the other, she is the embodiment of an ideal, set apart by her fictionality and, to use Ellen Moers's term, her very "heroinism" itself.[7] In the years between 1740 and 1820, numerous instances exist of a novelistic scenario which actively interrogates this duality, that is the quixotic narrative. To an extent the female quixote is the reader's "stand in" within a novel, responding to the heroines of her own "text books" with the expected mix of identification and emulation. The quixote though, by her position as the central protagonist of a fiction, is herself a heroine, and, as such, distanced from the reader outside the text, who holds the same relation to her as the quixote does to her "models". As the following chapters will illustrate, this kind of complexity strongly influenced attitudes regarding literary identification. By the time of Jane Austen, Maria Edgeworth and Eaton Stannard Barrett, for instance, the term "heroine" had become so weighted with connotations that a naive application of it was out of the question.

This then is a specific instance of a characteristic feature in eighteenth-century fiction, which will occasionally

be referred to below as the tension between "text as instruction" and "text as fiction". The former stands for the way in which professed authorial "intentions" and "messages", or conventional attitudes regarding the pedagogical function of the novel, are reflected within the text; the latter refers to the literary qualities of plot, imagination and desire that resist them. It must be stressed here that this is not an opposition between the authorially "sanctioned" and "unsanctioned": one of the aims of this thesis is to argue against the perception that eighteenth-century novelists chose didacticism in preference to creativity. These ambivalences, often enriching the texts in which they occur, can be seen to derive from the author's attraction to the imaginative and inventive. This is commonly manifested in exuberant portrayals of the quixote's realm of fantasy, or in the long line of, not strictly quixotic, figures stretching from Lovelace to Lady Delacour and Emma Woodhouse who take upon themselves the role of fictionalist, creating their own "plots" and "characters".

The plane on which the moral and the aesthetic content of eighteenth-century fiction interacts is the first of two areas of study with which this doctorate is mainly concerned. The second relates to it, connects with it, and functions by the same principles. This is the issue of genre in the novel, specifically the plane incorporating "realism" and "romance". Again the same pattern can be observed. As contemporary novelists stressed the improving, serious, purpose of their fictions, so they insisted that these texts were "like life" and bound by the same laws of nature and probability. However, just as the aesthetic and the fictive qualified the former, so the "outcast" genre of romance refused to disappear; the novels which resulted incorporated romance as much as they critiqued it. It is due to this that Cervantes' Don Quixote has such a significant position within this thesis. Don Quixote was the work of prose fiction which perhaps had the greatest influence

upon the development of the eighteenth-century novel and its generic complexity had far-reaching consequences, both for the quixotic "imitations" and contemporary fiction in general.[8]

Here my divergence from the conclusions of much recent historicist criticism should be obvious. Ian Watt's attempt to define the novel generically has been extended and refined by critics such as J. Paul Hunter in Before Novels and Lennard J. Davis in Factual Fictions who focus upon a wide range of printed texts published prior to 1740 in order to distinguish the novel strictly from romance; romance is rejected as an "origin", an "influence", or a continued presence in eighteenth-century novel writing.[9] Many feminist critics, among them Ros Ballaster and Deborah Ross, have argued that this approach is inappropriate for the experience and the writings of contemporary women.[10] In my opinion there are similar limitations in its applicability to the work of the "fathers of the novel" and later eighteenth-century fiction in general. Instead the position taken here is similar to that proposed by Steven Cohan in Violation and Repair in the English Novel: the novel encompasses "realism" and "romance", their interaction being an essential element of its generic construction. To Cohan this parallels the tensions between innocence and maturity which for him comprise "the paradigm of experience" in the novel.[11] I, however, suggest the interplay of instruction and imagination as the defining "paradigm" of eighteenth-century fiction.

The concept of such "dialogic" relationships within the novel, as Cohan points out,[12] derives from the work of Mikhail Bakhtin and it is Bakhtin's theory which has had the greatest influence over the development of this doctorate. Certainly only a fraction of Bakhtin's work is relevant here; other critics, notably Terry Castle, have applied his account of Rabelais and the carnivalesque to the eighteenth-century

novel,[13] and, even if consideration is restricted to The Dialogic Imagination, there is much which is outside the parameters of this thesis. Most significantly, the type of period-based study undertaken here is that which Bakhtin rejected due to its tendency to obscure the progress of "novelization" across centuries.[14] Such qualifications made though, this acknowledgment of Bakhtin reflects a belief that his theory comprehends the eighteenth-century novel. While historicist scholarship remains focussed on definitions and exclusions, Bakhtin's ideas concerning novelization and dialogism explicate what is present in the contemporary novel and account for its extraordinary dynamism.

Particular attention will be paid to two aspects of Bakhtin's thought, the concept of "incorporated" genres and the significance of parody. The belief that the novel "could never be merely one genre among others"[15] but instead, on reaching dominance, has the capacity to include and "novelize" the completed genres around it, makes sense of the continued presence of romance in the eighteenth-century novel. The texts include romance but, by this act of inclusion, the romance material is novelized and transformed. What was naive and transparent in its original context becomes self-conscious and self-reflexive, suffused with irony and awareness; and it is these qualities which generically characterise the contemporary novel. This position bears no relation to Northrop Frye's assertion that "It is clear that the novel was a realistic displacement of romance, and had few structural features peculiar to itself",[16] a view which gives priority to romance and reads the novel as a somewhat diverted continuation; "romance in the novel" in fact bears only a superficial relationship to "pure romance".

This does beg the question of what "pure romance" was; however, this is too complex an issue to be summarised here and

must be deferred to the discussions in the chapters which follow. Suffice to say that, although there was a romance tradition based on existing texts, evocations of "romance" in the eighteenth century could relate to works of very different ages and characteristics or indeed have no precise referent at all, as the idea of romance was as much a contemporary construction as a literary canon. The use of related terminology in this doctorate will reflect the broad field of contemporary application, thus "romance", "romantic" and "romanticism" pertain to the (actual or constructed) genre and the features associated with it. One clarification necessary here is that the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century artistic movement will be distinguished as Romanticism. The use of this convention is not ideal, especially as it imposes an artificial divide between the Romantic Movement and the aspects of eighteenth-century aesthetics which inspired it. However as "high" Romanticism plays only a peripheral role in the thesis it is hoped that the practice will not be overly obtrusive.

If the novel incorporates and reaccents different genres, it also possesses the ability to interrogate itself and other examples of its own genre. The emphasis Bakhtin places on parody is especially appropriate for the period from 1740 to 1820 where the progress of the novel is dominated by the oppositional relationships between individual fictions. One point made in <u>The Dialogic Imagination</u> is particularly relevant:

> Throughout its entire history there is a consistent parodying or travestying of dominant or fashionable novels that attempt to become models for the genre.[17]

The structure of this doctorate is intended to enable the implications of this remark to be explored. While individual chapters consider specific authors in ways that have been outlined above, there are also two chapter pairings made in

order to study the "model" to "parody" relationship - the first between Richardson and Lennox, the second between Radcliffe and Austen (this latter is included in a wider consideration of gothic parody). In both cases the initial writer of serious fiction produced texts of fashion and influence which inspired "answering" texts from authors of comedy. Such an interrelationship was not static; the first author could reply in later works, the originating text could include self-parodic elements "edited out" by its successor, and this successor could be incorporating as much from the original as it was questioning. This then is another level on which dialogic interaction can be observed.

Having situated this thesis within theories of genre it is necessary finally to mention its position with regard to modern feminist criticism. In a number of respects this is a matter of recording indebtedness. Many of the heroine-centred novels which are the subject of the following chapters are the work of women authors and so the feminist scholarship of recent decades that has unearthed obscure fiction, researched the lives of its creators, and provided the historical framework for critical study, has been invaluable.

The pioneering attitude of many influential works, such as Dale Spender's Mothers of the Novel and Jane Spencer's The Rise of the Woman Novelist, led to the decision to treat the "female tradition" of British fiction as a distinct entity. This practice tends to perpetuate the "canonical" and "peripheral" division between the fathers and mothers of the novel, and perhaps diminishes the critical understanding of both. My agreement is with those who, like Janet Todd and Deborah Ross, propose integration.[18] As a result the women critics who have been most relevant to this thesis are those such as Margaret Anne Doody, Patricia Meyer Spacks and Marilyn Butler whose work has always been informed by this principle. Here, from Samuel

Richardson to Eaton Stannard Barrett, male-authored representations of the literary heroine are considered alongside those of their women contemporaries, and the specific study of female quixotism is intended as a supplement to the fine accounts of their male counterparts in the work of Walter L. Reed and Alexander Welsh.[19]

There is however a more fundamental methodological difference between this doctorate and modern feminist accounts of the eighteenth-century novel. Feminist criticism often uses fiction to illuminate that which is outside fiction. The text is discussed as a reflection of the age which produced it, the female protagonist considered in relation to the social, economic and legal situation of contemporary women, while the authorial presence is subjected to analysis informed by study of the writer's background, her financial and marital position, her relative degree of fettering or freedom. Too often are the novels of this period mined for extra-literary information as if they were just one more conduct book or tract on female education. The aim here then is to concentrate on the heroine-centred novel as literature, and, in relation to woman writers, with two contentions in mind. First, that their fiction can and must be criticised on the basis of its aesthetic qualities as a work of art, and, secondly, that these were authors of creativity and imagination. This latter point especially has not received the attention it deserves in modern critical accounts.

Notes

1 Burney's Camilla Tyrold or Austen's Fanny Price, could be read as "exceptions" to this.

2 For contrasting views see J. Spencer, The Rise of the Woman Novelist: From Aphra Behn to Jane Austen (Oxford, 1986), pp. 3-22 and D. Ross, The Excellence of Falsehood: Romance, Realism, and Women's Contribution to the Novel (Lexington, 1991), pp. 1-15.

3 See I. Watt, The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding (London, 1957), esp. pp. 9-59, and N. Armstrong, Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel (New York, Oxford, 1987), esp. pp. 3-11, 23-7 and 59-108.

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8 For an account of the contemporary reception of Don Quixote and its influence on eighteenth century aesthetics and literature, see R. Paulson, Don Quixote in England: The Aesthetics of Laughter (Baltimore, London, 1998).

9 See Hunter, Before Novels pp. 22-28 and L.J. Davis, Factual Fictions: The Origins of the English Novel (New York, 1983), pp. 25-41.

10 R. Ballaster, Seductive Forms: Women's Amatory Fiction from 1684 to 1740 (Oxford, 1992), pp. 12-13 and Ross, Excellence pp. 4 and 13.

11 See S. Cohan, Violation and Repair in the English Novel: The Paradigm of Experience from Richardson to Woolf (Detroit, 1986), esp. pp. 1-19. Also I. Duncan, Modern Romance and Transformations of the Novel: The Gothic, Scott, Dickens (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 2-17.

12 Violation p. 8.

13 T. Castle, Masquerade and Civilization: The Carnivalesque in Eighteenth-Century English Culture and Fiction (Stanford, California, 1986).

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16 N. Frye, The Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romance (Cambridge, Mass., London, 1976), p. 38. J.P. Hunter takes issue with this assertion in "Novels and History and Northrop Frye", ECS XXIV (1990), 229-31.

17 Dialogic Imagination p. 6.

18 J. Todd, The Sign of Angellica: Women, Writing, and Fiction 1660-1800 (London, 1989), p. 2 and Ross, Excellence p. 13.

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CHAPTER ONE: SAMUEL RICHARDSON

i. "The Vehicle to the more necessary INSTRUCTION":[1] Samuel Richardson and the Use of Fiction

No author did more to shape the representation of the heroine in eighteenth-century fiction than Samuel Richardson. Consequently Richardson's work has a dual significance within this thesis, both as it exemplifies the ambitions and internal tensions of the contemporary novel, and also as it in turn acts as an influence on the authors who came after.[2] In responding to the demands made upon a writer of fiction in his day, Richardson engages with moral and aesthetic questions which also preoccupy those authors of heroine-centred fiction who are the subject of later chapters. Indeed he does much to set the parameters for their enquiries. Rather than simply developing a model for the depiction of the novelistic heroine, Richardson's importance lies in his conception of the purpose of fiction as it is expressed through the medium of character.

The frequency with which treatments of the deluded heroine occur in post-Richardsonian fiction is in itself suggestive of the nature of Richardson's impact on the later novel. Such characters were not direct emulations of Richardson's heroines; as I will show in the final section of this chapter, Richardson's own portrayal of delusion and imaginative fantasy is distinctively individual and dependent on the specific context of his narratives. What is relevant here are the more general authorial assumptions which lie behind the depiction of such figures, primarily those concerning the affective power of literature.

Eighteenth-century fiction was judged according to its "use" to the reader. An involvement and identification on the reader's part with the trials, mistakes, and enlightenment of

the heroine was perceived in terms of its instructive benefit. However, alongside this was a deeply felt concern with the effectiveness of the novel as a model. Fiction did not possess these improving qualities innately and so it was necessary for contemporary authors to express the principles which motivated their writing, and also to define their texts as thematically and generically different from literature that was believed to display dangerous tendencies. Richardson both embodied and, through his literary reputation, perpetuated such attitudes to art.

Of course it would be naive to accept at face value the statements which were made by Richardson, and many authors who succeeded him, about the moral usefulness of their novels, as such remarks are to an extent expressions of authorial self-defensiveness. In Richardson's case the anxiety is centred on the uncertain status of the novel.[3] At the time he was writing, fiction was of low critical standing and, more worryingly, was connected with scandal and licentiousness. Richardson needed to distance himself from what had gone before in order to protect his credibility, so he constantly drew attention to what was new, serious, and educational in his work.

Although these self-protective motives existed, the faith which many contemporary writers had in the educational function of creative literature was very real. The particular value of literature was perceived as being its ability to interweave the pleasures of the aesthetic with the improving tendencies of the moral; this is usually expressed in the Richardsonian manner of the prefaces to Pamela and Clarissa, "diversion", "entertainment" and "amusement" being set off against "instruction" and "improvement". There was of course nothing strikingly original about such a concept; the dicta of Horace's Ars Poetica were as familiar to the eighteenth-century consciousness as they had been to Sidney more than a century earlier when he wrote in the

Defence of Poetry that the "end" of poetry (which to Sidney could include prose writings) was to "teach and delight".[4]

Similar claims for prose fiction in the eighteenth century were not initiated by Richardson; assertions of a morally improving purpose had become something of a convention for the author's preface long before the publication of Pamela. Practically all of Defoe's novels are introduced in this way as are many of Eliza Haywood's. There is however a noticeable tendency in early eighteenth-century fiction for the sentiments of the prefaces to have little bearing on what happens in the story (this applies to Richardson himself in a rather different way, a point to which I will return later). It is also, like the adoption of an "editorial" rather than authorial role, often used as a device to sidestep responsibility for anything the reader might find offensive or immoral in the fiction.[5]

Probably the best example of this is Defoe's Moll Flanders where the justification for presenting low "criminal" scenes and characters is that it casts into proper relief the later treatment of reformation and penitence and, if readers are not "more pleas'd with the Moral, than the Fable; with the Application, than with the Relation",[6] then the fault lies with their own shortcomings rather than the "editor's". A comparable piece of authorial sleight of hand occurs in Haywood's Lasselia, published two years later. Haywood attempts to preempt criticism of the "too great Warmth"[7] of her scenes of sexual seduction by the rather disingenuous claim that, as her purpose is to teach the necessity of restraining passion, she has to show her readers what exactly it is they should be avoiding.

Richardson's involvement with literature as a vehicle of moral instruction was considerably more serious than that of these predecessors but this did not allow him to escape the pitfalls endemic to a combination of entertainment and educa-

tion in a work of art. Indeed the more importance Richardson claimed for his novels, the more some of his contemporaries delighted in exploding his pretensions. This was a feature of the reception of Richardson's fiction from the start. Pamela was condemned as a conniving, materialist hypocrite in numerous parodies, most famously in the exuberant subversion of Fielding's Shamela.[8] Even after the publication of the later novels, which silenced many of Richardson's critics, an anonymous "Lover of Virtue" felt it necessary to come forward and, in his Critical Remarks on Sir Charles Grandison, Clarissa and Pamela, questioned Richardson's entire achievement. In his view Richardson may have had "a laudable intention"[9] but this had not been translated into the actual novels; instead the "Lover of Virtue" accuses Richardson of both aesthetic and educational failure. His work has "corrupted our language and taste" and even more damagingly has "a manifest tendency to corrupt our morals".[10]

Suspicion and resistance towards Richardson's didactic intentions are as much a feature of twentieth-century critical appraisal as they were of certain elements of the contemporary response. Modern criticism displays a similar fascination with finding gaps between what Richardson said his novels would do and the actual effect they have on the reader but, unlike earlier accounts, it also tends to deny the validity of the whole attempt to instruct through art. An entrenched wariness about literature that comes bearing "messages" underlies studies of Richardson's novels, in tacit agreement with Keats' rejection of works of art which have "a palpable design upon us".[11] This is particularly the case when the design is presented as an attempt to further the causes of religion, morality, and virtue - as illustrated by Richardson's comment that in Clarissa he intended "to investigate the great Doctrines of Christianity, and to teach the Reader how to die, as well as how to live".[12]

There have been many modern readers who respond to Richardson's novels but resist such authorial addresses, and this has produced some of the peculiarities of Richardsonian criticism. Since Ian Watt expressed a distinction between "Richardson the novelist" and "Richardson the writer of conduct books", numerous writers have proposed their own version of the divided author - Mark Kinkead-Weekes speaks of "Richardson" and "Mr Richardson", John Traugott of "Richardson the artist" and "the banal Richardson".[13] Such accounts present, on one hand, the creative artist with a chameleon-like ability to think his way into the minds of good and evil; and, on the other, the didactic Christian moralist who is incapable of understanding the true import of his own fiction and actually becomes its worst enemy when he assumes the editorial, revisionary role.

There are echoes here of the more patronising elements of the contemporary (and nineteenth-century) critical response to Richardson. This quietly mocked Richardson for being uneducated, bourgeois, and a hypocrite whose supposed moral lesson was actually a smokescreen to disguise prurient voyeurism.[14] The belief that Richardson's personal deficiencies influenced the nature of his works persists in modern criticism. Even writers such as Kinkead-Weekes or Carol Flynn who ostensibly reject the idea that Richardson's literary achievement was unconscious and "in spite" of his personality,[15] display an ambivalence about Richardson through their reiteration of the view that his imagination allowed Richardson to transcend his "orthodox daily self",[16] hence raising his art above the restrictive level of his intentions and morals.[17]

The "proof" of the irreconcilability of the aesthetic and didactic in Richardson's work is everywhere, particularly when his extra-literary activities are taken into consideration. Richardson, as is well known, took to fiction while engaged in composing his Familiar Letters, a collection which often seems

as much concerned with conduct book behavioural guidance as it is with epistolary style. The overtly instructive intent of this work is paralleled later in his career by the publication of the Moral and Instructive Sentiments, which reduces the novels to an alphabetically arranged collection of decontextualised sententiae.[18]

If this is not off-putting enough there are the letters which announce that in his fiction "Instruction, Madam, is the Pill; Amusement is the Gilding" (SL 322),[19] and prefaces drawing attention to explicit "morals" which have little application to the reader's experience of the novel; it is unlikely that anyone has ever felt that rejecting the belief that a reformed rake makes the best husband, or proving the necessity of religious principle to the life of a good man, was a satisfactory summary of their interpretation of Clarissa and Sir Charles Grandison. And possibly Richardson could have spared himself a parody or two if the contemporary reader of Pamela had not had to face the legend "VIRTUE Rewarded" at the top of every right hand page.

The authorial action that causes the greatest controversy amongst modern critics is, however, Richardson's revisions, particularly of Clarissa.[20] For some this simply puts him beyond the pale, Terry Castle for example discusses the "pernicious effects" of this "sorry attempt".[21] Ironically, as John Mullan points out,[22] it is the very absence of authorial control - seen by recent critics as the strength of the multiple correspondent epistolary novel[23] - which allows Richardson to reintroduce himself into the text as "editor" and provide the interpretative framework of footnotes, indexes, italics, capitalisation and cross reference. To many, Richardson here sabotages the key innovation of his own text.

It is not surprising therefore that many perceptive

readers of the novels find Richardson himself at best an irrelevance and at worst an embarrassment. In Castle's case this is connected with the theory of interpretation she employs in her study of Clarissa. Following Barthes, Castle dismisses the relevance of authorial intention to the reception of the text, presenting "meaning" not as a fixed quality of the novel itself but purely as a creation of each individual reader.[24] This is a richly rewarding approach to the complex epistolary novel, not only because in the absence of a guiding authorial presence the reader has only the self-serving and contradictory accounts of the characters to go on, but also because these characters are themselves engaged in reading, writing and acts of interpretation. Their quest to find and understand the true meaning of their experience is as urgent as that of those who read their story.[25]

To Castle, Richardson's authorial involvement in the intricate, interpretive flux of Clarissa is unproductive to say the least. However, Castle's extreme attitude does highlight the possibility that modern resistance to the didactic can result in misleading accounts of Richardson. It seems highly unlikely that an author could have written some of the longest novels in the language while possessing only the limited insight into their value that critics such as Castle grant him. If Richardson was really oblivious to textual indeterminacy and opposed to the interpretive freedom of the reader, then surely the salutary reminder of both provided by the reception to Pamela would have made him think twice about continued usage of the epistolary form.

The difficulty lies in the way in which Richardson's approach to the purpose of literature is interpreted. I have discussed how Richardson's presentation of this can alienate the reader, creating the impression that he wishes to convey conduct book sentiment. To Castle he tries this and fails:

> The epistolary novelist can never express moral or social "messages" with the relative precision and clarity available to a novelist using other narrative forms ... The reader has no way of knowing, from the text alone, which correspondent is an authorial mouthpiece.[26]

In fact it is open to question whether Richardson perceived his novels as being fundamentally concerned with the promotion of distinct messages which required a specially sanctioned spokesperson within the text. The following examination of Richardson's attitude to the artist's role as educationalist is intended to question the validity of Castle's view that

> Clarissa has implications finally ... which are nothing other than moral - but not in any vulgar didactic sense. Contrary to Richardson's own expectations, the novel's moral impact lies not in any simple programmatic "message"; the text is, after all, a plethora of contradictory messages. Rather, the moral dimension of Clarissa shows up in the way it compels a certain readerly self-examination.[27]

When placed within the context of eighteenth-century theories of the relationship between author, text, and reader, it becomes easier to see how the imposition of such limited intentions upon Richardson's novels can be challenged. Maybe it can be argued that Clarissa's "moral impact" was not quite so divergent from Richardson's plan, and "a certain readerly self-examination" was a process as well understood in the eighteenth century as the twentieth.[28]

One text which provides an insight into the eighteenth-century conception of the dynamics involved in the process of literary communication, is the Explanatory Notes and Remarks on Milton's "Paradise Lost" published in 1734.[29] These "Explanatory Notes" are prefaced by a "Life of the Author, and a Discourse on the Poem", by Jonathan Richardson Senior. During the initial stages of this account Jonathan Richardson describes Milton's attitude to religious belief, commenting on his

> Contempt for a Lazy Adherence to What Men Implicitely Receive, and his Approbation of an Honest and Free Exercise of the Understanding in Finding Out, and making Use of what Helps are to be Had from Without, or the Dictates of Internal Reason.[30]

Later Richardson transfers this need for intellectual rigour and receptive sensitivity to the reader of Paradise Lost itself, outlining what it means to "Submit to do the Duty of a Reader".[31] In particular he stresses the fundamental need for attention, and an acceptance of the challenge which a demanding literary work makes upon the minds of its interpreters.

What is plain from Jonathan Richardson's analysis is the value he places upon the ability of creative art to influence those who read it. Alongside the emphasis on intellectual engagement is a recognition of the essential need for aesthetic and emotional responsiveness, in order to appreciate fully the "Great End of Poetry, which is to Please and Inrich the Imagination, and to Mend the Heart".[32] Paradise Lost is an exemplary work of literature to Jonathan Richardson because of the immense affective potential it possesses:

> the Mind of the Reader is Tempered, and Prepar'd, by Pleasure, 'tis Drawn, and Allured, 'tis Awaken'd and Invigorated to receive Such Impressions as the Poet intended to give it: it Opens the Fountains of Knowledge, Piety and Virtue, and pours Along Full Streams of Peace, Comfort and Joy to Such as can Penetrate the true Sense of the Writer, and Obediently Listen to his Song.[33]

As the eighteenth century progressed it became more acceptable to extend the application of such sentiments from poetry to prose fiction. As G.J. Barker-Benfield suggests, the prevalent belief that the novel could shape the personality of its readers owed much to the onus placed by Protestantism on private, individual study of the Bible (coupled with the legacy of the Puritan emphasis on self-examination as an essential means to the knowledge of one's own personality).[34] This

created an environment within which close, analytical reading of other forms of "improving" literature could be valorised and the examples of behaviour they provided become perceived as "public benefits".[35]

After the publication of Pamela, and Richardson's own vindication of his art, defences of fiction in these terms become increasingly frequent. In the anonymous Lady's Drawing Room (1744), characters argue for the instructive relevance of "histories" as,

> when Precepts are convey'd this Way, they steal themselves into the Soul ... and, by admiring the great Examples, which in the Narrative appear so amiable, [we] are led to a Desire of becoming the same ourselves.[36]

The appearance in 1750 of the influential fourth number of Johnson's The Rambler strengthened the credibility of such claims. Later essays contain recapitulations of the arguments Johnson had put forward; one instance of this is John Cleland's review of Peregrine Pickle published in The Monthly Review in 1751. Although Cleland expresses reservations about the increased production of prose fictions in the wake of the success of Richardson and Fielding, questioning the moral purpose which informs them,[37] he admits that there "are perhaps no works of entertainment more susceptible of improvement" than those which convey instruction through entertainment, as they are capable of catching the attention of those who "would not care to be dragged through a dry, didactic system of morality".[38]

This view is developed in an essay John Hawkesworth published in The Adventurer a year later. Hawkesworth believes the writer of fiction carries great responsibility for the "moral tendency of his work",[39] but also for the proper interweaving of the instructive with the creative; without this he will defeat his own purpose as

> the instruction will not be necessarily remembered with the facts; and because the story is so far from recommending the moral [40]. the moral is detested as interrupting the story.[40]

If, however, the two are properly combined, literature in Hawkesworth's mind becomes an enormously powerful and beneficial medium:

> Precept gains only the cold approbation of reason ... but by example the passions are rouzed; we approve, we emulate, and we honour, or love; we detest, we despise, and we condemn, as fit objects are successively held up to the mind; the affections are, as it were, drawn out into the field, they learn their exercise in a mock fight, and are trained for the service of virtue.[41]

The fundamental moral influence of literature then is its ability to engage readers on an emotional and intellectual level, to incite them to think about, question and, if necessary, alter their moral principles. It is precisely due to this that there was such concern about the possible dangers of fiction; the vehicle of improvement could, in the wrong hands, become one of corruption.[42]

It would seem that the conventional terminology through which eighteenth-century writers conveyed their belief in the function of art has led some recent critics to label it "didacticism", a concern with "programmatic messages" tacked on to novels at the expense of their aesthetic integrity. In fact the use of literature to draw the reader "out into the field" seems very closely related to the "readerly self-examination" which Castle presents as the, authorially unsanctioned, result of Clarissa. Richardson echoes Jonathan Richardson's and Hawkesworth's emphasis on literature as the catalyst for personal improvement rather than the indoctrination of specific lessons, commenting in a letter to Lady Bradshaigh that Clarissa "is designed to strengthen the tender Mind, and to enable the worthy Heart to bear up against the Calamities of

Life" (SL 116). However, evidence to the contrary undeniably remains - the crass summaries of the novels, the extraction of "moral sentiments", the clumsy attempts to control the reader's interpretation - all of which seem to prove Richardson's creativity was at odds with his pedagogy.

There is, though, one aspect of Richardson's writing which suggests greater reconciliation of the two elements; this is the centrality of debate. Dialogue, debate and discussion underpin Richardson's life and work. They are the keystone of the epistolary novel; the simple narrative structure of Pamela does not allow for a great deal of interactive dialogue, but Richardson's final two novels present a multivocal chorus of opinion freed from direct authorial control. To protect the integrity of the letter convention the characters cannot simply write of the action, which gives them the liberty to debate a vast range of subjects. Significantly, many of these remain on the level of discussion rather than coming to a fixed resolution, even the key conflicts between obedience and individualism enacted by Clarissa and Clementina are never formally concluded. Richardson does not give a final judgement on Clarissa's choice of action at Harlowe Place, nor does he impose a decision on Clementina, leaving it instead to "the Reader, to whom in this Sort of Writing, something, as I have hinted, should be left to make out or debate upon" (SL 296).

That Richardson's contemporary audience responded to this opportunity has been frequently commentated upon. John Mullan points out how fitting it is that Sarah Fielding's Remarks on "Clarissa" was composed in the form of a discussion taking place amongst a circle of Clarissa's readers, and indeed this document gives a useful insight into the contradictions and conflicts that the early reception of the novel produced,[43] as well as including an illustration of the affective process in action through the conversion of Bellario.[44]

The interpretative complexity of debate is also a feature of Richardson's correspondence. Although Richardson did retain an authorial prerogative over final conclusions in his letters, he delighted in encouraging argument, as illustrated by the following comment concerning the reception of Sir Charles Grandison - "I have lost a great Part of my Aim, if I do not occasion many Debates upon different Parts of my Management" (SL 257). Richardson realised that the readers' involvement in minutely analysing complex moral situations within the novels would prepare them for times in their own experience when a similar interpretative thoughtfulness would be required. It is this mental and emotional "training" which is the heart of Richardson's educational purpose.

Richardson's desire to refer his reader to principles of morality shapes his representation of the heroine. The most significant manifestation of this is the depiction of the heroine as an exemplary figure. In this Richardson differs from the authors I will be considering later in this thesis; specifically Lennox, Radcliffe, and Austen. Like Richardson, these writers (and the majority of other eighteenth-century women authors) present heroines who are young and inexperienced at the beginning of the novel, typically they are about to "enter the world" of social involvement and courtship decisions. However, their heroines are generally depicted either as being under the influence of some form of delusion at the start of the story, or as possessing a clearly signposted propensity to delusion (whether it be a tendency to excesses of imagination, sensibility, superstition or prejudice). As the author plays out the consequences of her protagonist's blindness she aims to provide an educative experience for both heroine and reader.

The technique of a novel centred around an exemplary heroine is rather different.[45] The Richardsonian heroine is a

fully formed personality before her story begins. She does not display an obvious character flaw, and, if she is forced into delusion during the novel, it is the direct result of circumstance and the conscious intervention of other characters. It is not a product of her own mind. Richardson's heroines personify a set of moral values which the novel then shows in action within the context of a specific narrative scenario.[46]

It is this scenario which is of paramount importance. Part of Richardson's novelistic genius is his ability to set in motion within the story a chain of circumstances which leads inevitably to deadlock; the application to Clarissa is obvious but this is also apparent in the dilemma faced by Sir Charles within the Italian sections of Sir Charles Grandison. The significance of such a situation is that there are no decisions the characters can make which will be unambiguously "right", these are areas where the absolute conclusions of conduct literature cannot apply. Richardson's characters only become mouthpieces for simplistic moral sentiment when they have ceased to be involved with a plot that questions, tests, and modifies the proper application of absolute principles to specific experience.[47]

The presentation of character in action allowed Richardson largely to avoid the greatest pitfall inherent in depicting an exemplary protagonist - their tendency to become what he called "a faultless monster" (SL 185). Although Richardson's heroines are explicitly set up as models for the reader, the difficulties of their situations engage sympathy, while the way principles are tempered by circumstance prevent them appearing unapproachably perfect. Obviously there were times when Richardson felt that his heroines had moved beyond anything the reader could hope to emulate, hence the numerous occasions when his characters specifically draw attention to the relevance of the heroine's "story". The best illustration of this is Anna

Howe's remark: "Every man, they will say, is not a LOVELACE. - True: But then, neither is every woman a CLARISSA. - And allow for the one and the other, the example must be of general use" (Cl VII, 144; 1315).

Clarissa is Richardson's greatest achievement in the treatment of the exemplary character. Her role as model is made explicit in the first letter of the novel when Anna Howe announces that "Every eye ... is upon you, with the expectation of an example" (Cl I, 4: 40); the readers of the third edition were already well aware of this as they had been informed by Richardson in the preface that Clarissa was "proposed as an Exemplar to her Sex",[48] a figure as perfect as human nature could aspire to be. This prefatory intervention is connected with Richardson's concern over how his heroine was being interpreted but it is also something of an authorial misjudgement. One of the interesting peculiarities of the epistolary form is that, in the absence of a guiding authorial presence which could highlight the exemplary nature of the heroine, the responsibility for this falls upon the other characters. What this means for Richardson's novels is that his heroines are consciously aware of their status as an example, and are continually reminded of it.[49] This is often underlined by the heroine being set into a mentor relationship with another female character. To an extent this occurs between Clarissa and Anna Howe but a better example would be that of Harriet Byron and Emily in Sir Charles Grandison.[50]

This creates an enormous burden of expectation upon the heroine. Clarissa particularly is painfully aware of the drawbacks inherent in being proclaimed a paragon and, after she has committed her "fatal step", the bitter condemnation she endures confirms her apprehensions. To her mother she has "deceived every-body's expectations. Her whole sex ... is disgraced by it" (Cl IV, 34; 585), and Mrs Howe refers to

Clarissa's actions as having "wounded" her sex (Cl VI, 11-12; 975). Even while Clarissa is still at Harlowe Place, it becomes obvious that there is a double standard involved in the way her behaviour is judged; because she is universally perceived as exemplary, any suggestion of falling off is met with critical attention that a more fallible character would not be subject to. Mrs Norton provides the explicit formalisation of this;

> persons of prudence, and distinguished talents, like yours, seem to be sprinkled thro' the world, to give credit, by their example, to Religion and Virtue. When such persons wilfully err, how great must be the fault! (Cl I, 264; 180)

Richardson of course goes to great lengths to protect Clarissa from such charges of wilful error.

After she leaves Harlowe Place with Lovelace, Clarissa believes she has renounced all her right to be regarded as a model and that her desire for this was part of the hidden vanity and pride which brought about her downfall.[51] Movingly, Clarissa is worried about Anna following "so bad an example" (Cl III, 71; 409), reacting immediately when Anna reveals she has argued with her mother over writing to Clarissa, or when she discusses joining Clarissa in London. Although Clarissa believes she is risking influencing Anna with the "infection in my fault" (Cl III, 335; 550) she cannot bring herself to break off the correspondence. One of the most painfully shocking moments in the novel occurs when Mrs Howe finally actively intervenes to prohibit it. By the single line "Evil communication, Miss - You know the rest" (Cl VI, 11; 975) the exemplary heroine has to face being branded as an agent of corruption to her best friend.

Anna refuses to endorse Clarissa's new interpretation of her experience as cautionary tale alone; she believes that if there is now an element of warning in Clarissa's story it is

given a particular resonance by the fact that such trials have been endured by a morally exemplary character. The fullest expression of this occurs in the letter Anna writes to raise Clarissa's spirits after she has belatedly received Morden's warning. It is in effect a summary of the way Clarissa's experience to this point can be sympathetically interpreted. Anna is careful to qualify her use of terms such as "error" or "misled" by relating them to Clarissa's own self-accusations.[52] The central point Anna makes is that Clarissa has become a more relevant model now because,

> there seems, as I have often said, a kind of fate in your error, if an error; and this, perhaps, admitted, for the sake of a better example to be collected from your sufferings, than could have been given, had you never erred: For, my dear, ADVERSITY is your SHINING-TIME (Cl IV, 24; 579).

What is expressed tentatively here appears more forcefully in the tributes Anna pays Clarissa later in the novel, one of the most unequivocal occurring in the ill-fated letter Clarissa misses due to her first escape from Mrs Sinclair's (Cl IV, 338-9; 749). It is interesting that both these letters are read by Lovelace. Although Anna is rather obviously guiding the reader towards the kind of applications Richardson hoped they would make from Clarissa's conduct, the reader is also aware of the ironic gloss on her remarks provided by Lovelace. Both letters are, like Anna's intervention with the Harlowes, instances where her zealous defence of her friend's cause actually makes Clarissa's position worse. In effect Lovelace uses Anna's argument as part of the justification for Clarissa's trial, ironically remarking, "she will be both a warning and example to all her Sex. - I hope the Sex will thank me for this" (Cl IV, 130; 636).

The question "What must that virtue be, which will not stand a trial?" (Cl III, 110; 430) is another piece of self-

justificatory Lovelacean rhetoric, but it is a sentiment which, in one form or another, is endorsed by most of the characters in the novel. Manipulative figures like Lovelace use it as an excuse to inflict cruelty, a similar application is made by the Harlowes. When, early on, Mrs Harlowe tells Clarissa that although she had previously "behaved extremely well" she "had no trials till now" (Cl I, 106; 95), it is clear that here interpretation of Clarissa's "trial" is solely in terms of the continuation of absolute obedience on Clarissa's part. Neither the Harlowes nor Lovelace can comprehend the virtue and integrity which underpins Clarissa's personality and, although they are responsible for testing her, they are unable to perceive the lessons to be learnt from her resistance.

The concept of the trial is central to Richardson's fiction and its significance is fully accepted by his protagonists. Often the Richardsonian heroine expresses an active desire to be tested. Pamela for example has a clear opportunity to return to her family at the beginning of her story (Pam I, 24; 38),[53] the fact she rejects it has often been offered as an illustration of her opportunism but it also demonstrates that a heroine cannot simply walk away from the experience which will test her principles. Harriet Byron is placed in an even more ambivalent position as she is an exemplary heroine in a novel where the role of moral example is shared between three characters. Not only must she be conscious of her own status as a "perfect paragon!" (SCG I, 46; I, 38) but she also has to learn from the "example to all her Sex" (SCG VI, 116; III, 79) set by Clementina. At times Harriet seems actively to crave the trials Clementina experiences, seeing it as almost a personal deficiency that she does not suffer as much.[54]

The necessity of adversity in Richardson's novels; "the state of trial of every good quality" (Cl II, 140; 282), according to Clarissa, or "the trial of principle" (SCG V, 67; II,

513), to Sir Charles, is that it creates the circumstances under which the most comprehensive exploration of his characters' exemplary qualities could take place. The reader may well agree with Anna Howe when she tells Clarissa "I bless God I have not your trials. We can all be good when we have no temptation nor provocation to the contrary" (Cl I, 175; 132) but, through their involvement in Clarissa's plight, the education by sympathy which Hawkesworth advocated in The Adventurer could potentially occur. Of course, on another level, the depiction of suspense, adversity, and trial is effective simply in terms of the novelistic requirement of a compelling plot. Richardson may have been scornful of those who read for the "Story" alone,[55] but he was too astute a writer to neglect exploiting such an essential means of engaging the reader's attention.

The extremity of the trials Richardson inflicts upon his heroines nonetheless generates its own problems. These are summed up by Carol Flynn's comment:

> Although he ostensibly places his heroines in stress-filled situations to reveal their shining virtues, Richardson often appears more concerned with the sensations he is eliciting than with the moral he is drawing.[56]

In Clarissa, Richardson attempts to control this tendency of his analysis of the heroine by transferring responsibility for the testing process onto Lovelace, a character who can then be condemned for employing such experimental methods of torture. However, numerous critics have drawn attention to the parallels between the strategy of the character and the author who stands behind him.[57] The heightened intensity of the conflict between Lovelace and Clarissa (and indeed of Mr B. and Pamela), drew adverse criticism upon Richardson from the outset.[58] Such responses were, ironically, fuelled by the very claims which Richardson had made for his novels. The valorisation of the ability of fiction to influence the reader could be turned

against the author if it was proved that the nature of this influence was an incitement to passion or cruelty.

The essentially uncontrollable process of identification between reader and character is what Bakhtin refers to as the "specific danger inherent in the novelistic zone of contact". This is the mirror image of Richardson's belief in the affective potential of literature, the propensity which such power has to take over and delude the mind of the reader for, as Bakhtin continues,

> we ourselves may actually enter the novel (whereas we could never enter an epic or other distanced genre). It follows that we might substitute for our own life an obsessive reading of novels, or dreams based on novelistic models.[59]

The eighteenth-century awareness of this creates what can be seen as the key ambiguities of the contemporary fiction. Indeed, later chapters of this thesis will be primarily concerned with examining how authors between 1750 and 1820 were compelled to address the implications of novelistic influence, and the methods of containing and directing it they proposed.

The paradox is that authors at this time perceived the dangers of fiction to be inseparably intertwined with its attractions. Laurie Langbauer encapsulates the result of this in an observation she makes concerning Lennox's quixote figure:

> Another way to read the mad Arabella is as the novelist's fantasy of wish-fulfillment. She is the ideal reader, completely given over to the sway of the text, attesting to the power of romance, a power the novelist desires for her form too.[60]

Richardson anxiously acknowledged that the engagement of the reader's mind, emotions, and sensibility which his novels were intended to evoke created the possibility of such responses.

Amidst the numerous strategies of authorial self-defence he developed, two emerge as most significant in this respect. First there is the emphasis he places on the experience of his heroines being the result of specific circumstances (which were highly unlikely to be shared by the reader in the exact form the novel records).[61] The role of the reader therefore was to extend their knowledge of human nature by considering the actions of Richardson's protagonists, not to "become" the heroine imaginatively:

> I must not have every good Lady enter herself into the Question, Should I, Could I have done so, or so? But say to herself, 'Here is a Character that somewhat differs from my own. Does she support it? Is she uniform? She is in a Situation I never found myself in; how can I tell how I should have acted had I been in hers?' (SL 251)

Richardson's second tactic is to exonerate the particular variety of fiction which he composed by attributing the "inflaming" or delusory tendencies of literature to other genres and forms. It becomes rather ironic that many of Richardson's contemporaries praised him in terms of how the credibility of his novels allowed him to influence the reader in a manner hitherto impossible, as Richardson himself was intent on ascribing intensive, and insidious, degrees of readerly involvement to previous prose forms. Sarah Fielding, through her character Miss Gibson, comments that, "the Author may thank himself" for the fact that Clarissa "is treated like an intimate Acquaintance by all her Readers" as "I dare say, the Authors of Cassandra, Clelia, with numberless others I could name, were never in any Danger of having their Heroines thought on, or treated like human Creatures".[62] Her opinion is similar to that expressed by Johnson in the fourth number of The Rambler.[63] Richardson was not so sanguine about the end result of the reading of romance, and the nature of his critique is the subject of the next section.

ii. Romances and Novels: The Question of Genre

Systematic generic definition of prose fiction was practically non-existent in the early decades of the eighteenth century.[1] As creative prose narratives were not taken seriously enough to attract rigorous analysis, their various manifestations - "romance", "tale", "novella", "novel", and "history" - coexisted and interrelated, the lines of demarcation between them remaining blurred. Retrospective attempts to read a pattern into this fluidity, or strictly to differentiate the novel from other modes of contemporary fiction, constantly run the risk of over simplification and misrepresentation.

A reminder of how elusive such categorising was to writers at the time is provided by Johnson's famous fourth number of The Rambler. To the modern reader the most conspicuous omission in Johnson's essay is the word "novel". The essay was published in March 1750 when the three authors traditionally acclaimed as the "fathers of the novel", Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding, had already published their masterpieces.[2] Despite this, the lines of division Johnson employs are "romances", "heroic romance",[3] "the comedy of romance", "fiction" and "familiar histories"[4] - anything but the term "novel" in fact.

Later in the century, aided by the distancing effect of hindsight, accounts of the generic development of prose fiction acquire a more familiar historical chronology. In particular the establishment of a genre called "the novel" which was defined by its difference from "romance" achieved widespread acceptance. Clara Reeve's The Progress of Romance (1785) is probably the most well-known contemporary expression of this concept,[5] but another version, which contains an interesting description of the transitional process of change, is the brief discussion of "fictitious history" in Hugh Blair's Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres (1783).

Blair outlines three recognisable stages in the history of fiction. The first is the time of the "romances of knight-errantry" during the "dark ages" between the eleventh and sixteenth centuries,[6] the second is the more sophisticated heroic romance, associated here with Sidney and seventeenth-century French writers, whereby the

> heroism and the gallantry, the moral and virtuous turn of the chivalry romance, were still preserved; but the dragons, the necromancers, and the enchanted castles, were banished, and some small resemblance to human nature was introduced.[7]

The third and final form according to Blair is the novel, which took over when the "magnificent Heroic Romance, dwindled down to the Familiar Novel".[8] The "Familiar Novel" started out under a cloud due to its immorality, but had been redeemed by the greater artistry of Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding.

Blair presents the simplest reading of the way in which genres of prose fiction changed over the centuries. His emphasis is on a process of gradual modification rather than abrupt alteration, with certain aspects of fiction - primarily probability, verisimilitude, and imaginative creativity - taking on different degrees of importance in different ages. However, this is a perspective that few novelists of the 1740s and '50s would have accepted.

What characterises the polemic of authors of prose fiction in the mid eighteenth century is a vigorous rejection of the vast majority of their predecessors,[9] and often a rather dubious opinion of their contemporaries. Therefore, one way of considering the means by which such writers generically defined their own novels is by examining the tendencies of previous prose fiction that they desired to distance themselves from through this condemnation.[10]

The difficulty here is that the indeterminacy of generic categorisation at the time is reflected in the language used by the novelists themselves, and one looks in vain for extensive accounts of the artistic shortcomings of named predecessors. The result of such confusing, often contradictory, references can be illustrated by a comparison of the conclusions drawn by modern critics who have ventured into this territory. There is a fundamental disagreement among such commentators as to what exactly was meant in the early eighteenth century by the terms "romance" and "novel". The only fixed point of reference is that Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett all claimed that what they were publishing was "new" because they felt it necessary to reject trends in previous fiction. The controversy therefore is over what they disliked and why.

Henry Miller argues that romance displays a high degree of thematic and structural continuity across the ages. For Miller the problem comes in the seventeenth century with the advent of the roman de longue haleine, (particularly associated with La Calprenède and Madeleine de Scudéry), when the romance becomes decadent, a salon "plaything for a group of rather extra-ordinary women".[11] Where before romance had centred on the knight's chivalric, martial code now it was given over to minute analysis of love and the exaltation of the heroine's role. The French romance then leads directly into "vulgarised erotic-pathetic ladies' books ... written by such interesting personages as Mary Delariviere Manley and Eliza Haywood",[12] and it is this which is rejected by the early novelists. So, to Miller, when these writers criticised "romance" they referred only to the amatory novella and heroic romance; it was not a condemnation of the "real" romance tradition.

To Hubert McDermott, in contrast, the anomalous stage is not the French heroic romance but medieval tales of chivalry. He argues that the continuity of romance was broken during the

medieval period and only restored when the influence of Greco-Roman romance returned through translations in sixteenth-century France and England. Hence the French romancers were actually the inheritors of romance tradition and their influence was channelled (albeit in corrupted form) through the "religious" and "passionate" romance of early eighteenth-century fiction into the English novel.[13] Dieter Schulz also contends that the French heroic romance is part of "the tradition of 'high' romance",[14] (rather than the decadent form which it was labelled by Miller) but, unlike McDermott, he develops this into an analysis of the terms of rejection employed by the novelists of the 1740s and '50s.

Schulz pays careful attention to the use of the words "romance" and "novel" in the early eighteenth century. He points out that many authors use the terms interchangeably. What he concludes is that the term "novel" came to stand for the short amatory or scandal novellas of the early years of the century; the novella was itself a derivative of French fiction a "shorter and debased variation of the heroic romance".[15] When the "fathers of the novel" emerged they resisted applying the term "novel" to their own fiction because they wanted to distance themselves from the scurrilous and licentious reputation of these amatory novellas. In the general wave of denunciations of previous English fiction its French predecessors were caught in the cross fire, as Schulz comments,

> even when they explicitly mentioned the heroic romance as their target, their notion of "romance" was profoundly influenced by the productions of such writers as Behn, Manley, and Haywood.[16]

Schulz points out that it is not clear how well Fielding, for one, actually knew the heroic romances,[17] and, for all his assaults on the "French Marvellous" (SL 53), the same question could be raised concerning Richardson;[18] certainly neither

displays the intimate knowledge of the subject that Lennox does in The Female Quixote.

References to "romances and novels", therefore, evoke a complex interrelationship between mid eighteenth-century novel, amatory novella, seventeenth-century romance and, behind that, centuries of romance tradition.[19] The issue is complicated further when Schulz's observation concerning the gap between 1740's polemic and informed knowledge of romance is taken into consideration. The absence of specificity is also commented on by Margaret Dalziel during her attempt to pin down Richardson's attitude to romance:

> We must conclude that he was often prepared to use the word romance to describe any extended piece of prose fiction, serious or comic ... comparison and contrast with such a vaguely defined genre did little to help him to a clear idea of what kind of fiction he himself was writing.[20]

Dalziel is correct up to a point, but it could be argued that this vagueness was necessary to Richardson in that it enabled him to deflect possible criticisms of his own text by transferring all the dangers of fiction onto a loosely constructed idea of "romance". Whether intentionally, or as a result of his limited reading, when Richardson illustrates his disagreement with the genre he shifts easily between description of the distinguishing features of novella, heroic romance, and the earlier tale of chivalry.

Richardson's attempt to construct "romance" as the demon alter-ego of the improving novel disguised, but did not alter, the presence of romance thematics in his own texts. This observation of course runs contrary to numerous modern accounts of the emergence of the novel. Since Ian Watt's influential definition of the novel in terms of its "formal realism",[21] many major analyses of the genre have been premised on an

essential divide between novel and romance, establishing different - often "non" or "para" literary - forms as the novel's predecessors.[22] These accounts are partially a reaction to the application of outdated methodologies to the study of the novel, in particular the practice of trawling through pre eighteenth-century fiction for instances of Ur-realism.[23] The intention here therefore is to create a paradigm of the novel as generically "other" to romance.

Watt, Davis, and Hunter present persuasive cases but they are hampered by the constant bugbear of "origin of the novel" criticism. When a critic has defined the novel by certain criteria it inevitably follows that this will apply more to some novelists than others, and that, even within the work of a single author, the critic will have to privilege certain features and risk an unbalanced account of the text. There is also the problem that, when a theory has been developed to cover Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding (which is difficult enough) it has to accommodate the fragmentation of "the novel" into generic confusion later in the century. It was only a decade after the publication of Sir Charles Grandison (1753-4) that Walpole announced his attempt to create a "new species of romance",[24] because the "great resources of fancy have been dammed [sic] up, by a strict adherence to common life".[25] Also, while banishing romance from a relationship with the novel involves a rather selective reading of even the "fathers of the novel", it is nigh on impossible if contemporary female writers are brought into consideration.[26]

A radically different approach is that proposed by Mikhail Bakhtin. Rather than concerning himself with establishing the novel as a specific genre with its own distinct canon, Bakhtin describes "novelization" as process, in particular as it is expressed through the "novelization of other genres":

> The novel parodies other genres (precisely in their role as genres); it exposes the conventionality of their forms and their language; it squeezes out some genres and incorporates others into its own peculiar structure, re-formulating and re-accentuating them.[27]

Novels, therefore, include within themselves myriad "languages" of genres, registers, and speech, set into a "dialogized" tension as "Novelistic discourse is always criticizing itself".[28] This is notably the case with the "incorporated genres" which,

> usually preserve within the novel their own structural integrity and independence, as well as their own linguistic and stylistic peculiarities.[29]

These observations have a, perhaps unexpected, relationship to Richardson's novels. Richardson's expressed anxieties concerning romance should be set alongside the way in which his fiction criticises, parodies, incorporates, and replicates it, containing in itself the internal tension characteristic of "novelization".

Ironically, after reading modern analyses of the novel based on the casting out of romance, Bakhtin, with his often cavalier application of the terms "romance" and "novel", sounds strangely reminiscent of the eighteenth-century novelists themselves.[30] The indiscriminate usage of the terms in the eighteenth century is indicative of generic confusion, and no one exemplifies this better than Richardson. This is particularly conspicuous in the famous account of his authorial intentions with Pamela:

> I thought the story ... might possibly introduce a new species of writing, that might possibly turn young people into a course of reading different from the pomp and parade of romance-writing, and dismissing the improbable and marvellous, with which novels generally abound, might tend to promote the cause of religion and virtue (SL 41).

If Richardson is in any way representative of the common

contemporary usage of these terms then obviously the link between the "novel" and realism (or closeness to "nature" as it was usually described in the early eighteenth century[31]) had not yet emerged. Here both "romance" and "novel" are suspect forms dealing with imaginary worlds rather than "true to life" experience; only romance has more of the "pomp and parade" than its derivative.

It is fairly safe to assume that, despite Richardson's reluctance here and elsewhere to name the "romances and novels" he is referring to, the chivalric romance, seventeenth-century French romance and the English amatory novella come under his generalised condemnation. The fact that Richardson tends to use the conventional critical language about these works ("improbable", "marvellous", also "inflaming" or "harmful"), suggests that he is not expressing direct complaints about specific works. Richardson's own assessment of the traditional thematic or structural patterning of romance[32] is submerged under his tendency to group together aspects of previous fiction he disliked - such as immorality, the over fanciful and supernatural, or the idealistic presentation of first love - and categorise them as the products of "romance and the novel".

If Richardson was not happy with terming his work either romance or novel, then the next stage is establishing what exactly the generic definition of this "new species of writing" was. This was not a great trouble to Richardson during the publication of Pamela, but it became a pressing concern with Clarissa. Clarissa was a more substantial work in every respect and the nature of its reception was deeply important to Richardson, some form of generic label therefore seemed essential. In part Richardson attempted to define Clarissa in opposition to previous prose writing, finding it easier to tell the reader what it was not than what it was. In the postscript to the first edition therefore he rebukes readers who "perhaps

looked upon it as a mere Novel or Romance" (Cl VII, 431; 1498) and by the third edition this had been expanded and included in the preface: "It will probably be thought tedious to all such as dip into it, expecting a light Novel, or transitory Romance".[33] However, if Richardson did "intend more than a Novel or Romance by this Piece" (SL 99) he needed to find a more positive terminology.[34]

So the "new" genre is delimited in various, and often contradictory ways. It is the "History, or rather The Dramatic Narrative of CLARISSA" (Cl VII, 426; 1495), of "the Tragic Kind" (SL 99), and a "History of Life and Manners".[35] There is also the question of what exactly Richardson meant when he spoke of a "new species" of fiction. Although Richardson did think of himself as having been innovative in the literary sense (particularly through pioneering the technique of "writing to the moment"), the distinction he always draws between himself and his predecessors is one of content not style. Due to this it was in fact possible to present his work in "the humble Guise of a Novel" (SL 117) as long as his emphasis on moral improvement did not disappoint the readers' expectations to the extent that they would reject it. This is expressed with typically Richardsonian circumlocution in the "Hints of Prefaces" for Clarissa:

> And if there be those, who suppose this Work to be of the Novel Kind, it may not be amiss, even in the Opinion of such, to try whether, by an Accommodation to the light Taste of the Age a Religious Novel will do Good.[36]

Alongside Richardson's desire to establish his novels as a distinct and original type there is a contrary impetus towards using the reader's perception of what was provided by romances and novels in order to "smuggle" through improvement to those who were usually immune to it. Richardson explicitly states that if he were to publish a work which was announced to be

moral, serious, and educational, the sections of the reading public he wanted to influence would not read it - but they would read a novel:

> I am endeavouring to write a Story, which shall catch young and airy Minds, and when Passions run high in them, to shew how they may be directed to laudable Meanings and Purposes, in order to decry such Novels and Romances, as have a Tendency to inflame and corrupt: And if I were to be too spiritual, I doubt I should catch none but Grandmothers (SL 46-7).

This belief remained with Richardson throughout his authorial career. Over ten years later, after the publication of Sir Charles Grandison, he reaffirmed it in a letter to Lady Echlin - "Instruction without Entertainment ... would have but few Readers" (SL 322). In regard to genre, then, Richardson was in a peculiarly ambivalent position. He had to distance himself from the immorality of the novella and the improbability of romance but without alienating the audience of these forms, as this would defeat his instructive intentions. Indeed, as McDermott points out, the "presentational context"[37] of Richardson's early novels was deliberately designed to make their readers believe that what they were about to read was within the romance genre.[38] Having "caught" his reader the educational process could begin.

What made Richardson's relationship to romance-orientated fiction yet more complex was the content of his stories. His reasons for using particular lines of narrative development and his methods of representing them may well have been a break with the past, but the plots themselves were not. The portrayal of the seduction plot and its corollary of "virtue in distress" drew heavily on the "warm" novels of women like Eliza Haywood, while the centrality of love in all Richardson's novels and the discussion of the behavioural codes of decorum that surround it, link him to the French heroic romance.[39]

That Richardson was, rather nervously, aware of this is apparent from the discussions of romance he writes into his fiction. However, these numerous internal references are far from all being simple rejections of romance conventions. In the novels themselves subtle interconnections emerge between romance tradition and Richardson's "new species of writing" suggesting that, despite the dogmatism of some of his assertions, Richardson did not intend to replace imagination and romance with morality and realism. There is a blending and a fusion and at its centre is the figure of the heroine.

There are a number of occasions in Richardson's novels where a character will openly discuss the effect that reading romances has on the youthful female mind. During these scenes of direct reference it is the dangers of romance that tend to be stressed. The tone ranges from the Mrs Shirley's mildly patronising cautionary tales (SCG VII, 204-9; III, 398-401) to the more open condemnation of Morden's comments in Clarissa:

> He said, that men had generally too many advantages over the weakness, credulity, and inexperience of the fair sex, who were too apt to be hurried into acts of precipitation by their reading inflaming novels, and idle romances (Cl VII, 90; 1279-80).

It is misleading to extract such remarks from their context and present them as the view of "Richardson",[40] this after all is the author who asserted that "It is not fair to say - I, identically I, am any-where, while I keep within the character" (SL 286). Morden is hardly the most reliable moral arbiter in Clarissa and Lovelace refers to this particular speech of his as being spoken in "this trite manner" (Cl VII, 90; 1280). However, the sentiments Morden expresses here had previously been put forward by Pamela who, partially due to the comparative simplicity of the narrative of her story, seems to be a more likely authorial spokesperson. Pamela uses similar terminology to Morden, the romances she has read,

> gave me no great Pleasure; for either they dealt so much in the Marvellous and Improbable, or were so unnaturally inflaming to the Passions, and so full of Love and Intrigue, that hardly any of them but seem'd calculated to fire the Imagination, rather than to inform the Judgment. (Pam IV, 440-1)

She goes on to discuss the conventions of romance; tournaments, monsters, adventures and knight-errantry all being rejected as irrelevant to "common Life", whilst the moral behaviour of the hero and heroine with their "indiscreet Love" is equally dubious as a model. However, if an anti-romance consensus appears to be emerging from the reiteration of such remarks in Richardson's letters and novels, there is one line in Pamela's diatribe that tends strongly in the opposite direction.

During her dismissive account of the romance heroine Pamela remarks,

> she is taught to consider her Father's House as an inchanted Castle, and her Lover as the Hero who is to dissolve the Charm, and to set her at Liberty from one Confinement, in order to put her into another, and, too probably, a worse. (Pam IV, 441)

The motivations Pamela ascribes to the heroine in this "typical" romance scenario are far removed from Clarissa's in escaping Harlowe Place with Lovelace (although figures like Arabella significantly insist in regarding this as Clarissa's "romantic and giddy expedition!" (Cl VI, 307; 1160) in Pamela's terms). However it is impossible to read these lines without thinking of those that echo them in the later novel,[41]

> she will undoubtedly have the gratitude to distinguish between the confinement she has escaped from, and the liberty she has reason to rejoice in.
>
> Lovelace, (Cl III, 30; 387)

and, especially:

> Let me but know, I beseech you, good Sir, bowing (I was very angry!), if you intend to leave me; or if I have only escaped from one confinement to another?
>
> Clarissa, (Cl III, 42; 393).

The underlying similarity between the events of Clarissa and a romantic archetype are driven home by a passage much later on in the novel which again is closely connected to the language of Pamela's speech. This is the important section in which Lovelace exposes Belford's complicity in Clarissa's trial. To emphasise how distinctly unheroic Belford's involvement has been Lovelace turns their story into a romance:

> Hadst thou a mind to make thyself a good title to the merit to which thou now pretendest to lay claim, thou shouldest, like a true knight-errant, have sought to set the lady free from her inchanted castle. Thou shouldst have apprised her of her danger; have stolen in, when the giant was out of the way; or, hadst thou the true spirit of chivalry upon thee, and nothing else would have done, have killed the giant (Cl VII, 341; 1440).

In one sense this is simply another instance of Lovelace's delight in consciously enacting literary roles, depicting himself as a giant is in character for a man who believes that "either I am a principal in this cause, or I am nothing" (Cl VII, 73; 1269). However, the idea of Clarissa as the lady immured in an enchanted castle is suggestive, and a subject to which I will return in the final section of this chapter.

There is more than a hint of parody in Lovelace's remarks and this too is typical of the overt references to romance in Richardson's novels. As is the case here, when one character describes another in such terms it is usually to express a belief that their position is untenable or to make them look ridiculous. During Sir Charles' oft-thwarted attempts to make Charlotte Grandison approach her marital prospects with the proper seriousness he suggests that she would be more amenable if they had the "right" setting:

> could I place you upon the mossy bank of a purling stream, gliding thro' an enamelled mead; in such a scene, a now despised Lord G. or a Sir Walter, might find his account, sighing at your feet. (SCG III, 142; II, 98)

Unfortunately, of all the youthful female characters in Sir Charles Grandison, Charlotte has the least similarity to the romance heroine, and so Sir Charles' rather laboured comparison falls flat, especially when compared to her arch rejoinder about his knowledge of "the fields of Ar-ca-dy!". It is however more palatable than the cruelty with which Mr B. evokes conventional romance scenarios, remarking that after he has raped Pamela she will be "turned loose to her evil Destiny, and echo to the Woods and Groves her piteous Lamentations for the Loss of her fantastical Innocence" (Pam I, 215; 144-5). As usual it is left to Lovelace to approach this imagery with a light, comic touch that is beyond either Mr B. or Sir Charles, commenting to Belford:

> I can account now, how it comes about, that lovers, when their mistresses are cruel, run into solitude, and disburthen their minds to stocks and stones: For am I not forced to make my complaints to thee? (Cl V, 331-2; 944)

Mr B.'s remark however does suggest the possibility of a more positive reading of Richardsonian romance references. To Mr B. Pamela's innocence is "fantastical" and he continues by labelling her a "romantick Idiot" (Pam I, 215; 145) for her continuing resistance to his attempts upon her. Although Mr B. believes that Pamela's principles are simply a matter of "a very pretty romantic Turn for Virtue, and all that!" (Pam I, 83; 71), to the heroine (and her author) the defence of her honour and virtue is a moral imperative rather than the quixotic whim Mr B. views it as being.

The use of "romantic" in this context becomes even more noticeable in Clarissa where almost every antagonistic character refers to the heroine in this way; Antony Harlowe talks of

the "most horrid romantic perverseness in your sex" (Cl I, 217; 155), James Harlowe calls her a "romantic young creature" (Cl I, 261; 178) given to "pretty romantic flights" (Cl I, 226; 160) and Lovelace frequently echoes Mr B.'s refusal to "form our opinion of things by the romantic notions of a girl, who supposes that to be the greatest which is the slightest of evils" (Cl V, 141; 836). Although the term when used is almost invariably intended as an insult, Dalziel is right to point out that the connection

> between the concept of heroism and the idealism of romance is hinted at by Richardson himself, when he makes his rakes use the word 'romantic' to describe the wholly admirable attitudes of their intended victims.[42]

The preconceptions about the female character conveyed through the belief in what Clarissa calls "that romantic turn ... which we have supposed generally to obtain with our Sex, from Fifteen to Twenty-two" (Cl IV, 349; 754), are not only relevant to how Pamela, Clarissa, Harriet, and Clementina were perceived within their respective novels, but also have a bearing on the attitude Richardson's readership had to the figure of a heroine.

The fact that specific references to romance in Richardson's novels are characterised by a tone of cautionary qualification should not conceal the indebtedness of Pamela, Clarissa and Sir Charles Grandison to the structure, themes and ideals of romance. If anything it can be shown that Richardson's fiction became increasingly romance-orientated as his literary career progressed.[43] This can be illustrated by a comparison of Pamela with Sir Charles Grandison.

On a surface level Richardson's first novel comes complete with all the trappings of romance convention. On the one hand it deals with the heroine's trial by abduction, imprisonment and sexual danger, and on the other, the story of Mr B.'s "pretty

Rustick" (Pam II, 91; 242) is set within the rural, country environment associated with pastoral romance.[44] Richardson was however new to the publication of fiction, wary about the reaction of his audience and keen to make them perceive his work as free from the moral and aesthetic problems of previous fiction. The result was that Pamela displays the most pronounced anti-romantic tendencies of any of Richardson's novels. These are most apparent in the portrayal of the heroine.

It would be too simplistic to state that Pamela's low social status renders her "realistic" while the more well-born heroine tends to be "romantic", especially as pastoral romance had dealt with lowly heroines before although, as Doody points out, they have a fortuitous tendency to turn out to be of the nobility in the end.[45] What distinguishes Pamela from the rural shepherdesses and milkmaids of romance are lines such as the following,

> I bought two Flannel Under-coats, not so good as my Swan-skin and fine Linen ones; but what would keep me warm, if any Neighbour should get me to go out to help 'em to milk, now-and-then (Pam I, 50; 52).

As has often been noted it is Pamela's relentless focus on the practical concerns of day to day living - clothes, food, and money particularly - that differentiates her from the romance heroine. In this respect her closest link is to Defoe's Moll Flanders or Roxana.

Pamela is not idealised in either her responses or her language (although Richardson did gradually "raise" both in revisions[46]). Unlike the later heroines Pamela does not seem dominated by a code of decorous behaviour; she responds to circumstance with a reassuringly human expediency, as displayed in her comic discussion of worms and sunflowers with Mrs Jewkes (Pam I, 165; 118), or her panic-stricken reaction to the

unexpected arrival of Lady Davers: "Tell her, said I, I am sick a-bed; I'm dying, and must not be disturb'd; I'm gone out, --- or any thing!" (Pam II, 226; 317). The use of dialect in the novel is particularly effective in establishing the credibility of Richardson's "comical Girl" (Pam I, 96; 79). The heroine of romance did not tend to be called a "sawcy Slut" (Pam I, 69; 63) by her would-be lover, describe her heart as "lumpish" (Pam II, 35; 211) or, when presented with the illegitimate child of the hero, make remarks like, "excuse me, Sir, I must go and have a little Prattle with her" (Pam II, 362; 392). The diction of the Richardsonian heroine does tend to get more stylised and formal in the later novels. However, in Clarissa at least, speeches such as the following:

> Base man! said the violent lady, I have no wishes, but never to behold you more! Why must I be thus pursued and haunted? ... Despoiled of all succour and help, and of every friend, I am contented to be poor, low, and miserable, so I may be free from your persecutions!-
>
> Clarissa, (Cl V, 25; 775)

are partially offset by Lovelace's connoisseur's appreciation of the "tragedy-speech" and the "high manner" (Cl V, 27; 775).

By the time Richardson came to write Sir Charles Grandison he was a successful author who had secured his reputation as a serious, moral writer through Clarissa. Also, rather than the more nebulous fears about "romance and the novel" expressed earlier in his career, his antagonism now had a specific focus - the popularity and influence of Fielding. Sir Charles Grandison therefore was explicitly conceived to counter the supposed cynicism and corrupting tendencies of Tom Jones (SCG VII, 303-4; III, 466). A side-effect of this may have been a lessening of Richardson's concern with traditional romance. Whatever the reasons, the links to romance in Sir Charles Grandison are inescapable and largely responsible for the novel's distinctive atmosphere.

The novel proceeds at a leisurely pace, the emphasis being on conversation between characters and their discussion of how each shift in circumstance relates to the emotional state of the central figures. Alongside the main plot concern of the triangular relationship between Harriet, Sir Charles and Clementina, there are subplots provided by Sir Charles' "continual round of good offices" (SCG II, 83; I, 279). These parallel elements of the main story and, when combined with the great amount of retrospective narration, mean that the text does not display the forward momentum of one with a single dominant line of plot action. All of these techniques would have seemed very familiar to the reader of the seventeenth-century romances of Scudéry or La Calprenède.[47]

Richardson presents the reader with what is effectively a fusion of two sets of generic expectations. There is adherence to representation of "true life" experience; the various communities within Sir Charles Grandison are set in specific geographical locations, the reader is told about the houses, social position, and wealth of the characters even down to minutiae of domestic management and monetary transactions. However, alongside this there is the nexus of romance allusions; so Harriet, for example, is not only a figure within a realistic context of familial and social relationships but also a "sweet orphan-girl" (SCG II, 123; I, 307) who can find herself being rescued by the hero from a "villain's hands!" (SCG I, 194; I, 140) whilst dressed as an Arcadian princess.

The novel goes even further into romance territory during the Italian sections, as Richardson's Italy is a land of the Inquisition, plots and imprisonment.[48] Sir Charles Grandison's status as a mixed genre novel is particularly highlighted when the Italians arrive back in England. Occasionally, the poniards and vengeance that accompany Olivia, or the garden walks and temples of friendship associated with Clementina, can be jarring, rather as if one of Ann Radcliffe's characters had

wandered into a Jane Austen novel. But because Richardson has not developed a simple contrast between a "real" England and a "romance" Italy there is often a more aesthetically successful interweaving of the two.

Rather than writing "realistic" novels which reject romance, Richardson, therefore, enacts the tensions between the two modes of representation by incorporating them in a "dialogized" relationship within the texts. In a useful discussion of the connections between Paradise Regained and Clarissa, R. Paul Yoder points to the means by which Richardson's novel functions both on the level of realism and that of allegory.[49] Such observations can be extended to encompass a further layering involving the fantastic, imaginative and romantic, with what Morris Golden describes as, "the curious and sometimes impressive result that their manifestations in the novels comment on each other".[50]

The important point is that all such internal "languages" of the text themselves undergo an inevitable process of "novelization". Romance may remain in some ways distinct and independent, as is characteristic of the "inserted genre" in Bakhtin's view, but it is no longer romance per se but romance novelized and transformed. Inclusion within the novel subjects it to a process of parodic questioning and a new sense of self-consciousness is acquired. For example, when Harriet describes her "fancy", "then comes my rescuer, my deliverer: And he is sometimes a mighty prince (dreams then make me a perfect romancer) and I am a damsel in distress" (SCG II, 92; I, 285), she is revealing an awareness of the generic qualities of romance which distances her from it, however closely her experience of Sir Charles' rescue enacted romance convention.

This technique, which combines a hint of parody with a prompt to the reader to make the connection with romance, is

used to much greater effect by Lovelace. Lovelace likes to portray himself in a heroic role, during his time spent shadowing Harlowe Place he remarks "was ever hero in romance (opposing giants and dragons excepted) called upon to harder trials?" (Cl I, 201; 146), and, when Clarissa displays her reluctance to leave with him, he makes her "gasp almost with terror" by a calculated display of heroics (Cl III, 11; 377). Although Lovelace possesses the requisite qualities of a romance hero, such allusions serve to point up his differences. If Sir Charles, despite the fact he would "not be thought romantic" (SCG VI, 52; III, 36), when necessary emulates the knight-errant, Lovelace consciously assumes the part when it suits his designs. These are designs deeply subversive of the chivalric code, as the following lines make clear:

> Purchased by a painful servitude of many months; fighting through the wild beasts of her family for her, and combating with a wind-mill virtue, that hath cost me millions of perjuries only to attempt (Cl IV, 315; 736).

The fact that the references here are to Don Quixote rather than "straight" romance suits the oblique way Lovelace approaches romance conventions. Rather than exalting his lady, Lovelace's "servitude" is intended to prove upon trial that her "wind-mill virtue" is the product of delusion and hypocrisy.

Richardson's characters come to romance from a range of perspectives but its greatest relevance is to the heroine. This may not seem immediately apparent. Within the novels Richardson is careful to differentiate his exemplary heroine's prudence, judgement and reason from "thoughtless, fond, giddy creature[s]" (Cl VII, 144; 1315) who would seem to be the obvious "romancers". It is significant that, as I have discussed, other characters do not respect this distinction, giving the impression that to be young and female necessitates a degree of romanticism, however flawless the character's

behaviour. The derogatory use of the word in Richardson's fiction, with its connotations of immaturity and irresponsibility, should also not disguise the fact that traditionally, and especially in the seventeenth century, the romance heroine was conceived as an idealised pattern of virtue whose behaviour was set within the context of a codified decorum.

The similarities between the romance and Richardsonian heroine are only increased by the continued centrality of the love plot.[51] In Sir Charles Grandison particularly there is an intense concentration on the love relationship. Harriet warns the "venerable circle" (SCG I, 294; I, 208) early on that she will have "nothing to trouble you with, I think, but scenes of courtship" (SCG I, 121; I, 89) and her story bears her out. The later Richardsonian heroine does occasionally express exasperation at being primarily considered in terms of her marital prospects. After her experience with Sir Hargrave, Harriet claims "I am vexed with these men, one after another" (SCG I, 309; I, 219) but in context this is primarily a reflection of her feeling of hopelessness over Sir Charles. Later this pattern will be repeated in the accounts of Clementina's initial involvement with the hero. When there is still some mystery about the cause of Clementina's melancholy she remarks:

> Camilla, here, is continually teazing me with her persuasions to be in Love, as she calls it: That is the silly thing, in our sex, which gives importance to yours. A young creature cannot be grave, cannot indulge a contemplative humour, but she must be in Love. (SCG III, 223; II, 152-3)

This is a perfectly valid rebuke but again it is undercut by Mrs Beaumont's "discovery" a few pages later that the doctors were right, romance convention is to be respected, "Love ... is the malady" (SCG III, 239; II, 164).

It is Clarissa that is most interesting in this context. From the start the preoccupation of every character is whom the "young lady" loves and whom she will marry. To the Harlowes her rejection of Solmes proves her love for Lovelace (this is partially a manipulative strategy), while even Anna Howe is intent on bringing Clarissa's concealed "prepossession" to the surface. But perceiving Clarissa within this frame of reference underestimates her. Clarissa's complexity results from her dual function as both exemplary and romantic heroine.[52] As the romance heroine she stands, as she is perceived by her friends and family: a young girl whose task is to choose and marry the most eligible man available to her. To this end she discusses her ideal of love and marriage, given a realistic grounding by accounts of how she views her future roles of wife, mother, and domestic manager. However, Clarissa is so palpably exceptional that thinking of her in these terms is difficult; something Belford perceives when he first meets her, "I am ready to regret that such an angel of a lady should even marry" (Cl III, 345; 555).

Part of the reason she should marry is that that is what the heroine of a romance story is supposed to do. This expectation is given the lie by Lovelace. His "rescue" of the heroine from imprisonment and threatened forced marriage is in keeping generically, but from then on his failure to act like a romance hero means the possibility of Clarissa's story developing to the conventional conclusion in marriage all but disappears, and Richardson is free to develop the singular qualities of his heroine to her saintly conclusion. Clarissa's continued involvement with Lovelace does, however, keep her within the parameters of the love story, and it is very late in the day that other characters finally rule out the possibility of a marital romance ending. It is, of course, one of the most famous aspects of the novel's reception that Richardson's original readers clung onto their generic expectations to the

bitter end, working out ingenious ways in which Lovelace could reform and Clarissa could be saved.[53]

Circumstances are different in Sir Charles Grandison, as here the heroine (or at least one of the heroines) does enter into the ideal marital state with the hero. However, this novel is, if anything, a better illustration of Richardson's ability to intermingle romance and instruction. The novel is structured around a series of decisions which can be answered in either a "prudent" or a "romance" fashion: whether Harriet should marry someone else if Sir Charles is accepted by Clementina, whether in any case she could tolerate "a double Love" (SCG VI, 83; III, 57) in a suitor, and whether Clementina ought to marry Belvedere.

The great strength of the epistolary technique is that all the arguments these choices raise can be canvassed and presented to the reader without the need for final arbitration. For instance, Harriet is called a "romancer" for admitting Sir Charles was "my first Love; and I never will have any other" (SCG V, 110; II, 542) and the Countess of D. immediately steps in to "disillusion" her, "I cannot allow the sacredness young people are apt to imagine in a first Love" (SCG V, 116; II, 546); but the dilemma is sidestepped as Harriet (like practically every other eighteenth-century heroine who marries) does marry her first love and never needs to change her mind.[54]

That Harriet does not have to go through a "conversion" scene where she actively rejects her romance ideals for pragmatic reality is connected to her status as an exemplary heroine. In contrast, later in the eighteenth century the heroine is more likely to be shown undergoing a process of delusions, mistakes and self-imposed trials that educate her into a greater self-awareness.

Harriet's story also illustrates the great advantage of the mixed modes of representation in Richardson's fiction. The compendious inclusivity of these novels, with their conflicting and enriching internal languages and genres, allowed Richardson to depict heroines whose experience can be simultaneously functioning on the level of realism, romance, and allegory, while also contrasting and questioning the place of all three within the parameters of creative fiction. It is one solution to the dilemma of definition which was to preoccupy novelists after 1750 and explains why such authors - whether their writings were comic or serious, romantic or realistic, sentimental or gothic - could turn to Richardson's fiction as the storehouse of models for all.

iii. "Real" and "Imaginary" Evils:[1] The Heroine in the Wilderness

The structure of Richardson's novels throws a great deal of emphasis on the imaginative life of his heroines. The main reason for this is that they are placed in an almost permanent state of apprehension. The Richardsonian heroine is called upon to react rather than act, decisions are made around her and trials are imposed upon her; and, as she never knows exactly what these will entail, her imagination is constantly suggesting and adapting possible scenarios. Such apprehensions become one of Richardson's key techniques in the creation of suspense. This is neatly conveyed by the justification of "writing to the moment" provided by Belford's summary of Clarissa's epistolary style, (which Richardson later extracted and placed in the preface to the third edition[2]):

> writing of and in the midst of present distresses! How much more lively and affecting, for that reason, must her stile be, than all that can be read in the dry, narrative, unanimated stile of persons relating difficulties and dangers surmounted! The minds of such not labouring in suspense, not tortured by the pangs of uncertainty, about events still hidden in the womb of fate; but, on the contrary, perfectly at ease (Cl VI, 336; 1178).

The impression Belford draws attention to here is common to all of Richardson's fiction, the novels' characteristic present tense immediacy being the intended effect of the employment of the epistolary form. There are however variations in narrative style from novel to novel which affect the way the reader perceives the heroine's suspense and apprehension.

Both Pamela and Sir Charles Grandison involve a simple suspense structure in that the reader's knowledge generally keeps pace with the heroine's. In Pamela this is because the reader really only has access to one account of the narrative, especially when Pamela's letters become a journal. With the

exception of the clumsy editorial intervention to explain Mr B.'s abduction of Pamela, there is no means by which the reader has the opportunity to acquire more information than the heroine. The same observation can be made of Sir Charles Grandison. Even though the novel contains a greater range of correspondents than Pamela, there are no real "closed" correspondences known to some characters and not to others.[3]

With a simple suspense pattern the heroine's apprehensions and fears are translated directly to the reader who possesses no greater insight. The shared tension drives the plot and fixes the reader's attention onto the heroine who is its central focus. Unlike Sir Charles Grandison, the suspense element of Pamela begins almost immediately. Pamela's parents announce that "we begin to be in great Fear for you" (Pam I, 5; 27) in their first letter and from this point Pamela's "Fears are always awake!" (Pam I, 74; 66). She has good reason for this, as Mr B. reveals his intentions towards her explicitly and early; this establishes the nature of her trial and dictates her response. Her position does undergo a change when she is held at the Lincolnshire estate, and significantly this is primarily due to Mr B.'s absence. Without direct involvement with her persecutor, Pamela's "distracting Fears and Apprehensions" (Pam I, 124; 95) take greater hold of her and so her concern begins to change from a fear of violence to a fear of delusion.

After Mr B.'s arrival this comes to focus on the question of the sham-marriage. Pamela does have rational grounds for her fears, she has been warned by the "gipsy" (Pam II, 7; 196), and indeed it becomes apparent later that such a plan was Mr B.'s intention until Pamela's "white Angel got the better of ... [his] black one" (Pam II, 71; 231).[4] However, the possibility of being "deluded with the Hopes of a Happiness that my highest Ambition could not have aspired to!" (Pam II, 8; 196) does become something of an obsession with Pamela, occasionally

threatening the movement of the novel towards happier "realities" (Pam II, 29-31; 208-9).

Pamela is disturbed by the fact that, while she can defend herself against M^r^ B.'s threats and offers, she has no way of telling whether he is capable of seducing her into accepting a false marriage as real. This is what Lady Davers believes has happened, commenting, "Thou'rt almost got into Fool's Paradise" (Pam II, 227; 318), whilst Beck expresses the belief that, "if the poor Girl has been deluded so, as you have heard, with the Sham-marriage, she'll be more deserving of your Ladyship's Pity than Anger" (Pam II, 237; 323). However, during the confrontation between Lady Davers and Pamela, the reader is well aware that Pamela has escaped such a fate through her marriage to M^r^ B.. It is Lady Davers who is deluded, not the heroine.

Both the imaginatively intensified troubles of apprehension, and the real dangers of Pamela's circumstances have been removed by a traditional "happy ending".[5] Even at the end of her story when she has arrived at her exalted condition, however, Pamela expresses the common attitude of the Richardsonian heroine towards the continued relevance and interrelationship of such "evils" in her life:

> Oh! what a poor thing is human Life in its best Enjoyments! --- subjected to imaginary Evils, when it has no real ones to disturb it! and that can be made as effectually unhappy by its Apprehensions of remote Contingencies, as if it was struggling with the Pangs of a present Distress! (Pam II, 387; 406)[6]

Pamela's remark has implications for the position of Harriet Byron in Sir Charles Grandison. Although Harriet does not have to undergo the fear of physical violation and loss of honour which is suffered by Pamela and Clarissa,[7] she is subjected to an intense mental and emotional trial by the suspense she is made to undergo while waiting for the outcome

of Sir Charles' Italian expedition. In her words:

> Never, I believe, did any young creature suffer in her mind by suspense as I have done for some months past. (SCG V, 129; II, 555)

It is significant that, as a result of her experience of the two main "mysteries" of the narrative (first the retrospective discovering of Sir Charles' attachment, second the process by which his relationship with Clementina is resolved), Harriet comes to feel that, however hurtful and disappointing real occurrences can be, the known circumstance is always preferable to trepidation and fear. The dread is of apprehension itself, "My heart sickens at the thought of farther suspense. I cannot bear it!" (SCG III, 198; II, 136). This is a frequent lament in Richardson's novels as, for all his heroines, there is a great deal of time available to them when they have "nothing to do but write, and weep, and fear, and pray" (Pam I, 123-4; 94).

In the light of Pamela's belief that imaginary disturbances continue even when real difficulties are settled, it is interesting to observe how Harriet's apprehension only seems to intensify when Clementina has finally refused Sir Charles and he has declared himself Harriet's suitor. This is connected with the fact that Harriet (like the reader) is not entirely convinced that Clementina's decision is final, nor what the consequences would be if she does have a change of heart, but Harriet's continued fears seem to go deeper than this.

Unlike Pamela who casts off the experience of her trial as soon as it finishes, Harriet is subtly altered by hers. The sections of the novel which deal with the months before her wedding show her in an emotional and imaginatively disturbed state, where her rational judgement cannot entirely resist encircling apprehensions: "Something, I thought, was to happen to prevent me ever being his. But hence, Recollection! I chase

thee from me. Yet when realities disturb, shadows will officiously obtrude on the busy imagination as realities" (SCG VI, 70; III, 48).[8] The blurring of the distinction between imagined fears and real concerns culminates in Harriet's dream, when her numerous and largely unfounded apprehensions combine to torture her. From this point until her wedding, Harriet's mood is one of subdued thoughtfulness (which occasionally gives way to barely controlled panic).

However, by this stage in the novel Harriet's fate is resolved and, just as Pamela is not tricked into a sham-marriage, nothing prevents Harriet's union with the hero. With relief Harriet accepts Charlotte's comment that "Your realities, thank Heaven, are more delightful than your resveries" (SCG VI, 284-5; III, 195), and settles into marriage with her good man. So, while the nature of both Harriet's and Pamela's trials place them in a state of apprehension which intensifies their imaginative perceptions, they do not fall into the kind of self-delusion which would allow their fears and fantasies to blind them to "realities".

Based on these two novels alone, Richardson's relevance to the presentation of the deluded, quixotic heroines in the later eighteenth century would be a simple one. His heroine is an exemplary figure who possesses imaginative qualities but who is not controlled by them; her awareness of the real, of responsibility and prudence does not desert her. In contrast, later heroines are often misguided figures who learn to distinguish fancy from reality literally by trial and error. Although circumstances may contribute to the delusion of the post-Richardsonian heroine, it is primarily a self-deception born of her naivety and inexperience.

But Richardson was also the author of Clarissa, a novel which reveals an original and distinctive approach to these

aspects of the representation of the heroine. Undoubtedly the fact that the treatment of imaginative delusion remains one theme amongst many in Clarissa partially explains this success, as it allows Richardson to avoid the difficulty which plagues the portrayal of the quixotic heroine later in the century - that the educative process which brings about the heroine's disillusionment denies the rationale of the text. Often in such novels the heroine's delusion is the primary reason why the story is being told, when it ends so does the novel, and with it comes the sense that the "moral" has replaced and silenced the aesthetic, fictive qualities which made the tale a work of art. Richardson not only displays a conscious awareness of the paradoxes inherent in discussing the distance between the "real" and "imaginary" in a novel which is fictional itself, but increases the complexity of his exploration by creating layers of "plots" within the plot that become especially significant when Clarissa enters a looking-glass realm where nothing is ever what it seems.

One way of pointing up the differences between Clarissa and Richardson's other novels is to compare the significance of Harriet's dream with Clarissa's. Harriet's dream presents a number of imaginatively heightened scenarios connected to the doubts and fears which continue to haunt her: this being in keeping with Locke's belief that the "Dreams of sleeping Men, are, as I take it, all made up of the waking Man's Ideas, though, for the most part, oddly put together".[9] Interestingly the "ideas" which surface in Harriet's nightmare are, as Doody has pointed out, influenced by those of another. The fears of Sir Charles' assassination, even down to the imagery surrounding it, develop from Clementina's "horrid dream" (SCG III, 350; II, 241), the narrative of which Harriet has read.[10]

Despite the fact that the sense of "Waking dreams" (SCG VI, 260; III, 178) remains with Harriet afterwards, the actual

events that occur during her dream stay safely within the realm of fantasy and - in this novel - there is a reassuring distance between the imaginative realm, associated with dream and apprehension, and the reality of the heroine's life. When in Clarissa, the heroine experiences her own dream, her response to it reveals a firm belief in such a separation:

> why should I, who have such real evils to contend with, regard imaginary ones? This, no doubt, was owing to my disturbed imagination (Cl II, 255; 343).

In asserting that the products of her "disturbed imagination" do not relate to her "real" experience, Clarissa is in keeping with contemporary attitudes towards dreaming. The mid eighteenth century was not a time when the prophetic or visionary aspects of such experience were privileged.[11] The emphasis is placed rather on the insidious effects of the chaos of dream states. So, for Zachary Mayne, that

> Perception ... which, in Dreaming ... [a man] hath of his own Being, is only of an imaginary Being; and consequently a delusive fanciful and seeming Perception, and not true Consciousness, or a Knowledge and Perception attended with a Sense of itself.[12]

The rationalist's approach expressed here is endorsed by the attitudes both Sir Charles and Charlotte display towards Harriet's dream.[13] However, when Clarissa's nightmare is placed in context it possesses implications which go against the grain of this consensus.

The dream occurs after Clarissa has written to Lovelace to tell him that she will leave Harlowe Place under his protection. She has already felt "strange fore-bodings!" (Cl II, 254; 342) about this and now she has dreamt that Lovelace

> carried me into a church-yard; and there, notwithstanding all my prayers and tears, and protestations of innocence, stabbed me to the heart, and then tumbled me into a deep

> grave ready dug, among two or three half-dissolved carcases; throwing in the dirt and earth upon me (Cl II, 255; 342-3).

It is hardly surprising that Clarissa dismisses this as irrelevant to her "real evils"; to her the dream is simply a result of the constant apprehensive suspense she has suffered in Harlowe Place. But the irony is that this is the only explicit warning Clarissa receives about the danger which Lovelace poses to her (her refusal to listen to Solmes' blackening account is motivated by laudable principles but works against her self-preservation).

While the content of Harriet's nightmare is given the lie by further developments of her story, here, in an imaginatively transformed description, is a prophetic prefiguration of the assault Lovelace is to make on Clarissa's existence. Oddly enough, in Clarissa it is the character who pays the most attention to "imaginary" evils who has the greatest chance of survival. The task that Clarissa faces as the narrative progresses is a kind of reverse quixotism. The quixotic heroine is a victim of her own imaginative fantasy which puts her at risk in the "real" world she misreads. Clarissa is a figure of exemplary judgement and clarity of mind who effectively enters a fantasy realm where all her points of reference are lost. Her singular trial, therefore, is to find out the fiction that lies under what everybody she meets presents as real. The lines of distinction between "real" and "imaginary" evils are to become dangerously destabilised.

To convey Clarissa's experience Richardson uses a complex narrative structure which places the reader in a different situation from that of his other novels. Initially it seems much the same. While Lovelace's few letters allow a slight advantage of insight over the heroine, the narrative is developed through letters between Clarissa and Anna; Clarissa's

apprehensions create our suspense. This alters when she leaves Harlowe Place with Lovelace. During their journey the dual correspondence highlights the distance between Clarissa and Lovelace by revealing their very different interpretations of supposedly shared experience. Also the reader, through access to both accounts, now knows more than any individual character, most importantly their awareness of the truth behind Clarissa's experience is greater than her own. This is preparatory for the arrival in London after which the reader is constantly fluctuating between gaining knowledge of Lovelace's schemes and contrasting this with an awareness of Clarissa's fatal inability to see through the nominally real.

The key term here is "appearances". Clarissa does not naively assume that everything she perceives and is told is true; in fact increasingly she submits all events to an intensive process of reasoning, suspicion, and doubt. However Clarissa cannot overcome a desire to see connections between how things (words, letters, names, people, places) appear to her and an essential reality underlying the surface.[14] This is in stark contrast to Lovelace, whose attention to "appearances" is intended to protect the credibility of his delusory, fictional scenarios.[15]

There is also the connection with physiognomy. Clarissa believes that a person's good appearance reflects inner nature (the reverse is also true, hence her emphasis on Solmes' ugliness). This is in Lovelace's favour "he has, besides, an open, and, I think, an honest countenance" (Cl III, 326; 545). She is not yet to know the dangers posed by a man with "a face that would deceive the devil" (Cl VI, 261; 1130), especially when deception is exactly what such outward appearance is masking. Before leaving Mrs Sinclair's for the first time, Clarissa is aware that Lovelace "can put on the appearance of an angel of light; but has a black, a very black heart!" (Cl V, 54; 790).

It is at Mrs Sinclair's that the distinctions between appearance and truth, imaginary and real, blur and often vanish; well may Lovelace remark "Things already appear with a very different face now I have got her here" (Cl III, 283; 522). Clarissa generally takes her surroundings at face value. She has some doubts and premonitions, but the guarded, self-protective vigilance that characterises her behaviour results from the ambivalent definition of the terms of her relationship with Lovelace rather than any insight into his deception. At this stage her suspicions do not stretch to the absolute rejection of the "reality" of everything she experiences, which the reader realises is the only way she can escape her trap, especially in the light of Belford's earlier remark:

> Considering the house she is to be in, where she will be surrounded with thy implements; specious, well-bred, and genteel creatures, not easily to be detected when they are disposed to preserve appearances, especially by a young, inexperienced lady (Cl III, 244; 501).

It is a lot to combat with "apprehensive virtue" (Cl IV, 143; 643) alone.[16] Within the fantasy realm that Sinclair's effectively becomes even Clarissa is prevailed upon to appear to be what she is not, allowing herself to be presented to the women as Lovelace's wife (she has been previously "transformed" into his sister at the Widow Sorlings').[17] The ambiguity of her status does not alert her to that of other characters to whom she is introduced.[18] In fact the more people she meets the less likely she is to question her situation, as eventually the surrounding network of plots and deceptions is so convoluted that rejecting the whole as undiluted fiction seems inconceivable.

There is one occasion when the gap between Clarissa's perceptions and circumstances is forcibly brought home to the reader. When Clarissa and Lovelace attend church relatively early on during their time at Sinclair's, Clarissa remarks,

> he opened the street-door, and taking my resisting hand, led me, in a very obsequious manner, to the coach. People passing by, stopt, stared, and whisper'd - But he is so graceful in his person and dress, that he generally takes every eye. (Cl IV, 28; 581)

It is shocking to realise how complete Clarissa's delusion is. She does not know the name of the street she is living on or that of the woman who owns the house ; particularly, she is utterly ignorant of the fact that she is attracting attention because she is walking out of a brothel. The reader's greater knowledge means having to watch Richardson's "sweet deluded excellence" (Cl IV, 275; 714) journey through innumerable scenes that lack "a real foundation" (Cl IV, 238; 694) before she finally comes to the realisation that "it is not for me to judge beyond appearances" (Cl VI, 377; 1205).

Clarissa's constant vigilance does afford her a degree of protection, even though she is not entirely aware from what she is defending herself.[19] But effectively Clarissa is lost and deceived from the time she leaves Harlowe Place until her arrival at Mrs Smith's. To Clarissa this is her time in the wilderness. All Richardson's heroines experience the onset of complex emotional and social relationships at the end of childhood as a bewildering, often frightening, alteration. Despite her wit and intelligence, after a few months experience of "the world", Harriet turns to her family like a lost child:

> It is now, my dear friends, some-how or other, become necessary, I think, to let you minutely into my situation, that you may advise, caution, instruct me - For, I protest, I am in a sort of wilderness. (SCG II, 90; I, 284)

Like the connections that can be made between their respective dreams, this is another occasion which subtly links Harriet to Clementina. Clementina's personal wilderness is similarly the result of involvement with Sir Charles but in her case it is the hero himself who is called upon to "extricate" the heroine

from the "briars and thorns" and return her to "the smooth and pleasant path, in which you at first found me walking with undoubting feet" (SCG V, 211; II, 612).

The use of this set of images in Sir Charles Grandison follows on from Clarissa. The presence of such imagery is unsurprising for, as Ruth Perry comments, Richardson's novels express the concerns of "a civilization steeped in the Christian tradition of wanderings in the wilderness".[20] This was a culture which experienced the Biblical mythos directly, as a result of the Protestant emphasis on reading Scripture, and also as it was mediated through creative literature. Milton's treatment of trial, temptation, and wilderness in both Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained was highly influential.[21] There was also the tradition of representation and allegorisation of Christian doctrine in romance narrative, from Malory's Morte D'Arthur, to Spenser's Faerie Queene and beyond, specifically in relation to the hero's linear quest or journey and its interruption by his seduction into delusion. Clarissa, too, believes she is

> so far out of my path, that I am in a wilderness of doubt and error; and never, never, shall find my way out of it: For, altho' but one pace awry at first, it has led me hundreds and hundreds of miles out of my path (Cl III, 365; 566).[22]

This evocation of the spiritual connotations of "wilderness" takes into the symbolic a network of images Richardson established earlier. Although Clarissa's isolation in Harlowe Place had gradually assumed the quality of a nightmare, it remained a familiar and solid setting to her. The threshold between this and the "otherness" of the outside world comes to centre on the back door of the house, which is a tangible presence during the scene which precedes her departure with Lovelace. On one side of the door Clarissa is in possession of the only security she can lay claim to, beyond it is "a place

so pathless and lonesome" (Cl II, 273; 352), where her perception of the distinction between real and unreal will be irrelevant to her new task of "treading after ... [Lovelace] in such crooked paths!" (Cl IV, 264; 708).[23]

With hindsight the relationship of the "garden door" to the theme of real and imaginary evils is a deeply ironic one. This can be revealed through examining its connection with Clarissa's great source of apprehension while she remains at Harlowe Place, her Uncle Antony's house. From the moment that Clarissa becomes aware of "the master-stroke of my brother's policy!" (Cl II, 24; 218), which is the Harlowes' intent to have Clarissa carried off "To the moated House - To the Chapel - To Solmes!" (Cl II, 100; 260), she is hardly able to contain her horror at the prospect:

> I mean not by this any disrespect to my uncle Antony: But his Moat, with his Bridge threaten'd to be drawn up, and perhaps his Chapel, terrify me beyond expression (Cl II, 39; 227).

While her imagination is engaged with this vision of the prison house of romance (itself a prefiguration of the later gothic locale), Clarissa becomes focussed on preventing the Harlowes fulfilling their plan by any means at her disposal, spurred on by Anna Howe's sentiments of agreement: "You must ... avoid being carried to that uncle's. The man, the parson, the chapel, your brother and sister present! - they'll certainly there marry you to Solmes" (Cl II, 61; 239).

Fear of being physically incapable of preventing marriage with Solmes possesses Clarissa's mind and draws her nearer to accepting Lovelace's protection as an escape. The apparently real threat is intensified by the vividness of Clarissa's imaginative experience of its enactment, in what Mrs Hervey describes as her "romantic picture of a forced marriage":

> If consent of heart, and assent of voice, be necessary to a marriage, I am sure I never can, nor ever will be married to Mr. Solmes. And what will any of my relations be answerable for, if they force my hand into his, and hold it there till the Service be read; I perhaps insensible, and in fits, all the time? (Cl II, 216; 322)

Clarissa's dread of the possibility of her "heart" and "voice" being betrayed by her body and actions will not of course be realised in the form which she expects. The plan for removal to Antony Harlowe's house is suddenly dropped before any real attempt has been made to put it into effect, creating the impression that the intense apprehension portrayed by Richardson has possibly been as anticlimactic here as it often is in Sir Charles Grandison.[24] However the vividness of Clarissa's fear stays with the reader and allows connections to be made on other occasions when "assent of voice" is notably absent. First when Clarissa departs with Lovelace, "My voice, however, contradicting my action; crying, No, no, no, all the while" (Cl III, 17; 380),[25] and more terribly during the rape scenes when rendered "insensible" by Lovelace's drugs,[26] "My strength, my intellects, failed me! - And then such scenes followed ... Fits upon fits" (Cl VI, 73; 1011).

Clarissa's apprehensive, imaginative preoccupation with Antony Harlowe's moated house has in fact allowed her to overlook the danger signs associated with the back door and the pathless wilderness beyond it. Again, as with Clarissa's dream, such hints work on an imaginatively suggestive level. From Lovelace's first mention of his acquisition of a set of keys for the door from Joseph Leman, the locale is described very differently from the rest of Harlowe Place:

> the garden-door ... opens to the haunted coppice, as tradition has made the servants think it; a man having been found hanging in it about twenty years ago (Cl I, 235; 164).

The reader never learns the specific details of this event (which indeed effectively heightens the sense of mystery) but Lovelace's account is repeated and elaborated in a long descriptive footnote, "extracted" from one of Clarissa's letters. This passage fixes the location in the readers mind as the alternate site of "gothic" terror:

> A piece of ruins upon it, the remains of an old chapel, now standing in the midst of the coppice; here and there an overgrown oak, surrounded with ivy and misletoe [sic], starting up, to sanctify, as it were, the awful solemness of the place. (Cl II, 273n; 352n)

Just as Clarissa dismissed her dream, here she provides a reasoned account of the development and perpetuation of rural superstition in relation to the "haunted" spot, distancing herself from the imaginative impact of the description. However, such an atypical description remains in the reader's memory and influences the perception of Clarissa's jeopardy in the scenes where she encounters Lovelace near the back door. Ironically, by her fear of the "real" evils she believes the Harlowes have planned, Clarissa neglects the warnings provided by the imaginative nexus of dream and superstition, with the result that she exposes herself to the greatest danger of all.[27]

Eventually both Anna and Clarissa will fully understand why crossing the threshold into the "haunted coppice" was "a step that put you [Clarissa] into the way of delusion" (Cl IV, 21; 577), but this only comes with increased insight into the character of the "grand deluder" (Cl VI, 58; 1001) himself. Lovelace's importance cannot be overestimated. The fundamental difference between Clarissa and the quixotic heroines of the later eighteenth century is that only Clarissa is the victim of a deliberate strategy of misguidance. Whereas later the role of the hero is to help the heroine out of her delusion,[28] here the (anti-) hero is the reason why she is entangled in unreality in the first place.

Lovelace is in many ways the embodiment of imagination. Other figures think of him as the possessor of "a very lively imagination" (Cl I, 69; 75), or "an intriguing wretch, and full of inventions" (Cl I, 177; 133). He combines both the pleasures and dangers which were associated with the imagination in the period. These are hinted at by the two definitions given by Johnson of the verb "To imagine": "To fancy; to paint in the mind" but also "To scheme; to contrive".[29] Lovelace's "contriving genius" (Cl VII, 191; 1344) is his distinctive quality, but other aspects of his nature are characteristic of the representation of the "imaginative" character in eighteenth-century fiction.

Lovelace describes vivid dreams which, as Doody suggests, is highly unusual for a male protagonist in contemporary fiction.[30] While Clarissa imposes an overly strict distinction between the "real" and the "imaginary", Lovelace hardly seems to perceive a separation at all. This is well illustrated in the bizarre dream of Mother H., particularly through the shape-changing metamorphoses with which it fulfils Lovelace's desires: "thou wilt say, this was a very odd dream. And yet (for I am a strange dreamer) it is not altogether improbable, that something like it may happen" (Cl V, 294; 922). In the eighteenth century a person who confounds dream and reality to this extent was perceived as being effectively mad.[31] Lovelace's uncontrolled fantasy life, for all its strange manipulative power in the central section of the novel, eventually culminates in complete mental and physical collapse and "raving unmanageableness" (Cl VII, 244; 1379).[32] This then is an example of the connection made between imagination and madness in eighteenth-century literature,[33] a subject to which I will be returning in my discussion of quixotism in the next chapter. It is however worth noting here that, as Leo Braudy has suggested, Lovelace is the figure in the novel who has the closest resemblance to the "literary" quixote, that is a

character whose behaviour is governed by literary models.[34]

Lovelace has a tangibly literary quality; the rich allusiveness of his exuberant language makes him inevitably attractive, but the test for the reader is whether an aesthetic appreciation of this will blind them to the self-obsession and evil it masks. This is rendered still more difficult by Lovelace's status as a figure in a novel. The reader of fiction is almost of necessity seeking and admiring what is imaginative and creative within the text, but in this novel to enter unthinkingly into the aesthetic pleasure of Lovelace's "plots" and "fictions" is to risk condoning the vicious inhumanity of his actions, a form of delusion far beyond that of the heroine.

Lovelace's role as an author also needs to be taken into consideration. To a certain extent all the correspondents in Clarissa are "authors" of the novel, as it is their letters which are its constituent parts. Lovelace, however, goes beyond this level and is more associated with the activity of a novelist; when Clarissa refers to him as the "author of my calamities" (Cl VI, 237; 1115) both the sense of "originator" and "writer" are absorbed by the reader.[35] Lovelace creates a fiction within the fiction that is Clarissa; his "plotting" echoes that of a novelist and, for a long section of Clarissa, he seems to possess the same absolute power over his narrative.[36]

Until the rape of Clarissa, Lovelace orders and directs the development of the story, the only one brief setback being Clarissa's first escape from Mrs Sinclair's. Once Lovelace provides his gloss on the events of the early volumes, it becomes apparent that his insight into the psychological motivation of his enemies, and employment of Joseph Leman, has allowed him effectively to stage-manage the actions of the

Harlowes. Even after Clarissa is with him, the false information he feeds the Harlowes, which eventually reaches Anna, allows him to influence Clarissa by proxy: "my charmer has no notion, that Miss Howe herself is but a puppet danc'd upon my wires, at second or third hand" (Cl III, 174; 464). After arriving in London, Lovelace's manipulative control becomes increasingly audacious and extensive. His belief that "said, is done with me, when I have a mind to have it so" (Cl III, 285; 523), is expressed through his technique of renaming characters and providing them with "stories" to present Clarissa. It is these "metamorphoses" (Cl III, 76; 412) which he feels gives him an unlimited power. This is most comprehensively described when Lovelace is about to introduce Mennell as part of the tale of Mrs Fretchville's house,

> I have chang'd his name by virtue of my own single authority. Knowest thou not, that I am a great name-father? Preferments I bestow, both military and civil. I give estates, and take them away at my pleasure ... What a poor thing is a monarch to me! (Cl IV, 5; 569)

While Lovelace has actually altered nothing but appearances, by this stage his imaginations are becoming Clarissa's "reality", and she is not yet aware that people and histories can also be "characters" and "fictions". Such observations are, however, unavoidable for the reader of a novel.

The impression of the power and "authority" Lovelace commands is heightened by the way in which his plots are aided by chance. The joy of stratagem to Lovelace is increased by spontaneity and the challenge of instant response to changing circumstances. He has "a quick invention, in hitting readily upon expedients" (Cl III, 128; 439). The central sections of the novel minutely record his plotting to the moment, one good illustration being his ability to conjure up "a Singleton" when required (Cl IV, 15; 574). Lovelace insists that his "plot" is not the playing out of a preconceived plan, and often his

letters display him literally making up his strategy as he goes along, "WHAT will be the issue of all my plots and contrivances, devil take me if I am able to divine!" (Cl V, 108; 820). Lovelace is quite happy to leave events in the hand of his "old friend CHANCE" (Cl III, 192; 473). This faith is rewarded by the number of occasions on which it serves him: for example Hannah's illness, Anna's decision not to address letters to Clarissa at "Dover Street", and the fact he manages to intercept several of Anna's warnings to Clarissa. No wonder he believes, "her very stars fight against her! I am the luckiest of men!" (Cl V, 175; 855).

Lovelace's luck however is not sustainable and neither are his fictions. As the story develops, Lovelace's plot becomes so complex and involved that he is as much at risk of "entanglement" as Clarissa.[37] Indeed Belford suggests that Lovelace is sabotaging his own much-vaunted freedom through his scheming, becoming a machine compelled to continue whether he would or not, and Lovelace occasionally concurs with this view.[38] The limits of Lovelace's power are evinced when he is unable to stop his "characters" from exceeding his authority and, ironically, acting against his interests, during the section of the novel dealing with Clarissa's imprisonment.[39] Lovelace is contained within the novel, his "plots", "fictions" and "authority" controlled by Richardson, an author who has very different intentions for the outcome of his own plot.

The turning point for Lovelace, Clarissa and the reader is the rape. Previously Clarissa's hopes have made her susceptible to believing and forgiving Lovelace, this has a particular poignancy during the times in the Tomlinson plot when she is deluded into feeling that "a delightful prospect was opened to me" (Cl IV, 244; 697). The finality of the act of rape, which proves that Lovelace is beyond redemption and shares none of Clarissa's principles of morality or benevolence, dissolves any

emotional influence he has over her. Now that "dreadful certainty" has replaced "cruel apprehension" (Cl V, 224; 884), Lovelace's ability to delude Clarissa disappears. Likewise the reader's delight in his fictions has to be reconsidered in the light of the act of evil in which they have culminated.

The use of web imagery to describe Clarissa's entanglement is suggestive in this respect.[40] The qualities associated with a spider's web are both intricacy and fragility: once Clarissa has ceased to believe Lovelace the whole structure of her delusion starts to unravel. At the time when Lovelace believed he would be revelling in his dominance over a broken and submissive woman, he is thrown onto the defensive by Clarissa's solemn questioning which is intended to cut through Lovelace's deceptive fictions and uncover the truth of her experience (Cl V, 249-58; 899-903: V, 266-73; 908-11).

Lovelace is slow to realise the irrevocable alteration that has taken place in his relationship with Clarissa, but she is proof against delusion now. His plots suddenly begin to fail,[41] as the aftermath of the dream of Mrs H. and the pen-knife scene reveal: "thou contemptible and abandoned Lovelace, thinkest thou that I see not thro' this poor villainous plot of thine ...?" (Cl V, 340; 949). Clarissa is not particularly surprised or affected by discovering the details of the delusion she has undergone. In the later stages of the novel the relevance of the distinction between "real" and "imaginary" dangers diminishes. Clarissa perceives both as manifestations of the transitory, earthly life she is hoping to transcend in death, such "temporary calamities" and "short-lived evils" (Cl VI, 219; 1103) are no longer her primary concern.

As Rita Goldberg has argued:

> Clarissa's delusions are a function of the manipulation of reality around her. They are not created by her, and she

> recognizes the true state of things when they are clarified by revelation or explanation.[42]

Therefore, although Clarissa is the focus of the fictionalising, delusionary tendencies of the novel she is not fundamentally altered by them. Goldberg, however, reads this as a sign of Clarissa's imaginative austerity:

> The heroine in this novel is curiously free of fantasy, though she is ceaselessly the object of it. Distortions, dreams, speculations and projections swirl around her.[43]

This is one way of approaching the relationship of "real" and "imaginary" in the novel. For Clarissa to be, as John Preston suggests, "a real person" representing "a world of real encounters" and opposed to "the world of fantasy, the world of Lovelace",[44] then she must be without imagination herself. Richardson however is an author who resists straightforward contrasts and he does not portray the two as diametrically opposed representatives of the rational and the imaginative.[45]

Clarissa does have a consistently developed fantasy realm of her own which becomes increasingly significant as the novel progresses. In contrast to the creative fictions associated with Lovelace, Clarissa's imaginative world revolves around the imagery of death and burial; as Doody puts it, death is "the great adventure, which fascinates her imagination".[46] It is, however, due to the particular nature of Clarissa's "adventure" that the fact she possesses imagination does not necessarily contradict Preston's argument.

Both Clarissa and Lovelace are, of course, fictional, but Richardson wished his heroine to be protected from association with falsehood so she could become a "real" model (hence his reluctance to concede that his novel was anything but an edited true history). A key Richardsonian strategy in this respect is the connection of the suspect qualities of fiction - delusion,

fantasy and madness - with Lovelace. When Clarissa rejects Lovelace the implication is that she has transcended everything he has been made to represent. Again, as with the attribution of responsibility for Clarissa's "trial" to Lovelace, this technique also allows Richardson a means of disassociating himself from the dangerous tendencies of the novelist's art. Preston is correct to argue that Richardson's characterisation of Clarissa means she has to resist the processes of the text as fiction.[47] However, he overlooks the fact that one of the ways by which this is achieved is through her imaginative involvement with a death which will eventually come "true" and allow her to escape from the novel that engendered her.

It is near impossible for modern readers to reenact the impact that Clarissa's death had on its original audience[48] because they come to the novel with the pre-knowledge that its heroine will die (the Penguin edition of the novel for example includes the phrase "How Clarissa ... falls prey to Lovelace, is raped and dies" as part of its cover advertisement). This means that the modern reader is likely to be alert to the significance of Clarissa's preoccupation with death from the outset, creating a different readerly experience from the shocked reaction of Richardson's contemporaries.

As Flynn has noted, Clarissa's engagement with thoughts of her death is apparent from the first example of the heroine's letters in the novel,[49] but it is the insistent frequency with which such references are repeated that conveys their significance to the reader. The early stages of the novel are littered with Clarissa's cries that rather than marry Solmes (or later Lovelace) she would die.[50] These are not simply generalised assertions, as Clarissa tends to dwell on the tortures she would suffer, even to the graphic evocation of "the cruelest death" in being buried alive in the ancestral vaults of Harlowe Place (Cl II, 184; 305).[51] If anything Clarissa's attitude to

death at this point seems to be marked by a fancifully melodramatic tone. Lovelace comments "O my beloved creature, what are these but words!" (Cl II, 119; 270) while even Anna Howe occasionally becomes impatient with her - after all "persons cannot die when they will" (Cl III, 269; 514).

During the central section of the novel the references to death lessen somewhat as Clarissa attempts to make the best of her worldly prospects, but they reemerge with a new seriousness after the rape.[52] Lovelace may believe that "'Tis idle, very idle, to talk of dying. Mere young-lady talk, when controuled by those they hate" (Cl V, 304; 929),[53] but the reader is aware that Clarissa has been imaginatively (and it seems now prophetically) encountering the prospect of the end of her suffering in death all along. Clarissa's death fantasies instead of being the delusory distraction that they appeared, become the most accurate insight into her fate, as well as the linking imagery that binds the final movement of the novel to the earlier volumes. Jean Hagstrum remarks that

> As the rigors [sic] of the family persecution [in the early volumes] intensify, Clarissa thinks of death - and this early, flickering wish lights up during the long climax into a baroque religious blaze.[54]

As with the associated imagery of the wilderness and Clarissa's dream, the fantasy of death as an "imaginary evil" is translated into the reality of Clarissa's experience. Doody provides a fascinating account of the direct correspondences which enact this process; the Ur-gothicism of Clarissa's focus on suffocation and burial being transferred onto the Harlowes' treatment of the picture of Clarissa in "the Vandyke taste", and then later her return in death to Harlowe Place, and entrance into the "awful vaults" in a coffin.[55] It is the imagery of Clarissa's imaginative experience, not Lovelace's, that unifies the novel and, with irresistible momentum becomes

"real". While Lovelace's "plots" and "fictions" can only attain a transient "reality", Clarissa's death insists upon the truth of her prophetic imagination. Finally, her absence from the text claims for Richardson's heroine a reality freed from the constraints of fiction.

The portrayal of imagination in Richardson's masterpiece should therefore be seen in the light of the novel's tripartite structure, the first and third movements being associated with the heroine, the second with Lovelace. The first section conveys imagination through apprehension and suspense, evoking "imaginary" evils that will later evolve into realities and reveal to the heroine that a strict division between the two is a dangerous oversimplification. The unsettling of the heroine's division between subjective imagination and objective reality is, however, not as comprehensive a challenge to her perceptions as the events of the Lovelacean second stage.

Here the "real" world of surfaces and appearances becomes "imaginary" in that it has no basis in fact. The exemplary heroine's mind is deluded and consequently her body violated, but she comes out of the experience with her principles unshaken. It is the realm of fantasy and delusion which falls apart as Clarissa reasserts a realm of reality that contains within itself the imagery previously associated with "imaginary evils". The desire to detach Clarissa from the taint of fiction underpins the final section. As her imaginative engagement with death becomes the truth of her circumstances, the weight of Christianity, religious symbolism and "Meditations" bears down upon Clarissa as creative art, until the point is reached where the novel can no longer encompass the heroine. Clarissa's "escape" and beatification becomes, ironically, a rejection of the vehicle through which her story has been told, a paradoxical conclusion which perfectly enacts the contemporary suspicion of this most seductive of genres.

CHAPTER ONE: SAMUEL RICHARDSON

Section i: Notes

1 Samuel Richardson Clarissa: Or, the History of a Young Lady (London, 1747-8), preface, I, vi. Further references are included in the text, abbreviated as Cl. These are followed by the corresponding page number in Clarissa ed. A. Ross, (New York, 1985). Where reference is made to later editions, details are given in the notes.

2 Richardson's reputation as an innovator has been qualified by J.J. Richetti's Popular Fiction Before Richardson: Narrative Patterns 1700-1739 (Oxford, 1969); R. Perry, Women, Letters, and the Novel (New York, 1980); and Ballaster, Seductive Forms. See also M.A. Doody, A Natural Passion: A Study of the Novels of Samuel Richardson (Oxford, 1974), esp. pp. 15-25 and 128-50. The extent of Richardson's influence on the later novel has also been questioned, see Spencer, Woman Novelist pp. 89-90. However Richardson's importance in shaping the novel of sentiment, manners, and gothicism cannot be overestimated.

3 See below, chapter one, section ii.

4 Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney eds. K. Duncan-Jones and J. Van Dorsten (Oxford, 1973), p. 80.

5 For discussion of the contemporary author's preface see J.F. Bartolomeo, A New Species of Criticism: Eighteenth-Century Discourse on the Novel (Newark, London, Toronto, 1994), pp. 19-46.

6 Daniel Defoe, preface, Moll Flanders (1722), ed. G.A. Starr (London, New York, Toronto, 1971), p. 2.

7 Eliza Haywood, Lasselia: Or, the Self-Abandon'd (London, 1724), dedication, p. vi.

8 See also the anonymously published Pamela Censured (1741), The Augustan Reprint Society, no. 175, introd. C. Batten Jr., (Los Angeles, 1976), pp. 21-2.

9 Anon, Critical Remarks on Sir Charles Grandison, Clarissa and Pamela (London, 1754), p. 3.

10 ibid., pp. 3 and 58 respectively.

11 The Letters of John Keats, 1814-1821 ed. H.E. Rollins, (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), I, 224.

12 Samuel Richardson, "Hints of Prefaces" for Clarissa in R.F. Brissenden, Clarissa: Preface, Hints of Prefaces, and Post-

script The Augustan Reprint Society, no. 103, (Los Angeles, 1964), p. 5.

13 Watt, Rise of the Novel p. 213; M. Kinkead-Weekes, Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist (London, 1973), p. 456, see also pp. 78, 81, 85, 104, 117, 188, 204, 483 and 498; J. Traugott, "Clarissa's Richardson: An Essay to Find the Reader", English Literature in the Age of Disguise ed. M.E. Novak, (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1977), pp. 157, 173. This distinction is also used by C.H. Flynn despite her assertion that "I do not propose to discuss a "divided" Richardson working against himself", see Samuel Richardson: A Man of Letters (Princeton, 1982), xi, also pp. 101, 198, 211-2, 264.

14 The Critical Remarks demonstrates how Richardson was belittled for a lack of classical education, while more psychologically based criticism is typefied by Coleridge's belief that Richardson had "so very vile a mind", The Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge ed. K. Coburn, (London, 1962), II, N2471.

15 Kinkead-Weekes is offended by the patronising attitude inherent in accounts of Richardson's unconscious artistry but admits that he finds such assumptions almost unavoidable, see Dramatic Novelist pp. 3, 8, 119, 279, 454 and 498.

16 ibid., p. 44. See also B. Glaser, The Body in Samuel Richardson's "Clarissa": Contexts of and Contradictions in the Development of Character (Heidelberg, 1994), p. 196.

17 See Kinkead-Weekes, Dramatic Novelist pp. 2, 44-5, 67, 103-4, 119-20, 204 and 288-9; also Flynn, A Man of Letters pp. xi, 5, 101-2, 195, 264-5, 288; and R. Goldberg, Sex and Enlightenment: Women in Richardson and Diderot (Cambridge, 1984), p. 28.

18 See Flynn, Man of Letters pp. 150-1. Also J. Todd, Sensibility: An Introduction (London, New York, 1986), pp. 70-72.

19 All references to Richardson's letters are to J. Carroll (ed.), Selected Letters of Samuel Richardson (Oxford, 1964), abbreviated within the text as SL.

20 On the changes to Pamela, see P. Gaskell, From Writer to Reader: Studies in Editorial Method (Oxford, 1978), pp. 63-79.

21 T. Castle, Clarissa's Ciphers: Meaning and Disruption in Richardson's "Clarissa" (Ithaca, London, 1982), pp. 158, 175. However W.B. Warner criticises Kinkead-Weekes for advocating a return to the first edition because he sees the desire for a "pure" text as a "humanist" attempt to sidestep the interpretative challenge posed by a novel which exists in numerous revised forms, none of which can be "authoritative". Reading

"Clarissa": The Struggles of Interpretation (New Haven, London, 1979), pp. 238-41. For Kinkead-Weekes' contrast of the first and third editions see Dramatic Novelist pp. 195-6.

22 J. Mullan, Sentiment and Sociability: The Language of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century (Oxford, 1988), p. 102. See also J. Preston's discussion of the "editor's" function in Clarissa, The Created Self: The Reader's Role in Eighteenth-Century Fiction (London, 1970), pp. 73-9; and G.M. Johnson, "Richardson's 'Editor' in Clarissa", JNT X (1980), 99-114.

23 See e.g. Castle, Clarissa's Ciphers p. 167.

24 ibid., e.g. pp. 51 and 149.

25 See J.G. Altman, Epistolarity: Approaches to a Form (Columbus, 1982), especially pp. 87-142. See also Preston, Created Self p. 3.

26 Castle, Clarissa's Ciphers p. 168. Bartolomeo also argues that "Richardson demanded a single, authorized reading", New Species p. 50.

27 Castle, Clarissa's Ciphers pp. 28-9. Kinkead-Weekes comments that Richardson "believed, rather crudely, that books had specific and immediate moral effects on their readers"; although he qualifies this in his discussion of Sir Charles Grandison, by emphasising debate and dialogue, Dramatic Novelist pp. 117, 283, and 279-85.

28 My discussion is indebted to T. Keymer, Richardson's "Clarissa" and the Eighteenth-Century Reader (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 56-84.

29 S.E. Fish, Surprised by Sin: the Reader in "Paradise Lost" (London, New York, 1967), pp. 54-6, 89 and 247; see also Keymer, Richardson's "Clarissa" p. 67n.

30 Jonathan Richardson, Sr. and Jr., Explanatory Notes and Remarks on Milton's "Paradise Lost" (London, 1734), p. xliii.

31 ibid., p. cxlv, see also p. cxliv.

32 ibid., p. clii.

33 ibid., p. clx.

34 G.J. Barker-Benfield, The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain (Chicago, London, 1992), p. 258. See also Hunter, Before Novels pp. 280-1, also p. 157.

35 See John Cleland, review of Peregrine Pickle in The Monthly Review IV (March 1751), 356: repr. in Novel and Romance 1700-

1800: A Documentary Record ed. I. Williams, (London, 1970), pp. 160-2.

36 Anon., The Lady's Drawing Room (London, 1744), p. 80. Further references are included in the text, abbreviated as LDR.

37 Even the author of Fanny Hill ostensibly laments the resistance of the reading public to serious works of morality when writing reviews, illustrating how automatic the belief in "useful" reading was. See P.-G. Boucé, The Novels of Tobias Smollett transl. A. White, (London, New York, 1976), p. 102.

38 Cleland, Monthly Review IV, 356

39 John Hawkesworth, The Adventurer I (No. 16, December 1752), 92: repr. in Williams, Novel and Romance pp. 196-200.

40 ibid., I, 93.

41 ibid., I, 92. These sentiments are influenced by Johnson's fourth essay in The Rambler, see The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson, The Rambler eds. W.J. Bate and A.B. Strauss, (New Haven, London, 1969), III, 21-3.

42 See Johnson, The Rambler III, 21 and 23; c.f. Jonathan Richardson, Explanatory Notes pp. clvi and clviii. Also J. Weinsheimer, "Fiction and the Force of Example", The Idea of the Novel in the Eighteenth Century ed. R.W. Uphaus, (East Lansing M.I., Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1988), pp. 1-19

43 Mullan, Sentiment p. 109. See especially Sarah Fielding, Remarks on "Clarissa" (London, 1749), pp. 4, 13, and 41. Also discussed in Keymer, Richardson's "Clarissa" p. 57.

44 Fielding, Remarks pp. 29-31.

45 Bakhtin discusses the movement from the "Prüfungsroman" which deals with the testing of the virtue of an exemplary protagonist, to the "Entwicklungs-" or "Bildungsroman" that is concerned with the character's "becoming" through experience, in Dialogic Imagination pp. 388-93. Bakhtin's account of the "hero" here has equal application to the figure of the heroine.

46 J.A. Stevenson examines the capacity of Richardson's heroines to display astute insights with no experience of "the world" in "'Never in a Vile House': Knowledge and Experience in Richardson", LP XXXIV (1988), 5-7. See also L. Braudy, "Penetration and Impenetrability in Clarissa", Modern Essays on Eighteenth-Century Literature ed. L. Damrosch, Jr., (New York, Oxford, 1988), p. 267.

47 See e.g. the final stages of Pamela (1741), the two-volume continuation of Pamela (1742), and sections of Sir Charles Grandison where Harriet attempts to "let you into the character and sentiments of Sir Charles Grandison", The History of Sir Charles Grandison: In a Series of Letters (London, 1753-4), II, 306. Further references are included in the text, abbreviated as SCG and followed by corresponding volume and page numbers in the modern edition, ed. J. Harris, (London, New York, Toronto, 1972).

48 See Clarissa: Or, the History of a Young Lady 3rd ed. (London, 1751), preface, I, vi.

49 R.M. Brownstein astutely remarks that the exemplary heroine's "own deeply paradoxical aim is to live up to her own appearance" in "'An Examplar to Her Sex': Richardson's Clarissa", YR LXVII (1977), 35. See also Braudy, "Penetration and Impenetrability", p. 270 and Glaser, Body pp. 51-2..

50 See Cl V, 191; 864-5 and SCG III, 233; II, 160: IV, 1; II, 259 and V, 108-9; II, 541.

51 See Cl III, 20; 382 and III, 153-4; 453.

52 Clarissa never unconditionally accepts this sympathetic reading. Her "repentance" involves taking blame upon herself, see e.g. Cl VII, 239; 1375-6.

53 Samuel Richardson, Pamela: Or, Virtue Rewarded (London, vols. I/II 1741, vols. III/IV 1742). Further references are included in the text, abbreviated as Pam. For Pamela vols. I/II, the corresponding page number in Pamela, eds. T.C.D. Eaves and B.D. Kimpel, (Boston, 1971), is also given.

54 See SCG IV, 60-1; II, 300: V, 204; II, 607: VI, 60; III, 41: VI, 213; III, 145: VII, 136; III, 351.

55 See Clarissa 3rd ed., preface, I, ix; also Charlotte's remarks on "Story, story, story" in SCG VI, 332; III, 228.

56 Flynn, Man of Letters p. 51.

57 See M. Golden, Richardson's Characters (Ann Arbor, 1963), pp. 9-11, 17, 26, 47; W.J. Palmer, "Two Dramatists: Lovelace and Richardson in Clarissa", SN V (1973), 7-21; Traugott, "Clarissa's Richardson", pp. 170-6, 193; Flynn, Man of Letters pp. xiii, 190-1, 197-8; and T. Gwilliam, Samuel Richardson's Fictions of Gender (Stanford, 1993), pp. 51-3, 59, 64, 81-3. Also A.J. Van Sant's, Eighteenth-Century Sensibility and the Novel: The Senses in Social Context (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 60-82. Richardson's use of "experimentation" is described by Perry, Women, Letters p. 22 and, as it is expressed through

Lovelace, by R.A. Erickson, Mother Midnight: Birth, Sex, and Fate in Eighteenth-Century Fiction (Defoe, Richardson, and Sterne) (New York, 1986), p. 117.

58 See Pamela Censured esp. title page, pp. 16, 49, and 63-4. In Critical Remarks Richardon is said to "act the part of the serpent", p. 43, in the temptations his novels provide.

59 Bakhtin, Dialogic Imagination p. 32.

60 L. Langbauer, Women and Romance: The Consolations of Gender in the English Novel (Ithaca, London, 1990), p. 65. See also Mullan, Sentiment pp. 96-8.

61 This is also Richardson's answer to those who read the exemplary heroine as one whose circumstances are to be emulated rather than whose principles are to influence: see Pamela Censured p. 18, Critical Remarks pp. 13-14. See Todd, Sensibility p. 75.

62 Fielding, Remarks pp. 14-15.

63 Johnson, Rambler III, 21. However his involvement with The Female Quixote (see next chapter), qualifies such an assertion.

Section ii: Notes

1 Even frequently cited documents such as Congreve's preface to Incognita (1691), or Manley's to The Secret History of Queen Zarah (1705), consider comparative variations between types of prose fiction, matters of degree rather than kind, see H. McDermott, Novel and Romance: The "Odyssey" to "Tom Jones" (London, 1989), pp. 126-7.

2 Amelia (1751) and Sir Charles Grandison (1753-4) only were still to come.

3 Johnson's description of "heroic romance" suggests the chivalric romance rather than the seventeenth-century roman heroique, see Rambler III, 19.

4 ibid., III, 19 and 21.

5 See Clara Reeve, The Progress of Romance (Colchester, 1785), esp. I, 111. Further references to this text are abbreviated as PR.

6 Hugh Blair, Lecture XXXVII in Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres (London, 1783), II, 305-6.

7 ibid., II, 308.

[8] ibid., II, 308.

[9] The exceptions are Cervantes, LeSage and Scarron, celebrated by Fielding and Smollett in particular.

[10] See Bakhtin's discussion of "normative definitions of the novel offered by novelists themselves, who produce a specific novel and then declare it the only correct, necessary and authentic form of the novel", Dialogic Imagination p. 9, also p. 10.

[11] H.K. Miller, "Augustan Prose Fiction and the Romance Tradition", Studies in the Eighteenth Century III: Papers presented at the Third David Nichol Smith Memorial Seminar, Canberra 1973 eds. R.F. Brissenden and J.C. Eade, (Canberra, 1976), p. 244.

[12] ibid., p. 246.

[13] McDermott, Novel esp. pp. 98-111, 131-56.

[14] D. Schulz, "'Novel,' 'Romance,' and Popular Fiction in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century", SP LXX (1973), 78.

[15] ibid., p. 89. Ballaster stresses that the work of Manley and Haywood is "steeped in a voyeuristic eroticism that Madeleine de Scudéry, with her strictly decorous system of bienscéance and courtly love ethic would have shunned in horror", "Romancing the Novel: Gender and Genre in Early Theories of Narrative", in Living by the Pen: Early British Women Writers ed. D. Spender, (New York, London, 1992), p. 192.

[16] Schulz, "'Novel'", p. 91.

[17] ibid., p. 91.

[18] Richardson prided himself on his inability to read French, hence his "unacquaintance" with French romance, see e.g. SL pp. 85-6. It is difficult to establish which works of French literature in translation Richardson could have read, (he displays a knowledge of Madame de Lafayette's Princess de Clèves, published in translation in 1679; and Madame de Sevigne's Letters, published in translation in 1727). See M. Dalziel in "Richardson and Romance", AUMLA XXXIII (1970), 5 and 10; and Doody, Natural Passion pp. 15 and 297.

[19] The presence of folk and fairytale, or chapbook versions of medieval romance (primarily associated with children's literature), is also worth considering. For contrasting accounts see Flynn, Man of Letters pp. 145-95 and Hunter, Before Novels pp. 141-8. But, as McDermott asks, "how does one evaluate the literary influences of childhood on the adult author?" Novel p. 104.

[20] Dalziel, "Richardson and Romance", p. 8.

[21] Watt, Rise of the Novel p. 32 particularly.

[22] See Davis, Factual Fictions and Hunter, Before Novels. But see also McKeon who does not see romance as the rejected predecessor but as a continuing presence in his dialectical model of ideological change, reaction, and counterchange within an historical context, The Origins of the English Novel: 1670-1740 (Baltimore, London, 1987), pp. 21-2. For a recent challenge to the divisions made between novel and romance in modern criticism see Doody, True Story pp. 15-16.

[23] Discussed by Richetti, Popular Fiction pp. 1-2; Davis, Factual Fictions pp. 1-5; and Miller, "Augustan Prose Fiction", p. 242.

[24] Horace Walpole, preface to the second edition, The Castle of Otranto: A Gothic Story (1764-5), ed. W.S. Lewis, (London, New York, Toronto, 1964), p. 12.

[25] Ibid., p. 7. Walpole echoes the concluding sentiments of Richard Hurd's Letters on Chivalry and Romance published two years earlier, (London, 1762), pp. 119-20.

[26] See Ballaster's comment that this, "ultimately produces little more than a new version of an old history of the novel whereby the 'masculine' tradition of news reporting, journalism, and ballads displaces the 'feminine' one of the romance to provide a more respectable, if populist rather than 'literary', backdrop to the emergence of the novel proper", Seductive Forms p. 13. "Rise of the novel" criticism tends to privilege "democratic", "bourgeois" para-literary influences, (journalism, biography, folktale), over "aristocratic" forms like romance - it is open to question whether the eighteenth-century reader would have made such distinctions.

[27] Bakhtin, Dialogic Imagination pp. 6 and 5 respectively.

[28] ibid., p. 49.

[29] ibid., p. 321.

[30] Rather than distinguishing romance and novel, Bakhtin links them together in opposition to "completed" genres such as the epic. Bakhtin's division is between the "First Stylistic Line of Development" - from Greek romance ("Sophistic Novel"), French and German seventeenth-century heroic romance ("Baroque Novel") to the Sentimental novel (Richardson, Rousseau et al.) - and the privileged "Second Line" which exemplifies "novelistic" processes of comedy and parody, (Rabelais, Cervantes and LeSage to Fielding, Smollett, Sterne and beyond), Dialogic Imagination esp. pp. 372-400. This sets Richardson in the

context of pre eighteenth-century romance, but the lack of distinctions between "romance-orientated novels", (and the emphasis on the Second Line), overlooks the dialogized tension between romance and novel within Richardson's fiction.

31 See e.g. Richardson, SL p. 53.

32 Richardson's "anti-romance" stance did not lead him to condemn Spenser, see SL pp. 161-2, 246.

33 Clarissa 3rd ed., preface, I, ix.

34 Fielding overcame the difficulty through classical genre division; see e.g. the preface to Joseph Andrews (1742), The Wesleyan Edition of the Works of Henry Fielding ed. M.C. Battestin, (Oxford, 1967), pp. 3-4 and 7.

35 Clarissa: Preface, Hints p. 5.

36 Ibid., pp. 3-4. As Watt points out, two of the largest book buying audiences were for religious material and fiction, Rise of the Novel pp. 49-50. The "Religious Novel" therefore could have appealed to both.

37 See Davis' concept of the "prestructure" of a text i.e. the nature of the expectations engendered in its readers Factual Fictions p. 12.

38 McDermott, Novel pp. 150, 170-3.

39 My examination of romance elements in Richardson's fiction is indebted to Dalziel's "Richardson and Romance", pp. 5-24; and Doody, Natural Passion esp. pp. 35-70, 128-50 and 293-300.

40 Something Doody perhaps overlooks in her citation of this passage in Natural Passion p. 128.

41 For parallels between this passage and Clarissa, see Golden, Richardson's Characters p. 189; and Flynn, Man of Letters p. 148.

42 Dalziel, "Richardson and Romance", p. 23.

43 Flynn argues that the "romance" elements of Pamela and Clarissa all but disappear in Richardson's last novel. However, her association of romance with fairy tale, (Man of Letters p. 152) overlooks the different varieties of romance influence. The diffusion she criticises (p. 186) is the quality which links Sir Charles Grandison to "high" heroic romance. McDermott's discussion of Richardson and romance, Novel p. ix, does not mention Sir Charles Grandison at all.

44 On how Pamela's "Arcadian Name" (Pam III, 141), evokes both a challenge and an incorporation of romance see G. Beer, "Pamela: Rethinking Arcadia", in Samuel Richardson: Tercentenary Essays eds. M.A. Doody and P. Sabor, (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 23-6, 28-31, and 36-9.

45 Doody, Natural Passion pp. 38-9, 42-3.

46 See Gaskell, Writer to Reader pp. 65, 74-6.

47 See Doody, Natural Passion pp. 294 and 297.

48 See SCG II, 63; I, 266 and II, 345-54; I, 456-62.

49 R.P. Yoder, "Clarissa Regained: Richardson's Redemption of Eve", ECL n.s. XIII, (1989), 13, 87, 91 and 97.

50 Golden, Richardson's Characters p. 190.

51 The preoccupation with "Love, eternal Love" was noted, and ridiculed, in the Critical Remarks p. 38.

52 The "trial" of the heroine in Richardson's novels draws on a nexus of romance allusions, often relating to the Christian themes of quest and testing. See Flynn, Man of Letters p. 158; and Van Sant, Eighteenth-Century Sensibility pp. 70-1. For a more general discussion see Bakhtin, Dialogic Imagination pp. 105-8, 151, 388-92.

53 See Keymer, Richardson's "Clarissa" pp. 200-6, 214-18; Castle, Clarissa's Ciphers p. 173 and, for a less sympathetic reading of Richardson's relationship with his readers, Flynn, Man of Letters pp. 75-8, 85-6 and 144.

54 See SCG VII, 223; III, 411.

Section iii: Notes

1 See e.g. Pam II, 387; 406 and Cl II, 255; 343.

2 See Clarissa 3rd ed., I, viii.

3 Communal reading of letters in Sir Charles Grandison challenges Altman's assertion that the "confidential role, letter, tone, and relationship are necessary components of epistolary narrative", Epistolarity p. 83. Richardson does retain some epistolary secrecy; see e.g. Harriet's suggestion that sections of her letters should not be read aloud (SCG II, 82; I, 279: II, 99; I, 290: II, 358; I, 465), or the concern over the "lost" page of Harriet's letter (SCG VI, 153-56; III, 105-6). Only in the final volume is Sir Charles granted access to the whole corpus of Harriet's letters. Altman argues that

epistolary fiction often shows confidential letters becoming public property at the denouement, as the form tends to encompass narrative explanation of its own publication, Epistolarity pp. 103-111.

4 See Golden, Richardson's Characters p. 188 and Flynn, Man of Letters pp. 192-3.

5 Flynn discusses Richardson's qualification and deferral of the fairy-tale happy ending in Pamela, see Man of Letters pp. 166-7.

6 Clarissa is in full agreement, see Cl VII, 149; 1318 and VII, 153; 1320.

7 Any sense of real danger in Harriet's abduction by Sir Hargrave is circumscribed by its brevity: this section of the novel is more a prelude to Harriet's trial than the trial itself.

8 The idea that the mind's imaginings can seem vividly "real" is repeated in SCG I, 290; I, 206 and Cl II, 173; 299.

9 John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding ed. P.H. Nidditch, (Oxford, 1975), p. 113.

10 See M.A. Doody, "Deserts, Ruins and Troubled Waters: Female Dreams in Fiction and the Development of the Gothic Novel", Genre X (1977), 542-4.

11 See M.V. DePorte, Nightmares and Hobbyhorses: Swift, Sterne, and Augustan Ideas of Madness (San Marino, 1974), pp. 25-7; and Doody, "Deserts, Ruins", pp. 529-30.

12 Zachary Mayne, Two Dissertations Concerning Sense, and the Imagination; with an Essay on Consciousness (London, 1728), p. 183.

13 See SCG VI, 55; III, 242 and VI, 287; III, 197. Although Charlotte lectures Harriet for allowing herself to be influenced by dreams, she has remarked earlier, "I slept not well myself. I did nothing but dream of robbers, rescues, and murders: Such an impression had the distress of this young lady made on my mind", (SCG I, 188; I, 136), supporting Doody's comment that in this novel, "it is the women around the hero who have weaknesses and perturbation. It is the women who have dreams", "Deserts, Ruins" p. 530.

14 Castle draws attention to this in Clarissa's Ciphers, but insists on Clarissa's naivety and blindness as a "reader", see pp. 21, 59, 67 and 93-8.

15 Lovelace's creation of verisimilitude depends on detail, "I never forget the minutiae in my contrivances", Cl III, 192; 473. On the relationship of this to Richardson's novelistic art see Golden, Richardson's Characters p. 27 and Flynn, Man of Letters pp. 189-90.

16 Lovelace blames Clarissa's apprehensions for her trial, arguing that "Evils in apprehension are often greater than evils in reality", Cl IV, 149; 646, see also VI, 114; 1037. In context this displays Lovelace's failure to comprehend the principles underlying Clarissa's fear of sexual violation c.f. his subsequent experiences of doubt and powerlessness, "so much greater are the evils we dread than those we see!", Cl VII, 175; 1334.

17 Through such transformations and the dislocation of appearance from reality, Richardson conveys the sense of Sinclair's house as a "realistic" updating of the "enchanted castle" of fairy tale. See above, section ii.

18 Castle, Clarissa's Ciphers pp. 96-7.

19 See e.g. Mullan's discussion of Clarissa's "unknowing but unchallengeable" gaze, Sentiment pp. 76-7.

20 Perry, Women, Letters p. 22.

21 See Yoder, "Clarissa Regained", p. 93.

22 Traugott draws a parallel between this speech and The Duchess of Malfi, see "Clarissa's Richardson", pp. 195 and 207.

23 Unlike Clarissa, Lovelace delights in experiences which take him off the beaten track. Clarissa's consolation is that "this very path ... strew'd as it is with briars and thorns, which tear in pieces my gaudier trappings, may ... be the right path to lead me into the great road to my future happiness", Cl IV,351; 755: whereas Lovelace exclaims, "What bryars and thorns does the wretch rush into (a scratch'd face and tatter'd garments the unavoidable consequence), who will needs be for striking out a new path", Cl V, 105; 818.

24 Suspense is built up only to be deflated; news of Harriet's rescue follows close on Mr Reeves' report of her abduction, (SCG I, 160-79; I, 116-29), the revealing of Emily's "secret" through the lost page of Harriet's letter (SCG VI, 153-7; III, 104-6) comes to no more than the "danger" Greville poses to Sir Charles, (SCG VI, 214-16; III, 146-53 and VI, 258-61; III, 176-9). Even in the Clementina subplot Richardson has to rely on complex manipulation of time scales and occasional clumsy expedients, (such as Sir Charles posting an unresolved account of his reunion with Clementina, SCG V, 102; II, 536-7), to maintain the air of mystery and suspense.

[25] c.f. Clarissa's earlier remark, "This Solmes shall never have my vows ... I will say nothing but No, as long as I shall be able to speak", Cl II, 297; 365. For an account of Clarissa's "incessant nay-saying" see M.F. Suarez, S.J., "Asserting the Negative: 'Child' Clarissa and the Problem of the 'Determined Girl'", New Essays on Samuel Richardson ed. A.J. Rivero, (Hampshire, London, 1996), p. 69 also pp. 69-84.

[26] See Cl V, 228; 886-7.

[27] The parallels between Clarissa and Milton's Eve in this respect are explored by J. Butler in "The Garden: Early Symbol of Clarissa's Complicity", SEL XXIV (1984), 527-44.

[28] See e.g. Glanville in Lennox's The Female Quixote, Robert Stuart in Barrett's The Heroine or Mr Knightley in Austen's Emma.

[29] "Imagine"; Samuel Johnson, A Dictionary of the English Language (1755), (London, 1979).

[30] Doody, "Deserts, Ruins", p. 530.

[31] See DePorte, Nightmares pp. 25-30; Doody, "Deserts, Ruins", p. 530. Also Mayne, Two Dissertations pp. 187-8.

[32] The best account of Lovelace's breakdown is R. Stephanson's "Richardson's 'Nerves': The Physiology of Sensibility in Clarissa", JHI XLIX (1988), 280-4. Also Flynn, Man of Letters p. 209.

[33] c.f. Clementina who is frequently described in terms of her "heated" or "disturbed" imagination, (see SCG V, 187; II, 595: V, 265; II, 648-9: VI, 229; III, 157: VII, 136; III, 351: VII, 195; III, 392). This is primarily responsible for her delirium and madness.

[34] Braudy, "Penetration and Impenetrability", pp. 273-4; see also Doody, Natural Passion pp. 113-4.

[35] The idea that Lovelace has "authored" Clarissa's fall is underlined by frequent repetition, see Cl VI, 153; 1061: VII, 123; 1301: VII, 270; 1395: VII, 274; 1398: VII, 278; 1400: VII, 351; 1446-7. Lovelace accepts the attribution on VII, 323; 1429.

[36] Lovelace's techniques also parallel those of the dramatist, see e.g. Palmer, "Two Dramatists".

[37] See Cl IV, 238: 694: V, 310; 932 and V, 355; 957.

38 Belford's remark, Cl IV, 72; 604, is echoed by Clarissa, Cl V, 314-5; 935. Lovelace admits his entrapment in the conscience killing scene, Cl V, 162-3; 848.

39 See Palmer, "Two Dramatists", p. 12.

40 Web imagery is usually employed by Lovelace, the shifting attribution of the roles of spider and fly (between Lovelace, Clarissa and Mrs Sinclair) suggest the complex levels on which characters in this novel establish power over each other. See Cl III, 88-89; 419: V, 215; 879 and V, 229; 887.

41 Discussed by Doody in Natural Passion pp. 104 and 204.

42 Goldberg, Sex and Enlightenment p. 44.

43 ibid., p. 44.

44 Preston, Created Self pp. 84 and 81 respectively.

45 For the interpretation that the conflict between Lovelace and Clarissa is actually "between two modes of imagination", see J. Clayton, Romantic Vision and the Novel (Cambridge, 1987), p. 28.

46 Doody, Natural Passion pp. 174-5.

47 See Preston, Created Self pp. 87-93.

48 See Keymer, Richardson's "Clarissa" pp. 201-4.

49 Flynn, Man of Letters p. 39.

50 See e.g. Cl I, 106; 94: I, 240; 167: I, 264; 180: I, 282; 190: I, 284; 191: I, 305; 202: II, 116; 269: III, 6; 374: III, 254; 506: III, 268; 514.

51 See also Cl I, 118; 101 and I, 136; 111.

52 See Cl V, 368-9; 964: VI, 42: 992: VI, 182; 1080: VI, 223; 1106 and VI, 237; 1115.

53 Again, Lovelace is slow to recognise changes resulting from his action, his refusal to believe that Clarissa's death is possible (Cl V, 281; 916: VI, 342; 1182: VII, 134; 1308), shows a lack of understanding (or a wilful misunderstanding) which is paralleled by the Harlowes' reaction.

54 J.H. Hagstrum, Sex and Sensibility: Ideal and Erotic Love from Milton to Mozart (Chicago, London, 1980), p. 197.

55 See Natural Passion pp. 191 and 195. On the significance of clothes, esp. wedding and burial garments, see pp. 172-4.

CHAPTER TWO: CHARLOTTE LENNOX

i. Madeleine de Scudéry, Samuel Richardson and Charlotte Lennox: The Anxiety of Influence?

While consideration of imagination and delusion is a recurring concern of Richardson's fiction it is still one theme among many in a series of complex, compendious novels. In Charlotte Lennox's second novel The Female Quixote (1752), however, the interest in quixotism is clearly placed in the foreground. In the next section of this chapter I will examine the representation of the quixotic heroine, both in this novel and elsewhere in the literature of the first half of the eighteenth century. Initially, I intend to take into account the questions of genre that Lennox brings into play by setting her fiction within this context.

The title of Lennox's novel refers directly to Miguel de Cervantes' Don Quixote (1604, 1614), a text which fascinated the eighteenth-century imagination and influenced contemporary approaches to fiction and genre. The complexity of Don Quixote was not always recognised by British writers who commented upon the work in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, hence the repeated claims that Cervantes' masterpiece was simply intended to overthrow Spanish chivalric romance by exposing it to ridicule and reality.[1] But Cervantes was also the author of romances himself,[2] while his depiction of the Don's illusions was capable of drawing sympathetic responses from readers which prevented them from maintaining an entirely condemnatory attitude to the Don's tales of knight-errantry. Susan Staves records the shifts in the English reception of Don Quixote, from readers who saw only a burlesque rejection of romance to those for whom the Don's romantic idealism conferred upon him an heroic stature.[3]

Staves, however, like numerous other critics, situates Lennox amongst those who interpret and use Don Quixote only as an antidote to romance.[4] This line of argument depicts Lennox as allied to writers of the 1740s and '50s who were engaged in ridding prose fiction of the influence of romance and establishing a new form - which came to be called the novel - that was defined in opposition to romance. Put simply it is suggested that Richardson, Fielding, Johnson and Lennox had a common aim, an aim which was aided by the precedent of Don Quixote as an illustration of the way to overthrow a genre. In recent years this approach to Lennox has been questioned, primarily by critics concerned with reestablishing eighteenth-century women authors. Here romance is often represented as a "female" literary form in contrast to the "male" novel. Lennox therefore, as a woman author, is shown to display an underlying tendency to resist the necessity of abandoning the female literary tradition of romance, rendering her supposed valorisation of the novel highly ambiguous.[5]

There are certainly many aspects of Lennox's life and work which support this latter argument. Lennox, like Cervantes, wrote romance-orientated fiction as well as quixotic parodies of it. Lennox's first novel Harriot Stuart uncovers none of the problems with romance which complicate The Female Quixote.[6] It would also be surprising, as Doody suggests, if a woman with the extensive knowledge of romance that Lennox displays proceeded to dismiss the genre out of hand.[7] Indeed The Female Quixote contains both an inset romance tale and so much reference and citation that it runs the risk of turning itself into a romance by inclusion,[8] especially when events become increasingly modelled on the genre in Sir George's plot near the end. The end of the novel has been a focus of recent readings, specifically the implications of Lennox's abrupt transition from lecture to disillusionment to conclusion, which has been interpreted as a reassertion of a "real", "male",

"novel" orientated realm that contradicts the internal logic of the text and acts to silence rather than educate Arabella, removing the power which her delusion has conferred upon her.[9]

Although recent accounts of The Female Quixote have involved a greater recognition of the complicated genre relationships which the novel charts, there is a third way of reading Lennox's work that takes the debate a stage further. I would contend that Lennox is neither engaged in rejecting romance nor resenting the novel. Instead The Female Quixote reveals a critique of the "novelty" of the "new species of writing" by subtly undermining the distance which had been claimed to exist between the romance and the novel of the 1740s and '50s,[10] and which has been maintained in numerous accounts of genre from the eighteenth century to the present day. In particular I will consider the fascinating, and problematic, presence of Richardson and Johnson in Lennox's life and work, arguing that instead of simply accepting the ideas of both men, Lennox, through The Female Quixote, enters into a dialogue with the aesthetic theories they had developed. At times Lennox's enquiry points to ways in which the whole agenda of employing creative fiction as moral instruction can be challenged.[11]

In my discussion I will be concentrating on three texts: Scudéry's Clelia, Richardson's Clarissa and Lennox's The Female Quixote, although reference will be made to further works by these authors and others. The choice of Clarissa is explained by its apparently privileged place within The Female Quixote itself; however reasons for singling out Scudéry's Clelia are less obvious. Clelia is just one of the series of seventeenth-century romances Arabella cites within Lennox's novel. None of these is shown to be the archetype of romance and, as Dalziel suggests, the two principal authors Arabella reads - Scudéry and La Calprenède - wrote very different kinds of historio-romantic fiction.[12] It is Calprenède who provides Arabella with

the character whom she, and many contemporary readers, regard as the model of the romantic hero, Cassandra's Oorondates.[13] However, as my focus throughout this thesis is with the presentation of the heroine in fiction, I have taken Scudéry's Clelia as the representative example of French romance. Clelia as well as possessing all the characteristics of the heroine has also the most pronounced influence on the plot of The Female Quixote, as it is by emulating her that Arabella sets in motion the chain of events that lead to her disillusionment.

My starting point is the penultimate chapter of The Female Quixote, "in the Author's Opinion, the best Chapter in this History" (FQ II, 299; 368) and the site of the greatest interpretative crux of the novel. Authorship of this chapter has never been conclusively established and so, in the absence of external evidence, it becomes a subjective decision as to whether the chapter was the work of Johnson or written by Lennox in imitation of him - both are equally possible. What is most significant is Lennox's decision to import a style that is not her own to resolve her novel. The debate as to whether this was by actual inclusion of another writer's words, or by an act of authorial ventriloquism, is of less relevance.[14]

Certainly the chapter contains recognisably Johnsonian sentiments regarding literature; the "great Use" of reading is that it provides mock encounters[15] whereby a person can "participat[e] without Labour or Hazard [in] the Experience of others" (FQ II, 305; 372), however, the reading of fiction is to be approached with caution because literature can provide both true and false models of behaviour. The Doctor establishes a juxtaposition between romance, which falsifies history and indoctrinates codes of revenge and passion, and the novel, which instils principles of morality and religion - the novel which is singled out for praise being Richardson's Clarissa.

What is not often pointed out about this chapter is the tentative, occasionally retrogressive, stages by which the Doctor proposes his argument. He makes false starts which he regrets, finds it difficult to find a language and tone with which to address Arabella, and occasionally resorts to impatient insults that he has to retract. There are two particularly telling moments in the debate. One of these involves the attempt to convince Arabella that the romances she has taken to be literally true are imaginative fiction. The Doctor is, if anything, too successful in his endeavour as, after Arabella has been persuaded that romance is not real history, she reacts in a manner understandable from one who believes in a simple correlation between exemplary models which are true and false models which are fiction:[16]

> Prove, therefore, that the Books which I have hitherto read as Copies of Life, and Models of Conduct, are empty Fictions, and from this Hour I deliver them to Moths and Mould (FQ II, 313-14; 377).

This is not what the Doctor wants at all and he has to retrace his steps in an attempt to make Arabella see how "Truth is not always injured by Fiction" (FQ II, 314; 377) and that, rather than simply turning from imaginative works to factual ones, Arabella has to replace one form of fiction by another. It is this latter stage of the argument that goes to the heart of Lennox's examination of contemporary approaches to genre. Arabella's delusion is the belief in the fictional as real. The Doctor can easily "cure" her of this, but the privileging of novel over romance is a point that The Female Quixote does not concede so lightly. The presentation here of a starkly polarised "choice" is subtly questioned by the way Lennox has previously undermined a simple approach to genre opposition.[17]

This brings us to the second key point of the debate, the fact that the Doctor has not read Arabella's romances. When

Arabella cites the names of her model heroines the Doctor replies:

> To the Names of many of these illustrious Sufferers I am an absolute Stranger ... The rest I faintly remember some Mention of in those contemptible Volumes, with which Children are sometimes injudiciously suffer'd to amuse their Imaginations (FQ II, 308; 373-4).

As well as being enormously patronising this admission disables the Doctor's argument because, as Arabella is quick to point out, it is difficult to argue convincingly against romances if you do not have any first-hand knowledge of their contents. Throughout The Female Quixote Lennox has stressed that those who oppose or ridicule Arabella's romance reading - the Marquis, Glanville, Sir Charles, Miss Glanville and the Doctor - do not consider that they need to have any prior experience of the books themselves.[18]

It is possible to see here Lennox's implied critique of authors who, in the first half of the eighteenth century, attempted to define a "new" genre of fiction by contrasting it favourably with preceding prose forms. This did not necessarily imply acquaintance with actual romances; "romance" was everything the novel did not want to be.[19] Lennox, as a romance reader herself, would have been aware that the agenda of the "new" prose was not the radical break with the past it was heralded as and that the claims made for it disguised a continuing indebtedness to the ridiculed earlier form. It was not only Sir George who "was perfectly well acquainted with the chief Characters in most of the French Romances; [and] could tell every thing that was borrowed from them, in all the new Novels that came out" (FQ I, 198; 129-30).

I would argue that The Female Quixote could well have had one set of implications for the readers of seventeenth-century romance and another to those who read it with an unspecified

idea of "romance" in their minds. While the latter could see Lennox's work as a further support for the novel, they would be unable to perceive the layers of authorial irony open to the initiated.[20] One of the most interesting of these concerns the penultimate chapter of The Female Quixote which I have discussed above, as the Doctor's belief that

> The only Excellence of Falshood ... is its Resemblance to Truth (FQ II, 316; 378)[21]

would have seemed rather familiar to the reader of Part IV of Clelia where they would find Anacreon asserting,

> when you invent a Fable, your purpose is to be believ'd, and the true art of Fiction is handsomely to resemble truth. (Cle IV, ii, 541/i)[22]

One prejudice that is immediately exploded by such a line is the idea that romance is a naive narrative form; in fact seventeenth-century romance repeatedly engages with questions of history and story, fact and fiction, and techniques of narratorial organisation. The Doctor's assertion, "I cannot think them [romance authors] intentionally culpable, because I cannot believe they expected to be credited" (FQ II, 314; 377), is therefore justified. The joke is that if Arabella had read Clelia Part IV, Book II (which presumably she must have done to have read the end and Clelia's famous crossing of the Tiber) she would have come across an account of the "Excellence of Falshood" as explicit as that with which the Doctor explodes her delusion and valorises the Richardsonian novel.

The end of Clelia Part IV, Book II is effectively the summary of Scudéry's aesthetics.[23] It is presented as a discussion between a number of the characters who have been established by this stage in the romance as intelligent and, in their own way, exemplary. Each book of Clelia is structured to contain an inset tale which is then set back into the overall

framework of the romance by the listeners' discussion and a return to the linking narrative storyline. Part IV, Book II is exceptional in that the tale, "The History of Hesiode", is the only story which involves none of the protagonists of the romance. As part of an evening's entertainment, Amilcar chooses to read out a supposedly true history and this provides the impetus to a consideration of fact and fiction.

Although the characters generally agree that Amilcar's tale is "almost all of it invented" they do not condemn it on those grounds because "fiction in this occasion has greater verisimilitude, than truth it self" (Cle IV, ii, 540/ii). This seemingly paradoxical statement refers to a perception of the incompleteness of history; the historian tends to record the factual outline of events but omits a credible account of the human motivations and passions which were involved.[24] The function of the historical romance is to fill in the gaps, to provide what Arabella refers to in The Female Quixote as "the Springs and Motives of ... Conduct" (FQ II, 141; 266), in order to educate the reader into a greater understanding of human behaviour (Cle IV, ii, 543/i-ii). The hybrid form which interweaves fact and fiction is argued to be better suited to this purpose than either history or romance alone because the susceptibility of the human mind to influence is increased when what it is presented with is recognisable and credible. In Clelia's words "things which have resemblance with truth ... affect far more" (Cle IV, ii, 541/ii): a concept that was not lost on Defoe, Richardson and all the other "editors" of "true histories" in the eighteenth century.

The way the discussion in Clelia is presented is strikingly similar to the terms by which genre was debated in mid eighteenth-century England. Plotina plays devil's advocate by desiring imaginative romance entirely detached from the real: fiction with no adherence to probability in either

characterisation or setting, where marvellous events can occur without explanation (Cle IV, ii, 541/i-ii).[25] This is immediately dismissed by Anacreon for,

> with rare Events, wonderful Descriptions, heroical Actions, extraordinary Matters, and Palaces of precious Stones, you would make one of the lewdest Fables that can be possibly invented; there being without doubt nothing worse, than to see things of this nature made without order and reason (Cle IV, ii, 541/ii).

Supernatural events disrupting verisimilitude have no place in Anacreon's version of the historical romance, although coincidence and chance are permissible if bounded by credibility.[26] Herminius answers the other aspect of Plotina's proposal by illustrating the importance of knowledge of the emotional basis of human nature in characterisation (Cle IV, ii, 542/ii).[27]

The insistence on verisimilitude over idealisation perturbs Valeria who believes that the simple representation of reality would be "extream vulgar, and not much delightful". This response, which again is applicable to eighteenth-century fears about the novel, is taken up by Amilcar who argues that "in disallowing things incredible and impossible, it is not intended to imploy only such as are mean and common" (Cle IV, ii, 541/ii). What is being advocated is a middle way through which an author can influence the reader by creating a believable narrative but still maintain control of the moral message of the text so that "Vice be blam'd, [and] Virtue rewarded" (Cle IV, ii, 542/ii). As Herminius proposes,

> above all things, he must know how to take away plainness and driness from Morality, and set it off in a dress so natural and so agreeable, that it may divert all those to whom it gives instruction (Cle IV, ii, 543/i).

Perhaps a rather unexpected sentiment from one of Arabella's "contemptible Volumes".

There is beyond doubt a distance between Scudéry's theory and her practice, but it is perhaps no greater than the disparities which can be observed between the statements of aesthetic principles made by the late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century novelists and the content of their works.[28] At least by considering Scudéry's discussion of the purpose of fictional history it is possible to avoid thinking of seventeenth-century romance only as being the irresponsible, ludicrous genre which the eighteenth-century novelists said it was. It is certainly not the case that Lennox was covertly pointing to the superiority of romance, but her familiarity with seventeenth-century romance led her to question the sharp divisions inherent in the contemporary claims for the novel, replicated in the penultimate chapter of The Female Quixote. Whether Lennox or Johnson wrote the chapter, there is a significant gap between the qualities attributed to "romance" in this chapter and the seventeenth-century romances Arabella cites.

The ambiguous subtext of The Female Quixote is revealed more clearly in an earlier section of the novel, that set in Bath. Book VII, chapter V records Arabella's "triumph" over Mr Selvin as her extensive reading in romance enables her to expose unintentionally the showy superficiality of Selvin's learning, culminating in him "casting down his Eyes in great Confusion at her superior Knowledge in History" (FQ II, 141; 266). Selvin's confusion is comic because he does not realise that he is being intellectually bettered through the suspect form of romance lore. Glanville, however, is aware of this and apparently Lennox controls the implications of Arabella's superiority through placing the reader with Glanville who, in chapter VIII, is described as knowing,

> all these Anecdotes were drawn from Romances, which he found contradicted the known Facts in History, and assign'd the most ridiculous Causes for Things of the greatest Importance

and so he

> could not help smiling at the Facility with which Mr. Selvin gave into those idle Absurdities (FQ II, 152; 273).

However, for the reader of the seventeenth-century romance at least part of the joke of these chapters is on Glanville. Between the two chapters mentioned above is chapter VI "Which contains some excellent Rules for Raillery" (FQ II, 143; 267). Ostensibly this is one of the sections in which Lennox draws attention to the sane understanding that Arabella supposedly retains underneath her romance delusions, and this is how the chapter has often been interpreted. Elaine Kauvar writes that,

> in Arabella's more lucid moments, we see that she possesses much wit and awareness as her comment on the subject of raillery illustrates: " ... persons who possess the true talent of raillery are like comets; they are seldom seen, and are at once admired and feared".[29]

However, Dalziel notes that the chapter is almost entirely drawn from a romance, Part IX, Book III of Scudéry's Artamenes: or the Grand Cyrus.[30] This section of Artamenes is a discussion between Pisistrates, Euridamia, Cerinthe and Silamis, and is therefore connected to Arabella's argument with Selvin in the previous chapter which was concerned with the history of Pisistrates. As is typical of both Artamenes and Clelia, the characters appear to be discussing a neutral topic but have a "secret interest in the business" (Cle I, ii, 88/ii), in this instance a latent rivalry between Euridamia and Cerinthe over Pisistrates. With the exception of two or three lines, Lennox lifts the speeches of Arabella, Glanville and Tinsel from Scudéry's dialogue. Arabella takes Euridamia's comments, Glanville, Pisistrates', and the "Beau" Tinsel receives Cerinthe's linking remarks. Much of Lennox's chapter repeats Artamenes verbatim, other sections are adapted, reorganised, or edited.

So Glanville here is not only speaking the lines of a character in a romance, he is also "charmed to hear her [Arabella] talk so rationally" (FQ II, 143; 268) when she is in fact quoting Scudéry. This comment describing Glanville's response is one of Lennox's few additions to her source material and appears to underline the irony of this moment - this novel is not supposed to be praising the rationality of the language of romance.

It is interesting to consider Lennox's use of the word "rational" with this in mind. Earlier when Arabella refers to conversations as rational the reader is given to assume that, due to her delusion, "rational" denotes "romantically absurd". So when Arabella is impressed with Sir George's conversation (FQ I, 220; 144) and the reader knows he is appropriating romance for his own ends, or when she is describing the "numerous and long Conversations" (FQ I, 228-9; 149) of Artamenes and Clelia as "most pleasing and rational Entertainment" (FQ I, 229; 150), Lennox is supposedly pointing out the ludicrousness of Arabella's illusions. But the "Raillery" chapter shows that, instead of containing arguments about "the Superiority of fair and brown Hair" (FQ I, 229; 150), Scudéry's inset conversations can inspire sentiments so eminently reasonable that they end up cited in Johnson's Dictionary (the phrase quoted by Kauvar above was included in the Dictionary as part of Johnson's definition of "talent"[31]).

This is relevant to a discussion that takes place not long after the "Raillery" chapter. In Book VII, Chapter VIII, Arabella repeats the idea that works such as Scudéry's provide "pleasing and rational Amusement" (FQ II, 158; 277) and gives her reasons. Arabella does not desire accounts of the marvellous or unusual as even in "common Occurrences" (FQ II, 154; 274) descriptions of exemplary human behaviour are found which can, "at once improve and delight me ... excite my Admiration,

engage my Esteem, or influence my Practice" (FQ II, 153; 274).[32] She is therefore disappointed with the "Adventures" that Tinsel narrates. Arabella has no use for gossip, scandal and the representation of human frailty, seeing them as simply a "Detail of Vices, Follies, and Irregularities" (FQ II, 158; 277). It is the manner in which she conveys her preference for romance that is of the greatest significance:

> A virtuous Mind need not be shewn the Deformity of Vice, to make it be hated and avoided ... 'Tis sufficient therefore to shew a good Mind what it ought to pursue, though a bad one must be told what to avoid. (FQ II, 157-8; 277)

Dalziel notes the similarities between this and Johnson's theories in The Rambler[33] but she does not draw attention to the fact that this is the unreformed "deluded" Arabella speaking whose aesthetic judgement has been shaped by Scudéry rather than the writings of the "greatest Genius in the present Age" (FQ II, 314; 377).

Interestingly the "in-joke" of The Female Quixote, that Arabella's romances are not the naive absurdities they are said to be by those who have not read them, does not compromise the purpose of Lennox's parody. The reason for this is neatly summarised by Ronald Paulson's comment that the "satire on French romances is less important as a theme than the more general one of form vs. feeling".[34] Literary representations of quixotism concentrate on analysis of the reader rather than the text, which is why Don Quixote and The Female Quixote can be read independently of the Ur-texts to which they respond. What the quixote reads is comparatively unimportant. What does matter is her reception of the text and method of applying it to her life. Quixotic delusion is produced by the attempt to turn literary artefact into a conduct book for behaviour.

It is in depicting this process that Lennox's humour is at

Arabella's expense. Arabella looks for rules and rigid codes in her reading, and it is her creation of the "Laws of Romance" (FQ I, 209; 137) which is the heart of Lennox's parody rather than romance itself. Arabella's desire to adhere to codified laws of behaviour makes her ridiculous; she attempts to control experience by fixing it into a pre-existing conceptual framework, believing that the "rules" which she derives from romance will determine events.[35] Throughout the novel Arabella will always be reassured if she can uncover a "precedent" from her reading,[36] but uneasy if she ever feels herself in uncharted territory.[37] The comic potential of her delusion is particularly well realised in the sections where she provides prophetic forecasts based on expectations drawn from romance narrative.[38]

The use of literature as prescriptive model creates the conflict Paulson describes as "form vs. feeling". On numerous occasions Arabella's emotional desires are at variance with the "Laws of Romance", and she either has to overcome her feelings or manipulate her laws to sanction her actions. One of the running jokes of the novel is the dilemma Arabella faces every time she is brought a letter.[39] She believes that "all Letters directed to me, must contain Matters of Love and Gallantry; and those I am not permitted to receive" (FQ II, 183; 293), but the "rule" can not assuage her "strong Inclination[s]" (FQ I, 264; 172) to read these missives and it is usually curiosity which wins the internal struggle. As well as these moments when form opposes desire, there are also times when Arabella's code of behaviour imposes emotional responses upon her that she has to falsify. The best example is when Arabella falls into

> a Swoon, or something she took for a Swoon, for she was persuaded it could happen no otherwise; since all Ladies in the same Circumstances arr [sic] terrify'd into a fainting Fit (FQ II, 194; 300).

Arabella is hardly the first literary character to have replaced natural reactions with learned responses taken from fiction. As Deborah Ross suggests, the very use of literature as a guide book for conduct renders the quixotic heroine's desire to emulate the romance heroine impossible; what is characteristic, innate behaviour in the originating text automatically becomes second-hand and acquired when "copied".[40] Hence Arabella's habit of giving "near half an hour to those Reflexions which occur to Heroines in the same Situation with herself" (FQ II, 217; 315) has a parallel in the self-consciousness with which Shamela can talk "a full Hour and a half, about my Vartue".[41] It should be noted that although the genre being parodied has changed from romance to novel, the technique of the comedy remains the same. Fielding was far from being the only writer who approached the novel in this way; a similar impression is given by a short "Dramatick Novel" published in 1760, George Colman's Polly Honeycombe.

Polly believes that "A Novel is the only thing to teach a girl life"[42] and although she is closer to Shamela than Arabella in attitude, she too looks to her reading for precedents and sanctions for behaviour. Polly's chief model is Clarissa, in "imitation" of whom she contrives elaborate schemes to correspond with her lover Mr Scribble who "writes as well as Bob Lovelace".[43] Her parents' attention is drawn to her use of the novel as conduct book when she rejects Mr Ledger, the Solmes character. But Polly's reading means that she takes parental disapproval, imprisonment, and elopement to be commonplace occurrences, creating an exuberant reductio ad absurdum of the Richardsonian novel - implicated amongst those "cursed Novels [which] have turned the girl's head".[44]

One reason why works which parody the novel's influence on behaviour, such as Polly Honeycombe, are of interest is that the attitudes they hold up for ridicule are often the same as

those focussed on by Lennox in The Female Quixote. In part this is because, as I have argued, the comedy revolves around the techniques of quixotism which remain constant despite the genre used by the quixote figure, but it also draws attention to the continuities of theme and story between romance and novel. This can be illustrated by a comparison of the parodic accounts of parental involvement in the love relationships of the heroine. When the Marquis first announces his desire for Arabella to marry Glanville her horrified reaction is expressed as the experience of a contradiction of "romance" expectations:

> The Impropriety of receiving a Lover of a Father's recommending appeared in its strongest Light. What Lady in Romance ever married the Man that was chose for her? In those Cases the Remonstrances of a Parent are called Persecutions; obstinate Resistance, Constancy and Courage; and an Aptitude to dislike the Person proposed to them, a noble Freedom of Mind.

Arabella forms her plans for resistance from such "Examples of heroic Disobedience" (FQ I, 36; 27).[45] Later in the century the terms of Lennox's parody of romance are appropriated for use against the novel. In Austen's Love and Freindship (1790) Edward's "noble" rejection of Lady Dorothea on the grounds that he can not marry with parental approval is described by his father as "unmeaning Gibberish" he could only have got from "studying Novels".[46] In Tabitha Tenney's Female Quixotism (1801) when the father of Dorcasina, the deluded heroine, attempts to save her from marrying an adventurer, she

> retired to her closet; and turning over her favourite authors ... found numerous instances of persecuted lovers, cruel parents, and tyrannical guardians. To find herself precisely in the situation of many sister heroines afforded her ... consolation (Fe 80).[47]

The difference between Dorcasina and Arabella is that Dorcasina's reading is in the novel, "all the British modern authors of the greatest celebrity" (Fe 26), principally Richardson.

Thus the question of genre in The Female Quixote is of greater complexity and fluidity than has been recognised. There are two main reasons for this. The first relates to the disparity which emerges between the seventeenth-century romance Lennox knew and the paradigm of "romance" she parodies in her fiction. The second is that this "romance" shares numerous points of reference with the novel which - in the penultimate chapter of The Female Quixote - is set up as its replacement. Of particular interest, in respect of this latter point, is how The Female Quixote stands in relation to Richardson's Clarissa.

Probably the best known facts about The Female Quixote are that it was written with Johnson's support, revised, completed and printed with the help of Richardson, and then favourably reviewed by Fielding. Authors of studies of Lennox's works a few decades ago often justified their consideration of her on the grounds of her ability to collect such an impressive phalanx of patrons.[48] Recent criticism has been more suspicious of these biographical details, worrying that Lennox's artistic integrity could have been jeopardised by the desire for male approval.[49] Undoubtedly Lennox appreciated and accepted the advice of her famous friends. She was an author who needed to sell her fiction and practical tips from a novelist and printer as influential as Richardson were not to be ignored.[50] But Lennox did not stand in awe of her advisors; she may have responded "appropriately deferential[ly]" when writing to thank Richardson for his comments,[51] but she was equally capable of bemoaning his inadequacies as a printer to Johnson a few months later.[52]

I have suggested that Lennox's response to Johnson's ideas was not as straightforward as it seems and her attitude towards Richardson requires similar reexamination - the direct, laudatory references to him in The Female Quixote are not the whole story (FQ II, 119; 253: II, 314; 377). In particular,

attention needs to be drawn to the number of occasions within the text where the specific target of Lennox's parody of "romance" is just as, or indeed more, applicable to Clarissa than a work such as Clelia. These references are of two general varieties, those involving the plot and those concerned with the manner in which a literary heroine is depicted.

Colman's account of the novel in Polly Honeycombe provides a starting point for consideration of plot similarities:

> Cassandra's Folios now no longer read,
> See, Two Neat Pocket Volumes in their stead!
> And then so sentimental is the Stile,
> So chaste, yet so bewitching all the while!
> Plot, and elopement, passion, rape, and rapture,
> The total sum of ev'ry dear - dear - Chapter.[53]

As I mentioned in the last chapter, the novel's inability to avoid the storylines of romance was one of the obstacles to its attaining respectability. If Arabella lives in fear of abduction, "ravishers", and sexual ruin it is open to question whether the best way to "cure" her is to let her read Clarissa rather than Clelia, in other words to replace one narrative in which the plot turns on the rape of an exemplary heroine with another. Colman's summarisation of "Plot, and elopement, passion, rape, and rapture" in fact illustrates how novelistic narratives elaborated and intensified those elements of the romance plot which concerned its more moralistic critics.[54] An example of this is the treatment of "elopement". Characters do not elope in Clelia. This causes Arabella difficulty when she decides on flight to avoid marrying Glanville:

> The Want of a Precedent, indeed, for an Action of this Nature, held her a few Moments in Suspense; for she did not remember to have read of any Heroine that voluntarily left her Father's House, however persecuted she might be.

However, she comes to the conclusion that as she is running

from, rather than with, a lover, she is doing nothing "prejudicial to her Glory" (FQ I, 48; 35).[55] This, however, is not the case in Clarissa, as Lennox knew, hence her sidelong reference to it here; the phrase "her Father's House," in particular, evokes Richardson's novel.[56] Richardson was anxiously aware that such references to Clarissa's conduct were possible and had reacted with despair when Hill described Clarissa's escape from Harlowe place as "a rash Elopement" (SL 82).

In many ways the similarities of plot are the product of the privileged place of the heroine in Scudéry, Lennox and Richardson. In the work of all three authors the principal concern of the heroine is her involvement in love relationships; as Arabella points out, one "never has the Idea of an Heroine older than Eighteen" (FQ I, 169; 111) and so the preoccupations of the text are courtship, love, and marriage. As a result of this basic resemblance, many of the traits of the romance heroine which Lennox parodies through Arabella are equally relevant to Clarissa. One example is the comedy Lennox derives from describing how Arabella believes she ought to talk when discussing love matters: "to speak in the Language of Romance, she did not hate him; but, on the contrary, was very much disposed to wish him well" (FQ I, 76; 53). It is difficult to read these sections without thinking of Clarissa's "conditional kind of liking" (Cl I, 181; 135), and her tortuous attempts to find a language to express her feelings for Lovelace, a man she "disesteems not" (Cl II, 117; 270).

The intensity of the concentration on the heroine produces other narrative conventions which Lennox undercuts, particularly "the Custom ... the Romance and Novel-Writers" have of recording what takes place "in the Heart, of ... [the] Heroine" (FQ II, 3; 180). In a frequently quoted passage in Book III, Chapter V, Arabella attempts to make Lucy understand how she should recite her "history". As Mullan argues, the minute

description of thoughts, emotions and their physical manifestations in the body, "Smiles, Half-smiles, Blushes, Turnings pale, Glances, Pauses, Full-stops, Interruptions" (FQ I, 185; 122), is an accurate summary of the way the reader of Clarissa comes to know the heroine.[57] Arabella however has no Lovelace to take such an obsessional interest in her every move.

Arabella's concern with the narration of her history is suggestive in other ways. Her engagement with literature is not simply a matter of the reception of influence alone, she in turn has to take on the role of behavioural model to others and is constantly considering how her actions will figure in "the Relation of my Life" (FQ II, 203; 305). Whilst Lennox treats this eye to posterity as part of the comedy it does accurately reflect an element of the work of novelists who set up their heroines as examples. In my last chapter I discussed how the exemplary heroine is consciously aware of her status, she therefore accepts the necessity of records being made of her life. This is easy for Clelia as Scudéry's characters habitually turn their lives into stories and statues are raised in their honour immediately their great deeds are done. It is a matter of greater concern for Clarissa, who battles to control the way her story is related, coaching the various "protectors of her memory" while the eager audience gathers round her.[58]

What Lennox appears to realise is that the heroine's tale is never the same as an account of a real life and it is not judged by the same standards. In this respect the Doctor is correct in asserting that "nothing is more different from a human Being, than Heroes or Heroines" (FQ II, 318; 380). Miss Glanville displays an understandably incredulous response to Arabella's conviction that her history "will be written after ... [her] Death" (FQ I, 167; 110) but the existence of The Female Quixote: or the Adventures of Arabella supports the claim.[59]

If Arabella is considered alongside the expectations which an actual eighteenth-century woman had for life then she is mistaken in assuming she will automatically be involved in adventures, and dangerously wrong to think that "the good Reputation of a Lady consists ... [in] the Noise and Bustle she makes in the World" (FQ I, 196; 128). But as the heroine of a novel she is describing the inevitable. One thinks of Anna Howe's report that Clarissa was "desirous ... of sliding through life to the end of it unnoted ... Rather useful, than glaring, your deserved motto" (Cl I, 3; 40). This is the "ideal" female existence presented by Lennox's Countess (FQ II, 237; 327) but it is open to question whether the Countess' life could be used as a basis for a novel. She, like the frivolous women Arabella describes in Book VII, Chapter IX, is "buried in Oblivion" (FQ II, 161; 279). The heroine is of necessity "push'd into blaze" (Cl I, 3; 40).[60]

Maybe it is because Lennox perceived that a literary character works on a fictional level which is not like reality that she avoided a total rejection of fictional models at the end of her book. A heroine can only emulate a heroine, while the reader outside the text is excluded from her unreal world. The conflicting, often contradictory, directions Lennox's enquiry takes in The Female Quixote made a neat resolution next to impossible. However, although the Arabella who is glimpsed briefly at the conclusion is unrecognisable, there is a logic in showing that once the reasons why she is the heroine of a novel have been removed "all her Adventures are at an End for the future" (FQ I, 209; 138).

Richardson was not unaffected by The Female Quixote although he did not see its subversive potential.[61] The influence of Lennox's novel is particularly apparent in Sir Charles Grandison, published in 1753-4. One scene which owes a debt to Lennox is the debate on romance towards the end of the

novel,[62] although in sentiment and positioning the scene is also reminiscent of a discussion in the continuation of Pamela (1741).[63] In both cases the notions of a group of young, romantically inclined girls are challenged by a figure of experience whose particular target is the reading of romances.

In Sir Charles Grandison the authority figure is Mrs Shirley, in the earlier novel the "matronised" Pamela, who is "capable of making those Reflections, by which Persons of twice ... [her] Age and Experience might be instructed" (Pam IV, 433). Unlike Pamela, who claims never to have been endangered by deluding romance narratives (her reading was controlled by Lady B.[64]), Mrs Shirley admits that, in her youth, her expectations were shaped by romances. Indeed she had initially spurned an eligible match because her suitor did not match her ideal and "what was a good sort of man to an Oroondates?" (SCG VII, 204; III, 398). Mrs Shirley's "enlightenment" was brought about by her friend Mrs Eggleton, adopting the role of Lennox's Countess. Both Mrs Eggleton and the Countess have read romances so, unusually, they are able to present revisionary accounts based on knowledge. Mrs Eggleton's persuasion tends more towards mockery and lecturing than the Countess' but they both present romance as a false model and believe that, in the Countess's words, "to form a Hero according to our Notions of 'em at present, 'tis necessary to give him Qualities very different from Oroondates" (FQ II, 240; 329).

This view has a wide-ranging relevance for Sir Charles Grandison, as Richardson's novel is set up to explore the "good sort of man" in the role of hero. Sir Charles is intended to represent a new form of literary protagonist, the Christian hero, whose valorised characteristics are restraint of passion and passive submission to providence, "Qualities very different from Oroondates". However, there is a palpable sense of tension inherent in Richardson's depiction of Grandison largely because

Richardson knew the expectations of his readership were based upon heroes like Oroondates. Too great a divergence could produce a disappointment that would defeat the object of establishing Sir Charles as a model. This links in with Lennox's doubt as to whether the female "ideal" of unadventurous domestic retirement could be translated into the behaviour of a fictional woman without jeopardising her status as a heroine.

Richardson reaches an uneasy compromise in presenting his hero. For the most part the reader sees Sir Charles performing his duties and obligations in an exemplary Christian way but set alongside this are the occasions (often reported second-hand or much after they happened), where Sir Charles appears as an "old-fashioned" hero, the "deliverer" of lives and victor in battle. Richardson's discomfort with this is conveyed by the bathos of his letter to Lady Bradshaigh in which he attempts to argue the realistic probability of Sir Charles' actions (SL 258). Within the text there are awkwardly repeated references to Don Quixote and knight-errantry, suggesting that Richardson was trying to undercut criticism by pointing out Sir Charles' quixotic tendencies, controlling parody by writing it first.[65]

It is not only Sir Charles who causes Richardson difficulty in this respect. The figure of the heroine shows an even greater propensity to continue rather than oppose romance. This is illustrated by part of Mrs Shirley's speech. Her critique of the French romance is based on the observation that reading it instils "very high ideas of first impressions; of eternal constancy; of Love raised to a pitch of idolatry" (SCG VII, 204; III,, 398). It should be pointed out that again this is the cliched account of "romance" rather than accurate description, Clelia for example argues, "I cannot conceive that it is possible to one to love, that he hath not the leisure to know ... [or] how Love should be produced in a moment" (Cle I, i, 21/i) and, in general, idealistic descriptions of love at

first sight are noticeable by their absence. Although Clelia does refuse to consider any lover apart from Aronces "though ... [he] were dead, or what were more insupportable, were he unconstant" (Cle III, ii, 288/i), this is largely because she was committed to marry him before the romance even starts - many other characters change the object of their affection without receiving undue criticism. As for "idolatry," it is not the most obvious word to describe the salon style discussions of Scudéry's cultured protagonists.

Again there is the sense that Richardson is setting up a smokescreen to distract attention from the romantic nature of his own heroines. After the "first impression" Harriet gets of Sir Charles (SCG I, 232-34; I, 166-7) she never considers another husband, even when it seems almost certain he will marry Clementina (SCG V, 110-11; II, 542). Richardson goes so far as to have Sir Charles declare "that the moment I saw you first ... I loved you" (SCG VII, 38; III, 284) to Harriet after they are married. Richardson diffuses the heightened, obsessive concentration on love and courtship in the story of Sir Charles, Harriet and Clementina by juxtaposing it with the view of pragmatic, older characters and with the anti-romanticism of Charlotte. Charlotte's ironic, almost cynical, attitude debunks the idealisation of first love, indeed love in general:

> Mild, sedate convenience, is better than a stark staring-mad passion ... Who ever hears of darts, flames, Cupids, Venus's, Adonis's, and such-like nonsense, in matrimony? (SCG VI, 43; III, 30).[66]

Charlotte becomes increasingly important when Harriet and Clementina are brought together in the final stages. In the light of Lennox's account of "heroinism", it is interesting that here Sir Charles Grandison splits into the romanticism of the "heroic friendship" (SCG VII, 262; III, 437) and Charlotte's commentary. Charlotte stresses the "literary" quality of

Harriet's relationship with Clementina "Heroines both, I suppose" (SCG VII, 234; III, 418) in contrast to her own "reality". Both of course are equally fictional constructs.

The strategies Richardson adopted to forestall accusations of over-romanticism were to no avail. Interestingly, John Tinnon Taylor points out that it was the concept of the exemplary protagonist which, more than any other consideration, undermined the status of Sir Charles Grandison as a model. In the late eighteenth-century parodies which Taylor cites the humour revolves around the impossibility of emulating Sir Charles; a man will inevitably fail and become disillusioned, a woman can throw away promising marital prospects while waiting for the elusive ideal man.[67] By the time of Tabitha Tenney's Female Quixotism at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Richardson's novels can be represented not as the antidote to romance but as themselves the originators of quixotic delusion.

Female Quixotism provides a fascinating commentary on the generic complexities I have traced in this section, particularly as it clearly announces its relationship to both The Female Quixote and Sir Charles Grandison.[68] The heroine Dorcas "Dorcasina" Sheldon has accepted the affective agenda claimed for the mid eighteenth-century novel, it is from these works that she looks for "instruction, improvement, and delight" (Fe 221). However, Richardson proves no more reliable a guide than Scudéry had been for Arabella; worse in fact, as the unrelenting series of humiliations and ridicule Dorcasina is subjected to ends only with her realisation in lonely, unmarried old age that she has "passed my life in a dream" (Fe 323). The primary criticism is that the "pernicious volumes" Dorcasina has read "convey false ideas of life, and inspire illusory expectations (Fe 325)", a critique which strongly resembles the Doctor's denunciation of Arabella's "contemptible Volumes" of romance (FQ II, 308; 373-4). As Harriot Stanly reports, novels

> are seldom natural; but colour every thing much too highly, and represent characters and situations, which never have existed. (Fe 221)

That this is primarily directed at Richardson is suggested by comparison with an earlier scene where Tenney had commented it "would require the pen of a Richardson to describe the ecstacy, and raptures of this meeting" (Fe 85). Inspired by her "novel-mania" (Fe 57) Dorcasina can make the most unlikely and corrupt man into a "perfect Sir Charles Grandison" (Fe 28) modelling herself in turn on Harriet Byron, mainly by submitting to continual abductions as there "was something so charmingly romantic in thus being carried off by force" (Fe 131).

Through the perspective that Tenney's novel casts on the genre discussion of the 1740s and '50s it becomes obvious that the clear distinction between "romance" and "novel" which contemporary authors attempted to establish did not stand the test of time. Indeed, the impetus for future generic revisions was contained within the fictions they created. Tenney uses the same arguments against the eighteenth-century novel that Richardson, Fielding and Smollett had against seventeenth-century romance. To her their work is unrealistic, improbable, obsessed with love and "rapture"; certainly not the kind of material to be given as conduct book guides to the young. The sense that the discussion has come full circle here is only increased by the fact that - as not all the qualities which Lennox parodied as "romance" were to be found in Scudéry - those which Tenney points out about the "novel" are not always true of Richardson.[69] Approaches to the genre of prose fiction from Scudéry to Tenney are characterised by this circularity; each generation uses the same criteria to reject the work of their predecessors, masking their indebtedness by disapproval. But for all the polemic and parody, definitions and discussions, romance and novel continued to display a remarkable reluctance to be disentangled.

ii. "A Perfect Quixot in Petticoats!"[1]: Representations of the Female Quixotic Imagination, 1705-1752

Charlotte Lennox inherited rather than invented the female quixote. As a literary "type" the figure had been current in England throughout the first half of the eighteenth century, usually appearing in a subsidiary position in plays, tales, translations, and periodical literature. By basing a full length narrative upon the female quixote, Lennox drew attention to the potential of the character in a manner which greatly influenced writers in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[2] One of the characteristic features of individual prose fictions at this time is their tendency to assert claims to credibility through parody of other varieties of narrative and the quixotic heroine came to possess a wide-ranging appeal as the protagonist which best enabled these juxtapositions. Whether an author was bemoaning the inadequacies of a genre, such as romance or novel, or a set of narrative conventions, like those associated with sensibility or gothicism, there was always a "reading Miss" who could conveniently exemplify their dangers through her susceptibility to delusion.

Although Lennox's title obviously evokes Don Quixote as her novel's literary ancestor, the female quixote is somewhat detached from the "mainstream" of Cervantian imitation and should be considered as a character with its own distinctive qualities and purpose.[3] The direct influence of Cervantes' Don Quixote on eighteenth-century fiction can be seen in the work of such authors as Fielding, Smollett and Sterne who, as I will discuss in the next chapter, create numerous older, male protagonists that are in some ways modelled on the knight of la Mancha. The female quixote in England, on the other hand, displays a reworking of Cervantes mediated through the developments of the intervening century of French literature.

From Sorel to Marivaux, French prose is steeped in reference to Cervantes' work, the attraction of Don Quixote being that its humour and vitality was an invaluable counter to the dominant prose forms of the day, the French pastoral and heroic romances. As early as 1627, in Le Berger extravagant, Sorel was using Cervantes to aid his parody of contemporary romances, specifically Honoré d'Urfé's popular L'Astrée (1607-27). The burlesque criticism directed at the précieux writers continued throughout the seventeenth century and, as the literary salons were associated with female celebrities and writers, the figure of the female quixote gained increasing currency as the most appropriate deluded protagonist, appearing in works by Molière, Furetière, Subligny, and Marivaux.[4]

When the female quixote began to filter through into English literature in the eighteenth century its appearance was marked by a conscious acknowledgement of the French tradition.[5] The most striking result of this is that, almost without exception, the reading material which is described by English writers of the first half of the century as engendering quixotic delusion is the French heroic romance.[6] The excesses of more recent indigenous literature, the she-tragedies or the amatory novella, are only touched on indirectly. The author Jane Barker was one of the few who favoured the "honourable Romances" over "Stories of our Times [which] are so black".[7]

It is possibly because of its "imported" quality that initially the female quixote was not greatly developed upon by the authors who took it up. There is a sense in which the figure was a stock "type" used as a shorthand means of establishing character but not of any complexity or fascination in itself. What is perhaps most interesting about these early representations is that they occur in the work of some of the most renowned literary figures of the day. Steele, Gay, Addison, Richardson, and Johnson were all drawn to creating

versions and it is worth considering why this was the case.

Noticeably, the majority of writers who depicted female quixotes in the early decades of the century were male.[8] Undoubtedly the gender of the author has a bearing on his or her reasons for employing this literary "type". However, in these texts the significant gender related issue is that of the sex of the internal and implied readers, and this tends to remain constant irrespective of whether the actual author is male or female. What is specified in these writings is that a particular kind of literature, the seventeenth-century romance (with its close associations with women writers such as Scudéry, and its female protagonists), gives rise to delusory expectations in the mind of a young, female reader. The general implication is that the text itself, in representing the mistaken beliefs of the quixote, stands as a corrective to its own audience (and as the century continued such implied readers are increasingly presumed to be female).

Some recent critics have attempted to establish overviews of early eighteenth-century female quixotism that rely heavily upon the question of the author's gender. While discussing The Tender Husband (1705), Doody remarks that,

> Steele, like other male creators of female Quixotes, emphasizes the folly of the girl's delusion, and in such male works the girl is customarily humiliated or tamed by some man more informed, worldly, or socially skilled.[9]

Even taking into account the unlikelihood of all male (or all female) "creators of female Quixotes" having the same aim, it is debatable whether what Doody observes is actually the case. Steele, like Gay, shows how using romance as a model misleads the judgement of a youthful female protagonist. Steele's Biddy Tipkin fails to realise that her ideal romance suitor Clerimont is an adventurer acting out a role with a view to her fortune.

Similarly, in The Beggar's Opera (1728), Polly Peachum is mistaken when answering Macheath's protestations, "Suspect my Honour, my Courage, suspect any thing but my Love", by commenting, "Nay, my Dear, I have no Reason to doubt you, for I find in the Romance you lent me, none of the great Heroes were ever false in Love",[10] as Macheath will prove far from faithful. However, although they depict such "mistakes", neither Steele nor Gay places the primary emphasis of the text on "the folly of the girl's delusion".

In choosing Clerimont, Biddy escapes the marriage arranged for her to "Numps", her cousin Humphry Gubbin. Steele is sympathetic to Biddy's reluctance to "burn Philocles, Artaxerxes, Oroondates, and the rest of the Heroick Lovers, and take my Country-Booby, Cousin Humphry, for an Husband!"[11] which would involve submitting to the mundane, unadventurous lifestyle outlined for Biddy by her aunt.[12] Despite Clerimont's ulterior motives, his ingenuity matches Biddy's lively humour and, as he is a romance reader himself, he understands her expectations. In the scenes where Biddy and Clerimont are together there is a palpable sense of their compatibility, conveyed through discussion of Biddy's unfortunate name,[13] and the negotiations concerning the terms of their elopement within the framework provided by romance convention:

> Niece. But then our History will be so short.
> Captain Clerimont. I grant it ... [but] Madam, tho' our Amours can't furnish out a Romance, they'l make a very pretty Novel - Why smiles my Fair?
> Niece. I am almost of opinion, that had Oroondates been as pressing as Clerimont, Cassandra had been but a Pocket-Book.[14]

This exchange captures the essence of the play. Considering its comic vitality it would be surprising if, as Doody suggests, Biddy was eventually either "humiliated" or "tamed". In fact the play ends with the marriage Biddy desires rather

than her disillusionment.[15] The quixote is frequently the most likeable, rather than simply the most ridiculous, character in a piece, and the one who embodies any positive values. Biddy's emulation of romance seems charming and harmless in comparison to the games being played elsewhere by Clerimont's brother, Fainlove, and Pounce. Likewise, in The Beggar's Opera, Polly's supposed delusion is set within the context of a topsy-turvy moral universe where mothers advocate sexual intrigue rather than marriage and a man who gets imprisoned women pregnant so they can avoid the death penalty exceeds "The Vigor and Prowess of a Knight-Errant".[16] It is only through such ironic reversals that Polly's belief in love and marriage is mocked.[17]

This sympathy for the quixote is equally apparent in Addison's account of Leonora in The Spectator number 37 published on the 12th April 1711. It is however a sympathy tinged with regret, summed up by the Spectator's remark that "I look upon her with a mixture of Admiration and Pity".[18] This dual response is caused by the fact that, although Leonora's library contains an eminently respectable collection of works by Dryden, Newton, Locke, Allestree, Jeremy Taylor and others, it is the collection of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century romances which has exerted the dominant influence upon her.

Addison here employs a technique which became commonplace later on in the century, whereby the depiction of a female character of virtue and worth is qualified by speculation as to what she might have been if only the indulgence in romance reading had been avoided. In The Lady's Drawing Room, for example, Acasto argues that the quixotic heroine, Marilla,

> had doubtless made one of the most shining Charracters [sic] that any Age or Nation has produc'd; but unhappily, she was likewise too well acquainted with Cassandra, Cleopatria [sic], Grand Cyrus, Pharamond, and other fabulous Treatises, which poison'd her Way of Thinking (LDR 213).

In such versions delusion is represented as a flaw rather than a trigger for more extensive corruption of personality. There is a sense in which the essential qualities of character remain fundamentally unchanged despite the superimposition of the quixotic persona. This is why Lennox is able to suggest that, once Arabella is "cured", she will be her "real" self, displaying the exemplary nature which her delusion has masked.[19]

Addison's lament for Leonora has relevance for Lennox's novel, and eighteenth-century female quixotism in general:

> Amidst these Innocent Entertainments ... how much more Valuable does she appear than those of her Sex, who employ themselves in Diversions that are less Reasonable, tho' more in Fashion? What Improvements would a Woman have made, who is so Susceptible of Impressions from what she reads, had she been guided to such Books as have a tendency to enlighten the Understanding and rectify the Passions, as well as to those which are of little more use than to divert the Imagination?[20]

Addison uses terms that are later of significance in The Female Quixote. Langbauer has pointed out the multiple meanings of "Diversion" both in the novel and critical responses to it;[21] another key word here is "Reasonable". As I have argued, Lennox problematises the status of "reason" and "rational" with regard to Arabella. It is notable that here the Spectator presents the "Entertainments" of the quixote as more rational than those which commonly preoccupy her sex. If the experience of young women is inevitably connected with activities that are "diverting" and time-filling, then the paradox arises that the quixote's innocent realm of the imagination is actually preferable to the trivial, fashionable pursuits of her peers.[22] One thinks of Arabella's immediate awareness of the shallowness of most social occasions (FQ II, 160-1; 279: II, 244-7; 332-4) and her disappointment that "instead of Clelia's, Statira's, Mandana's, &c. she found only Miss Glanville among all she

knew" (FQ II, 257; 341). The desire to emulate the romance heroine cannot be condemned out of hand if it produces a Biddy, a Leonora or an Arabella rather than a "Miss Glanville".

However, in the 1740s and '50s a new urgency enters the treatment of the "reading Miss", and the emphasis shifts onto the dangers of quixotism. In part this was a manifestation of the desire to valorise the "new species of writing" at the expense of romance by insisting on its insidious, delusory tendencies, but it also reflects a genuine concern with the influence of fiction on the mind of the reader. Writers such as Richardson and Johnson attributed an extensive affective power to literature. Johnson wrote that it could "take possession of the memory by a kind of violence",[23] and this was perceived to be particularly the case with the youthful female reader who, in Addison's words, was "so Susceptible of Impressions from what she reads". Addison's phrase is redolent of Locke and early eighteenth-century associative psychology, the belief that "Impressions" and "Passions" aroused by fiction could have a physiological influence heightened the concern that the "right" reading material be chosen for the young.

The fundamental objection put forward by those who opposed the reading of romance was that it jeopardised a girl's success in, what Arabella's father tells her is, "the most important Business of your Life" (FQ I, 59; 42), that is her choice of marriage partner. Romance is depicted as inspiring ludicrously high expectations for life and specifically for courtship. There are two ways that the romance quixote is endangered during courtship; either she may reject all men who fall short of her heroic ideal, or conversely she may indeed find her "hero" only to discover that he is not what her deluded perception has led her to believe. In The Rambler of 23rd April 1751, Johnson depicts an example of the former type in Imperia,[24] whose mind has been "vitiated ... by false

representations" in romance, rendering her proud and arrogant to her suitors, expecting "nothing less than vows, altars, and sacrifices".[25] This theme is picked up by Richard Berenger in The World (4th July 1754) who, in an attack on romance, mentions "several unmarried ladies" he knows of who have been "cheated" out of relationships by "hopes of that ideal happiness, which is nowhere to be found but in ROMANCES".[26]

The second variety of delusion is associated with the figure of the adventurer who exploits the paraphernalia of romance heroism in courtship. As is the case with Steele's Clerimont, such characters are often presented more for comic effect than to embody an urgent warning to the reader. Lennox adds a new dimension when her romance seducer, Sir George, spectacularly fails to mask his intentions by his narrative (FQ II, 115-18; 250-2).[27] The fact that romance protects rather than endangers Arabella in this instance is a further illustration of the comparative sophistication of Lennox's account. This kind of playful ambivalence is noticeable by its absence in Richardson's treatment of the "seduction by quixotism" theme in the history of Polly Horton, a short narrative which records one of the quickest progressions from reading to ruin in eighteenth-century literature.

Polly Horton's life story was added to the conclusion of Clarissa in its third edition (1751). At the time when Richardson was most concerned with safeguarding the reputation and guiding the interpretation of his text, he provided here a cautionary tale about the dangers which beset female readers of the "wrong" kinds of literature. As is typical of Richardson he is not specific as to what Polly reads,[28] it is simply, "that sort of Reading, which is but an earlier debauchery for young minds, preparative to the grosser at riper years, to wit, Romances and Novels, Songs and Plays, and those without distinction, moral or immoral".[29] When this is combined with

"the inflaming additions of Music, Concerts, Opera's [sic], Plays, Assemblies, Balls",[30] a character is created who is, in Richardson's mind, guaranteed to fall. The inevitable is postponed by the fact that Polly's Imperia-like "superior airs" discourage addresses,[31] but eventually Polly encounters a suitor who can live up to her romance expectations. Added interest is provided by the fact that the "gay Deluder" who knows "what turn to give to his professions" is Lovelace.[32] Polly's speedy descent into sexual indulgence, pregnancy, poverty and prostitution is a none too subtle contrast with the way Clarissa's strong sense of identity allows her to combat Lovelace's chameleon-like assumption of roles.

Another graphic description of the ruin of a quixote is "The Adventures of Marilla" in The Lady's Drawing Room. Published anonymously in 1744, The Lady's Drawing Room provides in this tale a fully developed prefiguration of The Female Quixote, indeed there is a strong possibility that it was the most immediate source for Lennox's novel. As John Tinnon Taylor has suggested, the two texts are in many respects "Strikingly similar"[33] and, even bearing in mind that by the mid-century the female quixote figure had acquired a set of continually repeated narrative conventions, these similarities seem to go beyond mere coincidence.[34] In many cases the only previous versions of specific descriptions and scenes in The Female Quixote are to be found in "The Adventures of Marilla".

The Lady's Drawing Room is of complicated generic status. Although it contains a direct critique of French heroic romance in Marilla's history, it does itself owe a debt to such writings in terms of structure and tone. The locus of the text is Ethelinda's drawing room. While the gatherings here do allow the author the opportunity for social satire - the subtitle of the work is "Being a Faithfull Picture of the Great World" - usually the drawing room is a "Theatre of Politeness"

(LDR 5) where cultured characters with romance names come to discuss codes of conduct and relate discrete histories to each other. These narrations however often contain descriptions of sexual passion and misadventure which go beyond the heroic romance, and so The Lady's Drawing Room is perhaps best considered as a mixed mode in the manner of such later seventeenth-century French prose as Madame de Lafayette's La Princesse de Clèves (1678). The combination of romance and scandal in the inset tales links them to the amatory novella and indeed the similar sections of Lennox's own Harriot Stuart.[35]

"The Adventures of Marilla" is related by Acasto to support his views on correct behaviour in courtship (LDR 211). Typically Marilla is young, female and an heiress. We are told that she has siblings and presumably she had a mother but the only familial relationship represented is between her and her father.[36] The effect of romance reading upon her personality becomes an issue as soon as she begins to be of interest to prospective suitors as, like Arabella, she has distinct ideas of what a "proper" courtship entails. Unusually, the author specifies exactly what these "romantick Notions" (LDR 215) are in great detail: a lover cannot publicly declare his desire, he has to serve his mistress unsuspected until the stress of repression causes illness whereupon his mistress can command him to live, his continued service over a span of years will eventually be rewarded with marriage (LDR 215-16). All of these are familiar material to the reader of The Female Quixote.

The story develops along the same lines as Lennox's novel. Marilla's father, like the Marquis, is initially "Unwilling to put any Force on her Inclinations" (LDR 217) but becomes increasingly insistent in advocating his favourite, Carlos. Marilla's relationship to Carlos is similar to that of Arabella and Glanville, both women are attracted to their proposed husband but frustrated because, as Marilla puts it, their

"Addresses ... were not made in the Form she had read of" (LDR 218). One specific parallel is the repetition of the scene where, fired by acquiring the approval of the heroine's father, the lover rushes to tell her of their impending marriage only to be angrily rejected.[37] Carlos's reception is particularly unequivocal, "Know, that Death is not more terrible to me, than the Thoughts of being yours" (LDR 220), the parental sanction only adds insult to injury in the mind of the quixotic heroine.

Marilla's downfall is that Carlos takes her at her word; "imputing her Behaviour ... to an invincible Dislike" he leaves intending "to banish so unhappy a Passion from his Heart" (LDR 223). This unforeseen result thwarts all Marilla's plans for gradually accepting Carlos as her intended, exposing her to her father's anger and an imminent marriage to another man who she has a "real ... Dislike to" (LDR 225). Having run away to avoid this marriage only to be brought back and threatened with banishment to a nunnery which forces her into "a second Elopement" (LDR 226-7), Marilla is left alone and dangerously vulnerable. When she is disinherited and shunned by her family after her father's death her disillusionment is completed:

> These Distresses ... very much chang'd her former Ideas; she had never found that the Heroines of Romance were slighted for Want of Money ... a mournful Experience convinc'd her, that Mankind was of a different Nature from what was represented in those Stories (LDR 229).

However, after Marilla has brought disaster upon herself and experienced this realisation that romance is a false model, further developments in the narrative complicate what has appeared to be a conventional conclusion.

Unable to bear dependency on her family Marilla drifts into marriage with a young army officer. He proves to be a dissolute character who keeps her in neglect and poverty. Reduced to this misery Marilla is offered the temptation of

alternatives by men attracted by her youth and beauty. It is in depicting her "Conduct amidst these Trials" (LDR 231) that the author, whether intentionally or not, illustrates that, while the quixotic female's adherence to "form" jeopardises her, the lessons learnt from the behaviour of the romance heroine can be invaluable.[38] Marilla knows exactly how to respond when threatened with attempted seduction: that her

> Virtue stood like a Rock impregnable to all Efforts, and unshaken either by Force or Fraud (LDR 231),

is not unrelated to the example of heroines like Clelia who resist male threatenings by

> being fortified with a rocky constancy, a vertue that hath no parallel (Cle II, i, 159/ii).

Although she displays "exemplary" (LDR 231) behaviour Marilla's virtue is not rewarded, her child dies, her husband remains unreformed until his early death, and she is left in widowed poverty experiencing "a Life of Misery, obscure, unknown, unaided, and deserted by all but her own Fortitude" (LDR 233).

Despite their shared quixotism the experiences of Marilla and Arabella are, therefore, very different. Through most of "the Adventures of Marilla" the heroine is treated with a sharpness that Lennox does not often apply to Arabella. Marilla's cruelty in rejecting Carlos is stressed, (LDR 222)[39] as is the scandal and loss of reputation she suffers by her "elopements" (LDR 225-7). Likewise Marilla's humiliation at the hands of her family and her ruin is a fate Arabella avoids. Lennox's reluctance to expose her heroine to public ridicule has often been remarked upon, indeed Barbauld criticised Lennox for this, arguing that the conclusion would have been more credible if Arabella had "been recovered by the sense of ridicule; by falling into some absurd mistake".[40] Like Marilla in her trial Arabella shows a marked propensity to slip from

the quixotic to the romance persona, becoming a heroine not through the emulation of the context of such figures ("the rules") but their nature (the virtue, freedom from envy and malice which the romance heroine personifies).[41]

Lennox seems to set up scenes intended to undermine Arabella only to see the impetus of the comedy dissipate upon her arrival. The most well known of these is the ball to which Arabella arrives dressed in the manner of the Princess Julia:

> It is not to be doubted but much Mirth was treasur'd up for her Appearance; and the occasional Humourist had already prepared his accumstom'd Jest, when the Sight of the devoted fair One repell'd his Vivacity, and the design'd Ridicule of the whole Assembly. (FQ II, 150; 272)

Recent critics who, like Jane Spencer, read the novel as "an analysis of romance as a fantasy of female power",[42] argue that the ambivalence of Lennox's attitude to Arabella derives from a wistful attraction to the representation of women in romance, a sympathetic attachment which conflicts with Lennox's ostensible satiric purpose. In her delusion Arabella is of prime importance and can command, without it she has to accept subjection to her father and prospective husband, her status as "a pawn in the game of property".[43] However, less attention has been paid to the implications which Arabella's quixotism has for Lennox's role as a creator of imaginative fiction,[44] and it is this which I will be focussing on for the remainder of this chapter.

The quality which Arabella exemplifies is imagination. The pleasure of the text, and indeed that of any narrative which centres on the quixote, is in discovering how the protagonist's invention will allow the events of the narrative to be interpreted so that they support the quixotic delusion in question. Arabella manages this even without the aid of imaginary "enchanters" of the type Don Quixote believes transform his surroundings, as Glanville woefully admits,

> she had such a strange Facility in reconciling every Incident to her own fantastick Ideas, that every new Object added Strength to the fatal Deception she laboured under. (FQ II, 256; 340)[45]

The appeal of such a figure to the creative artist has a double-edged quality. The delight in depicting the ingenuity and imagination of the quixote is set alongside the fact that the character is risking alienation through their delusion. The quixote's dilemma is that of fiction itself; whether to retreat into a self-referential world of fantasy or to be brought into contact with, and have relevance to, the "real".

This has significant implications for the woman author of a female quixote. After all Lennox has manifestly read the same romances as Arabella; not only that, but she must possess the same qualities of creative imagination as her heroine, otherwise she could not have invented her tale.[46] The Female Quixote was, however, written at a time when the justification of fiction through its instructive usefulness was axiomatic, and Lennox's acceptance of the required "improvement" is displayed by the need she felt to reform Arabella. It was also necessary for Lennox to display her own freedom from the delusion which besets her heroine and this she achieves through the distancing effect of comedy. However, there are moments when the detachment disappears and the author appears to acknowledge the attractions of the imaginary world her creation inhabits.

The ambivalence regarding the power of the imagination was far from being the prerogative of the female author. During the century preceding the publication of Lennox's novel the imagination had been the focus of urgent interrogation and, alongside the authors who concerned themselves with its "pleasures", most famously Addison and Akenside, were those who feared its dangers.[47] Between Hobbes' Leviathan (1651) and Johnson's Rasselas (1759), highly influential warnings were

given regarding the effects of indulgence in imaginative fantasy. In addition, after the publication of Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690), such admonitions gained the tacit support of the central premises of contemporary physiological, psychological and philosophical thought.[48]

One representative account is Zachary Mayne's Two Dissertations Concerning Sense, and the Imagination (1728). Although Mayne has some argument with Locke, his treatise follows the Essay in its discussion of the associative workings of the mind. Mayne is not entirely critical of the imagination, he accepts that "a lively or sprightly" imagination is a prerequisite of artistic creation, despite the danger that a "strong or vehement Imagination" poses to the mind.[49] His attitude is very much what Michael DePorte terms

> the common Augustan view that imagination is an anarchic faculty, essential as the source of ideas and images, yet lacking any principle of order or restraint.[50]

Specifically imagination has in itself no innate moral control but can be at the sway of the passions.[51] Mayne, like Johnson, reveals a belief that few individuals can exercise suitable restraint over their imaginative faculty,[52] his emphasis is therefore placed upon describing its potential for damage:

> Seeing that the Imagination is naturally busy and restless, and often acts, as it were, spontaneously ... And seeing also that Ideas or Phantasms, which are its Creatures and Emissaries, have an extraordinary Influence ... upon the Mind, in the Exercise of its Rational Faculties: Hence it comes to pass that the Imagination is almost continually ... hurtful and prejudicial to the Understanding.[53]

Here Mayne touches on one of the great fears expressed by writers of the early to mid eighteenth century, the ability of imagination to undermine reason. As Johnson's Imlac laments during the final stages of Rasselas, "Of the uncertainties of

our present state, the most dreadful and alarming is the uncertain continuance of reason" and he outlines the causes of this in a chapter entitled "The dangerous prevalence of imagination".[54] The aspect of this which has most relevance for the literary representation of the quixote is conveyed by William Battie's remark "deluded imagination, which is not only an indisputable but an essential character of Madness".[55]

The text which made the greatest single contribution to the eighteenth-century conception of derangement was Locke's Essay.[56] Before Locke, madness was often attributed to divine retribution or a sinful failure to control the passions. In contrast, during the Essay, it is described as the extreme result of a mental process which is common to everyone. An individual's thought is the product of the imaginative associations made between ideas the mind has accumulated. If however by "Chance or Custom",[57] certain ideas are repeatedly wrongly associated the seeds of mental delusion have been sown. Due to the possibility of this, Locke explicitly warns

> those who have Children, or the charge of their Education ... diligently to watch, and carefully to prevent the undue Connexion of Ideas in the Minds of young People.[58]

Taking this into consideration, it is easy to see why disillusioning Arabella proves to be so troublesome: "romantick Heroism, was deeply rooted in her Heart; it was her Habit of thinking, a Principle imbib'd from Education" (FQ II, 240; 329). If wrong associations have been made in this way then the mind does not cease to function for, as Locke puts it, "mad Men" do not loose their "Faculty of Reasoning", the problem is that their thinking is now based on a false premise: "For by the violence of their Imaginations, having taken their Fancies for Realities, they make right deductions from them".[59]

It may seem strange to consider Arabella as being actually

deranged. Other eighteenth-century heroines who experience madness - Richardson's Clarissa and Clementina, or Burney's Cecilia - tend to undergo a distinct period of loss of sanity as a result of extreme emotional stress, as Doody points out, "Madness is a phase through which the heroine lives and from which she learns".[60] Arabella on the other hand is almost a case-history of Lockean madness, which is revealed not when an individual "is under the power of an unruly Passion, but in the steady calm course of his Life".[61]

In many ways the variety of derangement which was so compelling to eighteenth-century philosophy and psychology is the madness of the quixote.[62] Madness was linked to obsession; once the mind had developed a quirk in the form of an incorrect association, it possessed a propensity to become increasingly caught up with this single idea, to Mayne such people "can only think in that Road and Track".[63] Locke and Mayne believe that almost all men are subject to the dominion of these "favourite Ideas" but while Mayne argues that a man can possess a "Blind-side" whilst otherwise being sane,[64] Locke believes that all such "opposition to Reason" is "really Madness".[65]

Lennox's references to "Lady Bella's Foible" (FQ I, 26; 21), her "peculiar Turn" (FQ I, 182; 119) or her "favourite Topic" (FQ I, 73; 51) are informed by this psychology of the mind. She is particularly in keeping with her contemporaries by depicting Arabella's delusion as being commonly expressed through conversation.[66] Locke criticises the prejudices and foibles people display by remarking that

> there is scarce a Man so free from it, but that if he should always on all occasions argue or do as in some cases he constantly does, would not be thought fitter for Bedlam, than Civil Conversation.[67]

Mayne echoes this by asserting that a man's delusion is best

revealed in conversations which are "extempore ... or spoken off hand" and he includes descriptions of conversational styles which reveal an unbalanced mind.[68] At the end of the century John Haslam, who was the apothecary to Bethlehem Hospital at the time, described how many insane people were able to speak with the appearance of complete coherence and rationality, their madness only coming to the surface when the "favourite subject" or obsession was broached.[69]

The reason why most characters in the novel find Arabella so baffling is because "her Conversation ... when it did not turn upon any Incident in her Romances, was perfectly fine, easy, and entertaining" (FQ I, 97; 65).[70] Once Glanville has overcome his own initial confusion at the changeability of Arabella's discourse, he spends the rest of the narrative nervously attempting to control the subject of conversations in which Arabella is included; and relaxing with a palpable sense of relief when she enters into one of her "sane" speeches (FQ II, 144-5; 268-9: II, 200-1; 303-4: II, 210-11; 310-11). His endeavours are often thwarted by Charlotte whose jealousy leads her to encourage Arabella's "foible". These occasions can be amusing for the reader, as in the instance when Charlotte "innocently" begins a conversation concerning romance with Sir George while a "horridly vexed" Glanville attempts to divert Arabella's attention: "she, who saw a favourite Subject started, took no Notice of what Mr. Glanville was saying" (FQ II, 42-4; 204-5). However, the emphasis of the text is often placed on the spiteful unpleasantness of Charlotte's behaviour.

This is the case in the scene following the contretemps over Tinsel's visit to Arabella's room, when Charlotte who "with a malicious Pleasure had secretly triumph'd in the Extravagances her beautiful Cousin had been guilty of" (FQ II, 206; 308), starts discussing Arabella's "Intervals" and patronising her for her manifest insanity (FQ II, 207-8; 308-

9). Glanville's anger underlines the tawdry motivation behind Charlotte's speech and points to a highly significant element of Lennox's depiction of Arabella's quixotic madness. Numerous characters in the novel call Arabella mad.[71] To Hervey she is "the most fantastical Creature that ever lived, and, in my Opinion, fit for a Mad-house" (FQ I, 240; 157), while after the Vauxhall debacle, Sir Charles seriously considers bringing a "Commission of Lunacy against her" (FQ II, 255; 339). However, the adventures of this "fantastical Creature" are the motivation of the text,[72] and it is likely that the reader will resist the dismissive interpretations of such characters in the same way that they might resent the intervention of the Duke and Duchess into Don Quixote's world.[73]

There is a sense that these figures in The Female Quixote find it easy to categorise Arabella because they are themselves without the imagination or sympathy to connect in any way with Arabella's romance fantasy. "Mad" is used in this novel in a comparable way to "romantic" in Richardson's; the blanket term to describe behaviour which does not conform to the norm. The fact that this standard is proposed and defended by characters like Hervey, Charlotte, and Sir Charles does not increase its attractions as a replacement for Arabella's rich imaginings.

However, the division between "mad" and "sane" is not depicted in such simple oppositional terms in the novel, again reflecting the relativism introduced into the subject by Locke's Essay. The novel demonstrates that an individual's conception of madness is personal rather than an absolute standard - after all, to Arabella, Glanville does "not seem ... far from Madness" (FQ I, 182; 120) in his failure to enter into the character she believes he is assigned in her romance. Glanville, however, is fending off the encroaching threat to his reason which Arabella's delusion constitutes to him (FQ I, 161; 107: II, 222; 318). The quixote's imaginative refashionings

of experience are often portrayed as being transmittable to other characters. Lucy is drawn into Arabella's fantasy (FQ II, 194; 300), as is Dorcasina Sheldon's maid Betty who at times displayed ideas "as wild and extravagant as ever those of her mistress had been" (Fe 209).[74] In The Female Quixote the treatment of this contagiousness goes beyond its influence on specific individuals and, in the process, starts to break down the structural defences that the novel itself has raised against its central protagonist and her romance fantasies.[75]

The Female Quixote is an episodic narrative. Instances of Arabella's delusion follow a pattern: they are introduced, enacted, concluded, and Lennox moves onto the next development, which need not be closely related to what has just occurred.[76] This has the effect of enclosing and controlling the implications of Arabella's quixotic imagination. However, during the final stages of the novel, in the Richmond setting, this framework disappears. The change in tone is heralded by the arrival of "The Princess of Gaul". Whereas before, in Sir George's previous attempt to use Arabella's "Foible, to effect his Designs" (FQ I, 198; 130), the reader was aware of his intentions, and distanced from Arabella's folly in lamenting "the imaginary Afflictions of the full as imaginary Philonice" (FQ II, 122; 254), now they are permitted no greater insight. The unsettling effect is comparable to Lovelace's introduction of Tomlinson in Clarissa, where there is a delay before it is made explicit whether he is "real" or not (Cl IV, 211-14; 679-96). It is not until the second meeting and the rather surreal line "she was soon join'd by the imaginary Princess" (FQ II, 269; 348) that the reader is given the advantage.

The boundaries between fantasy and reality remain blurred through the next few chapters. In the confusion, caused by the speed with which developments occur, it seems that finally Glanville, Charlotte and Sir George have assumed the role

ascribed to them in Arabella's imagination, indeed at the moment when Glanville "snatch'd up his Sword, flew down the Stairs into the Garden, and came running like a Madman up the Walk in which the Lovers were" (FQ II, 282; 357), he has actually appropriated Arabella's quixotism. Although this mood does not last - subdued by the sobering effect of manslaughter laws, the Thames, and the Doctor - Lennox takes a delight in setting up her intriguing "mysterious Chapter[s]" (FQ II, 268; 348) and "extraordinary Accidents" (FQ II, 282; 357). As Helen Thomson argues,[77] Lennox knew of the "liberating potential" of the imagination as well as its dangers and the novel's concluding stages are an expression of both these qualities.

Indeed, the quixote was an ideal solution for the eighteenth-century novelist. It was an opportunity to present creatures of the imagination whose fantastic world introduces them to the realms of delusion and madness, figures with obvious attractions to authors who were engaged in the invention of a work of fiction. But while the content of the text revolves around the depiction of the quixotic fantasy, novelists had in their power the disillusioning moment when the protagonists were brought to their senses, turning the narrative from an enactment of delusion to a warning against it and fulfilling the dual requirements of aut prodesse aut delectare. In many ways Lennox's Arabella is to her what Lovelace was to Richardson, a figure who personifies the pleasures and the dangers of imagination, allowing creative desires to be played out with the inbuilt safety net of comic distancing or moral comment. Also, for both authors, when the time came to turn the trend of the narrative against these characters, they were perhaps made to realise that - within the medium of fiction at least - the power of the fantasist is not easily dispelled.

CHAPTER TWO: CHARLOTTE LENNOX

Section i: Notes

1 See e.g. Tobias Smollett, preface, The Adventures of Roderick Random (1748), ed. P.-G. Boucé, (Oxford, New York, Toronto, Melbourne, 1979), p. xliv; George Colman, prologue, Polly Honeycombe, a Dramatick Novel of One Act (London, 1760), [p. xiv]; and Blair, Lectures II, 307.

2 La Galatea (1584) and Persiles y Sigismunda (1617). Reeve's Euphrasia cites these when discussing the "paradox" that it is "possible to respect that incomparable work [Don Quixote], and yet respect the books it condemns and ridicules", PR I, 53 and 58-9. See also M.A. Doody, introduction, The Female Quixote ed. M. Dalziel, appendix D. Isles, (Oxford, New York, 1989), p. xiv. This edition is referred to below as FQ (1989).

3 S. Staves, "Don Quixote in Eighteenth-Century England", CompL XXIV (1972), 193-4 and 204-7. Also H. Levin, "The Quixotic Principle: Cervantes and Other Novelists", The Interpretation of Narrative: Theory and Practice ed. M.W. Bloomfield, (Cambridge, Mass., 1970), pp. 54-55, 59; S.G. Auty, The Comic Spirit of Eighteenth-Century Novels (Port Washington, New York, London, 1975), pp. 19-21.

4 See Staves, "Quixote in England" pp. 195-6. Also T.P. Haviland, The "Roman de Longue Haleine" on English Soil (Philadelphia, 1931), pp. 146-47; J.M.S. Tompkins, The Popular Novel in England, 1770-1800 (London, 1932), p. 207; A.B. Shepperson, The Novel in Motley: A History of the Burlesque Novel in English (Cambridge, Mass., 1936), pp. 69-70, 73 and 76; E.M. Kauvar, "Jane Austen and The Female Quixote", SN II (1970), 212 and 214; M. Dalziel, introduction and D. Isles, appendix to The Female Quixote (London, New York, Toronto, 1970), xiv-xvi and 419 respectively. This edition is referred to below as FQ (1970).

5 See Doody, FQ (1989), pp. xvii, xix-xx and "Shakespeare's Novels: Charlotte Lennox Illustrated", SN XIX (1987), 300-5; Langbauer, Women pp. 62-3, 65-6; P.M. Spacks, Desire and Truth: Functions of Plot in Eighteenth-Century English Novels (Chicago, London, 1990), pp. 13-16, 23-25, 28-29; H. Thomson, "Charlotte Lennox's The Female Quixote: A Novel Interrogation", Living by the Pen ed. Spender, esp. pp. 113-4, 119; C.A. Craft, "Reworking Male Models: Aphra Behn's Fair Vow-Breaker, Eliza Haywood's Fantomina, and Charlotte Lennox's Female Quixote", MLR LXXXVI (1991), 832, 836-8.

6 Harriot thinking herself "nothing less than a Clelia or Statira" even helps her with the romance-orientated trials she faces, The Life of Harriot Stuart (London, 1751), I, 8.

[7] Doody, FQ (1989), p. xiv. Also Ross, Excellence p. 100.

[8] The inset is Sir George's "History", The Female Quixote (London, 1752), II, 49-118. Further references are included in the text abbreviated as FQ, followed by the corresponding page number in FQ (1970). Langbauer believes "Lennox goes too far", allowing "romance's ... formal excesses [to] make their way into the novel", Women p. 72. See also D. Marshall, "Writing Masters and 'Masculine Exercises' in The Female Quixote", in ECF V (1993), 113-15.

[9] See Doody, FQ (1989), pp. xxx-xxxi; Spencer, Woman Novelist pp. 189-90; Langbauer, Women pp. 81-4; M.A. Schofield, Masking and Unmasking the Female Mind: Disguising Romances in Feminine Fiction, 1713-1799 (Newark, London, Toronto, 1990), pp. 132-3; E. Kraft, Character & Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Comic Fiction (Athens, London, 1992), pp. 87, 92-4, 97-9 and W. Motooka, "Coming to a Bad End: Sentimentalism, Hermeneutics, and The Female Quixote", ECF VIII (1996), 251-2.

[10] Here I differ from Ross who contends that the ambiguities of The Female Quixote derive from Lennox's commitment to "a tradition that elevated the novel and deprecated the romance", "Mirror, Mirror: The Didactic Dilemma of The Female Quixote", SEL XXVII (1987), 458. Also Excellence pp. 71, 94-5, 108-9. c.f. J.H. Messick in "Reading As If For Life: The Female Quixote", (unpublished) Diss. (Santa Barbara, 1982), pp. 24, 41-3 and J.J. Lynch, "Romance and Realism in Charlotte Lennox's The Female Quixote", EIL XIV (1987), 51-63. I see Lennox in a more active role, herself questioning the premises of generic division and the purpose of "Johnsonian didactic fiction" (Ross, "Mirror, Mirror", p. 468).

[11] Lennox's first two novels are without the prefaces, excuses, and apologies of some later eighteenth-century female novelists. The strong authorial presence in the texts does not necessarily correlate with a didactic programme.

[12] Dalziel, note for p. 62 (1), FQ (1970), p. 392.

[13] See Dalziel, note for p. 24, FQ (1970), p. 390 and S. Baker, "The Idea of Romance in the Eighteenth-Century Novel", PMASAL XLIX (1964), 508, 513.

[14] See Spacks, Desire and Truth pp. 15-16 and Langbauer, Women pp. 82-3. Marshall details the complex layerings of authorship and authority in the novel in "Writing Masters", pp. 110-11, 113-20, 125-35.

[15] Johnson, Rambler no. 4, (1750), III, 23.

[16] See her earlier comment that "One Falshood always supposes another, and renders all you can say suspected: Whereas pure,

unmixed Truth, carries Conviction along with it", FQ I, 159; 106.

17 My discussion may seem to presuppose Lennox's authorship of the chapter. However the contradictory subtext could equally be attributed to Johnson. The ambiguities here are no greater than those in Rambler no. 4 where the desire to replace "old" romance with a realistic alternative conflicts with a valorisation of the exemplary characters as found in romances.

18 See FQ I, 68-74; 48-51: I, 77-9; 53-5: I, 90; 61 and I, 122-4; 82-3. One exception is Sir George but, as Doody illustrates, he is a misreader of romance, FQ (1989), p. xxviii. In contrast, numerous characters in Don Quixote know the Don's romances, see Cervantes, Don Quixote (1604, 1614), The Ormsby Translation eds. J.R. Jones and K. Douglas, (New York, London, 1981), I, vi, 48-54; I, xxix, 222; I, xxxii, 245-6 and II, xxx, 592. Further references, given in the form of part, chapter and page number, are included in the text abbreviated as DQ.

19 See Langbauer, Women pp. 16-17 and 63, although I disagree with the direct genre/gender relationship drawn here (pp. 1-5).

20 Sophronia in Reeve's Progress of Romance comments that The Female Quixote "lost its aim, because at the time it first appeared, the taste for those Romances was extinct", PR II, 6. But a number of Lennox's contemporaries displayed knowledge of French romances suggesting they were still current. See Haviland, "Roman" pp. 130-32, 145-50; Shepperson, Novel in Motley pp. 67-8; Baker, "Idea of Romance", pp. 507, 511-12; Dalziel, FQ (1970), pp. xvii-xviii; Doody, FQ (1989), pp. xv-xvi, and Todd, Angellica pp. 48 and 153.

21 c.f. Rambler no. 96, "The Muses wove ... a loose and changeable robe, like that in which Falsehood captivated her admirers; with this they invested Truth, and named her Fiction", Rambler IV, 152. See Spacks, Desire and Truth pp. 1-2. Also Johnson, "Poets, indeed, profess fiction, but the legitimate end of fiction is the conveyance of truth", Lives of the English Poets ed. G.B. Hill, (Oxford, 1905), I, 271.

22 Reference is to the translation of Madeleine de Scudéry's Clélie (1656-60) by J. Davies and G. Havers, entitled Clelia: An Excellent New Romance (London, 1678), abbreviated in the text as Cle. The pagination is unreliable, therefore citations include part, book, page and column numbers.

23 See also Davis' consideration of the preface to Ibrahim, Factual Fictions pp. 28-33. Discussed in Williams, Novel and Romance pp. 4-5.

[24] c.f. Sidney, The Defense of Poetry, Miscellaneous pp. 87-91. See also the translator of Scudéry's Artamenes preface, "to the Reader".

[25] Some "surprising events" (Cle IV, ii, 541/i) do occur in Clelia but Scudéry is sparing in her use of the "marvellous". Also, as Frye comments, the novel fared little better in its attempt to exclude shipwrecks, hermits, mysterious births and prophecy, Secular Scripture pp. 4-5.

[26] Again one thinks of the novel which, from Fielding to Hardy and beyond, has included miracles of coincidence in its "realism".

[27] Scudéry's own characterisation is no doubt stylised, as Herminius suggests it is "the nature of the passions" (Cle IV, ii, 542/i) rather than individualism which is to be explored. However it is not as two-dimensional as was suggested in the eighteenth century.

[28] It is not as extreme as McDermott suggests in Novel p. 127. Davis' insistence on a "profound rupture" between novel and romance, overlooks the continuity of content by focus on the audience and "prestructure" of prose fiction, Factual Fictions p. 25.

[29] Kauvar, "Austen and The Female Quixote" p. 213.

[30] Dalziel, note to p. 267, FQ (1970), p. 406. Also Langbauer, Women p. 69. See Scudéry, Artamenes: Or, The Grand Cyrus, transl. by F.G., (London, 1690-1), Part IX, Book iii, 325-31 (Artamène ou le Grand Cyrus was originally published in France between 1649 and 1653).

[31] See Johnson, Dictionary defin. "Talent", "Persons who possess the true talent of raillery are like comets; they are seldom seen, and all at once admired and feared. Female Quixote". See FQ II, 145; 269. The phrase is one of two additions Arabella makes to Scudéry; it "pursue[s]" the "Comparison" that "the Fire of its Wit should ... shine as the Stars do, but not burn" FQ II, 145; 269, c.f. Artamenes IX, iii, 330.

[32] c.f. FQ I, 69; 48.

[33] Dalziel, note to p. 277 (1), FQ p. 408.

[34] R. Paulson, Satire and the Novel in Eighteenth-Century England (New Haven, London, 1967), p. 276.

[35] Langbauer asserts "Romance is mad because it elevates rules for their own sake", Women p. 73 but it is Arabella's quixotic delusion which creates the rules not French romances.

[36] See FQ I, 251-2; 164: II, 4; 180-1: II, 186-90; 295-7 and II, 280; 355.

[37] ibid., I, 261; 170.

[38] ibid., II, 169-72; 284-6.

[39] ibid., I, 12-14; 12-13: I, 264-7; 172-4 and II, 182-3; 292-3.

[40] Ross, "Mirror, Mirror" p. 467, also her Excellence pp. 5-6 and 106-7. See C. Gallagher, Nobody's Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Literary Market-place, 1670-1820 (Oxford, 1994), pp. 185-90, who remarks that Arabella, "behaves as if the books must be universally known, always already read, so that she can forget the fact that calls their "reality" into question: that she, a heroine, has unaccountably been allowed to spend most of her life reading them" (p. 186).

[41] Henry Fielding, An Apology for the Life of Mrs. Shamela Andrews (London, 1741), p. 27.

[42] Colman, Polly Honeycombe p. 4.

[43] ibid., p. 10.

[44] ibid., p. 19, c.f. the condemnation of Arabella's romances, "These foolish Books ... have turned her Brain!", FQ I, 79; 55.

[45] Harriot Stuart's mother accuses her of a similar strategy, see Harriot Stuart I, 29-30.

[46] Love and Freindship in The Works of Jane Austen ed. R.W. Chapman, vol. VI, Minor Works (London, New York, Toronto, 1954), p. 81.

[47] Tabitha Gilman Tenney, Female Quixotism eds. J. Nienkamp and A. Collins, (New York, Oxford, 1992). References in text abbreviated as Fe.

[48] See M.R. Small, Charlotte Ramsay Lennox: An Eighteenth Century Lady of Letters (New Haven, 1935), pp. iii, 1-2; J.R. Foster, History of the Pre-Romantic Novel in England (New York, 1949), pp. 77-8, and D. Isles, "The Lennox Collection" (1), HLB XVIII (1970), 323.

[49] See Kraft, Character pp. 88-89, 92-9; S.K. Howard, introduction, The Life of Harriot Stuart (Madison, Teaneck, London, 1995), pp. 16-18. Also Gallagher, Nobody's Story pp. 200-2; D. Malina, "Rereading the Patriarchal Text: The Female Quixote, Northanger Abbey, and the Trace of the Absent Mother" ECF VIII (1996), pp. 277-8, 281, 289-90 and Spencer on "the terms of acceptance", Woman Novelist pp. 91-5.

[50] Richardson's involvement with The Female Quixote probably began after most of it existed in manuscript, the novel was not necessarily written even "in part in homage" to Richardson, Mullan, Sentiment p. 99.

[51] Isles, appendix, FQ (1970), p. 426. See Lennox's letter to Richardson of 22.11.1751, Isles, "Lennox Collection" (1), p. 340, (date amendment from "Lennox Collection" (4) HLB XIX (1971), 434).

[52] See Johnson's letters to Lennox 4.2.1752/12.3.1752, Isles, "Lennox Collection" (1), pp. 341-343.

[53] Colman, Polly Honeycombe [p. xiv].

[54] Richardson's contemporaries accepted Clarissa on his terms; Warburton, in the preface to volume four (later cancelled), insists Clarissa is a "Faithful Picture of Nature in Private Life" (Cl IV, v-vi), and that readers who desired "Strange Tales, Love Stories, Heroical Adventures" (Cl IV, v), were better suited to the French romances he denounces. Warburton, preface (1748); repr. in Williams, Novel and Romance pp. 122-4. Flynn comments on this aspect of the novel in Man of Letters p. 147.

[55] When Clementina carries out this plan she is described as having "tarnished all her glory!", SCG VII, 97; III, 325.

[56] Critics often seem reluctant to accept this as a conscious reference, see Todd, Angellica p. 153, c.f. Langbauer, Women p. 74. Bartolomeo uses it to support his contention that "Lennox's novel is a rewriting of Clarissa in a comic mode", overlooking the possibilities of critique, "Female Quixotism V. 'Feminine' Tragedy: Lennox's Comic Revision of Clarissa", New Essays ed. Rivero, p. 164. Schofield misinterprets the section, ascribing Arabella's behaviour to her emulation of the heroines of French romance, Masking p. 135.

[57] Mullan, Sentiment p. 99. See also Bartolomeo, "Lennox's Comic Revision", New Essays ed. Rivero, pp. 171-2.

[58] See the reception of Clarissa's story in the latter part of the novel, Cl VI, 87; 1019: VI, 185; 1082: VI, 220; 1104 and VI, 366; 1198.

[59] Lennox jokes that, when Arabella tells her history to the "Princess of Gaul", it is "as Romantick and Incredible as any in her Romances" FQ II, 269; 348. FQ I, 269; 175 gives an idea of how Arabella does this.

[60] See, Langbauer, Women p. 79, Ross, "Mirror, Mirror", pp. 463-4, Spencer, Woman Novelist pp. 189-90, L.E. Warren, "Of the Conversation of Women: The Female Quixote and the Dream of

Perfection", SECC XI (1982), 371-3 and Craft, "Reworking", pp. 835, 837. The desire to connect Lennox's protagonist with a "real woman living in the eighteenth century" ("Reworking", p. 835) devalues the literary qualities of Lennox's work. As Spencer says "Arabella is a heroine and she does have a story" (p. 190) and if Don Quixote and Parson Adams can be considered outside their socio-economic implications so can she.

61 See Richardson's accounts of The Female Quixote in SL p. 223 and Isles, "Lennox Collection" (1), p. 338.

62 Mentioned by Doody, FQ (1989), p. xxvi(n). The connection is also noted in A.J. Rivero's "Representing Clementina: 'Unnatural' Romance and the Ending of Sir Charles Grandison", New Essays ed. Rivero, p. 216.

63 Both scenes are discussed by Dalziel in "Richardson and Romance", pp. 8-13.

64 See Pam IV, 440.

65 This strategy worked with William Webster who, in a letter to Richardson, blamed himself for initially presuming the author had gone too "near the Borders of Quixotism", cited in Samuel Richardson: A Biography T.C.D. Eaves and B.D. Kimpel, (Oxford, 1971), p. 403.

66 See also SCG VI, 96; III, 66: VI, 332; 228 and VII, 215-17; 406-7.

67 J.T. Taylor, Early Opposition to the English Novel: The Popular Reaction from 1760 to 1830 (New York, 1943), pp. 91-2.

68 Female Quixotism is nevertheless different from these two novels; in particular the burlesque violence, bedroom farces and cross-dressing show the influence of Cervantes, mediated through Fielding, Smollett, and Burney.

69 Again the quixote has read selectively; extracting the elopements, abductions and intensity of the love plot without noticing the framework of serious commentary around it. Hence Bakhtin's point that, "It is the nature of every parody to transpose the values of the parodied style, to highlight certain elements while leaving others in the shade: parody is always biased in some direction", Dialogic Imagination p. 75.

Section ii: Notes

1 Richard Steele, The Tender Husband, The Plays of Richard Steele ed. S.S. Kenny, (Oxford, 1971), p. 241.

[2] See Taylor, Early Opposition pp. 68-80; and Shepperson, Novel in Motley chap. IV-VII, esp. pp. 70-1, 76, 78-9, 96-7, 114, 123-6, 142, and 166.

[3] Lennox's debt to Cervantes is however shown in scenes such as the "book-burning" debate (FQ I, 76-84; 53-7 c.f. DQ I, vi, 48-54) or speeches like Arabella's remarks on the relationship of the law to "heroes" (FQ I, 195; 128 c.f. DQ I, x, 70 and I, xlv, 361). See also below chapter three, section i. See Auty, Comic Spirit pp. 66-7, 77; Kraft, Character p. 88; and Marshall, "Writing Masters", p. 125-6.

[4] See Molière, Les Précieuses ridicules (1659); Furetière, Le Roman bourgeois (1666); Subligny, La Fausse Clélie (1670; transl. as Mock-Clelia 1678) and Marivaux, Don Quixote Moderne (written 1712, published 1737, transl. as Pharsamond 1749). Discussed in Shepperson, Novel in Motley pp. 62-66; Paulson Satire p. 275; Kenny, Plays pp. 191-2; Messick, "Reading As If", p. 9; Doody, FQ (1989), xxii-xxiv; McKeon, Origins pp. 57-8; and McDermott, Novel pp. 124-5.

[5] e.g. Steele's The Tender Husband which contains sections translated and adapted from Molière's Le Sicilien (1667) and Les Précieuses ridicules.

[6] Named in Steele's The Tender Husband, The Spectator's presentation of Leonora, The Lady's Drawing Room, The Rambler's depiction of Imperia and The Female Quixote.

[7] Galecia in Jane Barker, The Lining of the Patch-Work Screen (London, 1726), p. 129. Barker herself wrote an imitation of the French heroic romance in Exilius (1715).

[8] Lennox's most significant female predecessor is Jane Barker, whose Galecia narratives; Love Intrigues: or the Amours of Bosvil and Galecia (1713), A Patch-Work Screen for the Ladies (1723), and The Lining of the Patch-Work Screen (1726), both include and interrogate romance. The last includes the narrative of Dorinda, a quixotic figure, pp. 104-28. Barker's works are discussed in Doody, Natural Passion pp. 21-2, 306; Spencer, Woman Novelist pp. 62-70; and Schofield, Masking pp. 67-78. See also Aphra Behn's Isabella in The False Count (1682) and Penelope Aubin's Lucinda in The Life and Amorous Adventures of Lucinda (1722).

[9] Doody, FQ (1989), p. xxiv.

[10] John Gay, The Beggar's Opera in Dramatic Works ed. J. Fuller, (Oxford, 1983), II, 20-21.

[11] Steele, Plays p. 235.

[12] ibid., pp. 233, 235-6.

[13] ibid., pp. 239-40. The renaming of the heroine became a favourite joke of the female quixote narrative, particularly in the early nineteenth century; hence Biddy "Bridgetina" Botherim in Elizabeth Hamilton's Memoirs of Modern Philosophers (1800), Anne "Angelina" Warwick in Edgeworth's "Angelina; Or, L'Amie Inconnue" (1801), Dorcas "Dorcasina" Sheldon of Female Quixotism (1801) and Barrett's Cherry Wilkinson self-transformed into Cherubina de Willoughby, The Heroine (1813).

[14] ibid., pp. 259-60.

[15] See Kenny, Plays pp. 191-2 and Messick, "Reading As If", p. 27.

[16] See Gay, Dramatic Works II, 16 and 47 respectively.

[17] e.g., ibid., II, 18-19.

[18] Joseph Addison, The Spectator no. 37, ed. D.F. Bond, (Oxford, 1965), I, 158. Messick's view, that "Addison's attitude [to Leonora] is disapproving", is too simplistic, "Reading As If", p. 29.

[19] As Langbauer has suggested, the premise of Arabella's dual self is not entirely credible, see Women pp. 68-9. It illustrates Lennox's reworking of the Cervantian model: many characters in Don Quixote comment on the Don's switches between "sane" and "deluded" speeches. See e.g. DQ I, xxxvii, 300; II, xxiv, 561-2; II, xxxiii, 612 and II, xliii, 657.

[20] Addison, Spectator I, 158.

[21] Langbauer, Women pp. 71-2.

[22] In The Female Quixote, Lennox includes a section of "Examples of Whims full as inexcusable" as Arabella's which are contained in the behaviour of status-obsessed upper class women, FQ II, 137; 264.

[23] Johnson, Rambler no. 4, III, 22. Discussed in Spacks, Desire and Truth p. 22. See also Weinsheimer, "Force of Example", Idea ed. Uphaus, pp. 1-2.

[24] Isles points out that Johnson, who was aware of The Female Quixote before its publication in 1752, was probably influenced by Lennox in his presentation of Imperia. See appendix, FQ (1970), p. 419.

[25] Johnson, Rambler no. 115, IV, 252.

[26] Richard Berenger, The World no. 79, (4.7.1754), II, 474: repr. in Williams, Novel and Romance pp. 214-17. See also Oliver Goldsmith's review of True Merit True Happiness (1757),

Collected Works of Oliver Goldsmith ed. A. Friedman, (Oxford, 1966), I, 17.

27 See Doody, FQ (1989), pp. xxvii-xxviii; Thomson, "Novel Interrogation" pp. 118, 121; and Kraft, Character pp. 95-6.

28 The one detail Richardson gives is that Polly desires to prove herself "a Parthenissa!", see Clarissa 3rd ed., VIII, 268. Roger Boyle's Parthenissa (published in parts, 1654-69; complete, 1676), was one of the few direct English imitations of the French heroic romance; see McDermott, Novel pp. 121-4. The name of Boyle's heroine recurs in eighteenth-century writings; Biddy Tipkin on arriving at the "years of Discretion" (Plays p. 239) calls herself Parthenissa, Fielding's Mrs Western announces that in her youth she was called "the cruel Parthenissa" Tom Jones (1749), The Wesleyan Edition of the Works of Henry Fielding introd. M.C. Battestin, ed. F. Bowers, (Oxford, 1974), II, 891 and Arabella refers to her, see FQ I, 158; 105. See also Baker, "Idea of Romance", p. 510.

29 Clarissa, 3rd ed, VIII, 266. The final words are important, as Richardson believed with Addison that reading could have positive influences if the young were "guided to such Books as have a tendency to enlighten the Understanding and rectify the Passions".

30 ibid., VIII, 267.

31 ibid., VIII, 268.

32 ibid., VIII, 270 and 269 respectively.

33 Taylor, Early Opposition p. 71. Also Haviland, "Roman" p. 145.

34 Interestingly, the heroine of the previous tale in The Lady's Drawing Room, who also suffers from "a distemper'd Imagination" (LDR 205), is called Arabella.

35 e.g. the history told to Harriot by Mrs Belville, Harriot Stuart II, 110-46. The only similar inset in The Female Quixote is Miss Groves' tale, FQ I, 104-13; 70-76 and I, 213-17; 140-42.

36 Messick believes, "Female Quixotes are most often orphaned or fatherless" and "Deprived of paternal models", "Reading As If", p. 14. While there are a few orphans, such as Edgeworth's Anne Warwick, the repeated circumstance is the loss of the heroine's mother; true of Lennox's Arabella, Marilla, Tenney's Dorcasina, Barrett's Cherubina and Austen's Emma. The absence of maternal models creates the gap in the quixote's self-image which she attempts to remedy by her reading (although some, like Polly Honeycombe and Catherine Morland, find the survival

of both parents no bar to quixotic adventure). See J. Sloman, "The Female Quixote as an Eighteenth Century Character Type" TSJSN (Calgary, Alberta, 1972), p. 89.

37 LDR pp. 220-2, c.f. FQ I, 40-5; 30-33.

38 In both "The Adventures of Marilla" and The Female Quixote the authors are careful to suggest that the heroines' education is not entirely based on romance; Marilla reads instructive texts and Arabella is educated by her father before encountering her mother's romances. This "explanation" for any rational behaviour they display later in life is however mentioned so fleetingly it still seems that romance reading produces the valorised aspects of their personality as well as the delusion.

39 There are times when Arabella's romance obsession stands in the way of her humanity (e.g. FQ I, 200; 131 and I, 269; 175). For a reading of Arabella as a "monster of egotism" see Paulson, Satire p. 276 and England pp. 173-4, also Spencer, Woman Novelist p. 188.

40 Anna Laetitia Barbauld, introduction, The Female Quixote, The British Novelists (London, 1820), XXIV, iii.

41 I differ from Kraft who reads the novel as illustrating Arabella's "psychological progress from romance heroine to novelistic character", Character p. 92. Paulson discusses Arabella as "both Quixote and Dulcinea" in England pp. 171-3.

42 Spencer, Woman Novelist p. 187. See also Warren "Conversation of Women", pp. 367-8, 371, 377-9; Messick, "Reading As If", pp. 13-14, 34-5; Spacks, Desire and Truth pp. 15-16, 25, 29-31; Langbauer, Women pp. 67-8; Kraft, Character pp. 84-5, 92, 98; Marshall "Writing Masters", 120-21; and Craft, "Reworking", pp. 832-3.

43 Doody, FQ (1989), p. xxi. Also Sloman, "Character Type". pp. 94-5.

44 One exception is the brief discussion of the novel in Auty's Comic Spirit pp. 66-78.

45 c.f. Don Quixote, "For he made everything he saw fall in with his crazy chivalry and aberrant notions" DQ I, xxi, 143.

46 See Auty's reference to "Mrs. Lennox's inventive imagination, which is at least as extravagant as Arabella's", Comic Spirit p. 73.

47 Addison and Akenside had reservations concerning the imagination, see Spectator no. 421, III, 579, and J. Engell's discussion of Akenside in The Creative Imagination: Enlightenment to Romanticism (Cambridge, Mass., London, 1981), pp. 46-7.

[48] See G.S. Rousseau's, "Science and the Discovery of the Imagination in Enlightened England", ECS III (1969), 108-35.

[49] Zachary Mayne, Two Dissertations p. 76: c.f. Jonathan Richardson who, in 1734, combined Mayne's two categories in his praise of Milton's "Lively and Strong" imagination, while agreeing with Mayne that "Imagination is Essential to Poetry", Explanatory Notes p. xv.

[50] DePorte, Nightmares pp. 71-2.

[51] See Mayne, Two Dissertations pp. 76-7, 88-9, and DePorte, Nightmares pp. 13-14.

[52] See Mayne, Two Dissertations p. 84. Johnson, Rasselas (1759), The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson ed. G.J. Kolb, (New Haven, London, 1990), XVI, 150.

[53] Mayne, Two Dissertations p. 82.

[54] Johnson, Rasselas XVI, 149-50.

[55] William Battie, A Treatise on Madness (London, 1758), pp. 5-6.

[56] See Rousseau, "Science", pp. 118-21, and DePorte, Nightmares esp. pp. 19-25. Also R. Porter, Mind-Forg'd Manacles: A History of Madness in England from the Restoration to the Regency (London, 1987), pp. 190-1.

[57] Locke, Essay p. 395.

[58] ibid., p. 397.

[59] ibid., p. 161. c.f. Rasselas XVI, 152.

[60] Doody, "Deserts, Ruins", p. 544.

[61] Locke, Essay p. 395. See DePorte's account of Walter and Toby Shandy as "Lockean madmen", Nightmares pp. 114-17.

[62] See M. Byrd, Visits to Bedlam: Madness and Literature in the Eighteenth Century (Columbia, South Carolina, 1974), pp. 50 and 105; DePorte, Nightmares pp. 115-6; and Warren "Conversation of Women", p. 367.

[63] Mayne, Two Dissertations p. 87.

[64] ibid., p. 83 and 84 respectively. The Lady's Drawing Room's preface announces the author's intention to reveal "the Foibles or Blind-sides" of the characters, LDR p. iii.

[65] Locke, Essay p. 395. c.f. Rasselas, "All power of fancy over reason is a degree of insanity", XVI, 150.

[66] Warren considers Arabella's speech in contrast to "prescriptions for female conversation", (p. 376), aimed at actual eighteenth-century women in "Conversation of Women", pp. 374-9.

[67] Locke, Essay p. 395.

[68] Mayne, Two Dissertations pp. 82 and 86-7 respectively.

[69] John Haslam, Observations on Insanity (1798), cited in A. Ingram, The Madhouse of Language: Writing and Reading Madness in the Eighteenth Century (London, New York, 1991), p. 38.

[70] Don Quixote, "When other subjects are dealt with, he can discuss them in a perfectly rational manner, showing that his mind is quite clear and composed. So that, provided his chivalry is not touched on, no one would take him to be anything but a man of thoroughly sound understanding", DQ I, xxx, 236.

[71] It is the common reaction to the quixote, Humphry Gubbin remarks to Biddy that, "Indeed, Cousin, tho' 'tis a folly to tell thee so - I am afraid thou art a Mad-Woman", Plays p. 250.

[72] Narratives concerning quixotes highlight the fact that quixotic adventures are the rationale of the text by "skipping" over all periods of the protagonist's life when they are not so occupied, e.g. The Female Quixote, I, 6; 8 and I, 98-9; 66-7 and, especially, Female Quixotism pp. 6, 14-15, 152, 203, 220.

[73] Similarly Doody notes that the Doctor's dismissal of Arabella's fantasy realm, "there is no such Castle, Desart, Cavern, or Lake" (FQ II, 307; 373), is disheartening for the reader of imaginative fiction. See "Deserts, Ruins", p. 536-7. c.f. Johnson, Rambler no. 4, on how "heroic romance" tends to "bewilder its personages in desarts ... lodge them in imaginary castles", III, 19.

[74] c.f. descriptions of the Don, "you have the gift of making fools and madmen of all who have anything to do with you", DQ II, lxii, 771. See Messick, "Reading As If", p. 1.

[75] I would disagree with Kraft's argument that "romance moves gradually from the center [sic] to the periphery" towards the end of the novel, Character p. 92.

[76] See the initial encounter with Hervey, FQ I, 6-27; 8-21, the scenes with Miss Groves, I, 99-118; 67-79, Edward's "abduction" attempt, I, 138-80; 92-109, and the hunting incident, I, 234-50; 153-63.

[77] Thomson, "Novel Interrogation", p. 116.

CHAPTER THREE: CONTINUITY AND CHANGE - THE MID TO LATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

i. Misguided Women and Chivalrous Men: Female and Male Quixotism Contrasted

Assessing the influence which Charlotte Lennox's novel had upon the numerous depictions of the deluded female misreader in the second half of the eighteenth century is not a straightforward matter, particularly because, as I have shown in the last chapter, there was a fairly well established tradition of such figures in English literature before the appearance of The Female Quixote. This is further complicated by the fact that Lennox's creation is, as Henry Fielding pointed out in a review published in The Covent Garden Journal, itself an "Imitation" rather than an "Original", through its adaptation of the Cervantian model to suit the special case of a female protagonist.[1] Certainly there is evidence that The Female Quixote reached a relatively wide and appreciative audience. When writing to Elizabeth Carter in April 1752, Catherine Talbot described the book as being "much in fashion",[2] while, at the end of the century, Frances Burney could show Mrs Arlbery referring to Camilla Tyrold as "my fair female Quixote" with full confidence that her readers would appreciate the reference to the title and understand its implications.[3]

Part of the difficulty is that the use of the "reading Miss" was not restricted to the novel. Some of the most well known eighteenth-century female quixotes are to be found in the drama and playwrights tended to place themselves within a specifically theatrical tradition, usually comprising Steele's The Tender Husband, Colman's Polly Honeycombe and Sheridan's The Rivals (1775). So the author of Angelica: or Quixote in Petticoats (1758), announces in the dedication that Garrick's refusal to stage the piece was attributed by him to "the

elegant manner in which Sir Richard Steele has handled the same subject",[4] and this indebtedness is emphasised by extracting a line from The Tender Husband as the subtitle of the comedy.[5] The anonymous "Authoress" of Half an Hour After Supper (1789), a one act "interlude" similarly concerned with a comic account of the female reader, also dedicated her work to Colman.[6]

However, the influence of Lennox's novel is not entirely overlooked by such writers. The subtitle and dedication of Angelica may draw attention to Steele, culminating in the prologue's celebration of how

> great sir Richard Steele,
> To celebrate th' immortal Tipkin's praise,
> Courted the muse in high and lofty Bays.[7]

But the advertisement of the piece reads:

> THE author of the following sheets thinks himself under an indispensible obligation to inform the public that the character of Angelica and the heroic part of Careless, is not only borrow'd, but entirely taken, from the female Quixote, of the ingenious Mrs. Lenox [sic].[8]

Such an admission was indeed "indispensible", as Angelica appropriates material directly from Lennox, even down to repeating the footnote in The Female Quixote that describes how "The Heroines always speak of themselves in the Plural Number" (FQ I, 10n; 10n)[9] which, as Dalziel points out, is not true,[10] and in any case is a "convention" which both Lennox and the author of Angelica only employ sporadically.

As is the case with most depictions of the female quixote before 1760 the reading material which produces the heroine's delusion in Angelica is the heroic romance. After this date, in the work both of playwrights and prose writers, the texts to which ill-effects are attributed are usually novels, specifically sentimental novels.[11] Dramatic works following the latter

trend include Polly Honeycombe, The Rivals and Half an Hour After Supper. In the last chapter I illustrated how this transition can point up thematic connections between romance and novel, as the means by which they can be parodied are often identical. In the next section of this chapter I will develop this point by examining how the novel of sensibility can be interpreted as a return to romance aesthetics which became perceived to be desirable in order to offset problems caused by the "realism" of the novel.

It is unlikely that the author of Angelica had any familiarity with the heroic romances beyond the knowledge which could be gleaned from The Female Quixote itself, references to "the rigid statira [sic]", "the divine Mandana" and "the wicked Arianta",[12] are in keeping with an author using Lennox's novel as a source. As is the case with The Tender Husband, "The Adventures of Marilla" and The Female Quixote, the main element of the comedy derived from the heroine's quixotic behaviour is her reaction to situations which arise during courtship. Angelica insists on strict adherence to the romance "code"; refusing to receive messages or to countenance declarations of love, asserting the power of banishment and condemnation to death, insisting on chastity, the lover's service and - as is typical - acting with an eye to posterity, worrying whether lapses will be something she "may be blam'd for ... in after ages".[13] One contrast with The Female Quixote is that, unlike Arabella, Angelica realises that she is living in an era subsequent to "those ages of respect and tenderness" recorded in her romances, and accepts that her behavioural ideal is based on what her sister Melinda calls "antiquated notions".[14]

There are a number of ways in which Angelica (and practically every other dramatic treatment of the female quixote to which I have referred) differs from Lennox's novel. The relevance of these dissimilarities is that they explain why

Lennox achieves a complexity in her characterisation of Arabella which is lacking elsewhere. The most significant contrasts are found in the depiction of the hero and his role with regard to the heroine. Without exception the "hero" of the plays is an adventurer who has made a conscious decision to act out the part established for him in the reading material of the heroine in order to seduce her away from her family into a runaway marriage - an ambition which is aided by the attraction of the idea of elopement to the "reading Miss" of the drama.[15] On one level, therefore, the message of stage representations of the female quixote appears to be that the use of fiction as a template for reality renders girls vulnerable to scheming men who will use their delusions in order to entrap them.

This is complicated by another feature of these plays: the presence of the rival. In every case, however dubious the character of the hero, the heroine is presented with a straight choice of either him or an even less attractive alternative. These rivals - Humphry Gubbin in The Tender Husband, Gripe in Angelica, Ledger in Polly Honeycombe - are usually the men who have achieved the sanction of approval by parent or guardian. The situation differs slightly in Sheridan's The Rivals where Acres, the actual rival to the hero, is little more than light relief because Captain Absolute's dual role as Ensign Beverly enables him to play both the approved suitor and the illicit romance lover. This more sophisticated scenario makes The Rivals the most successful dramatic reductio ad absurdum of the sentimental novel, cleverly exposing the "lessons" which a devotee could draw from endless accounts of love triumphant after its inevitable trial by persecution.

In the drama, once the triangular relationship between heroine, lover, and rival is in place, the effect of parental involvement acts to reinforce the quixote's faith in her literary models. Biddy, Angelica, Polly, and Lydia are all

faced with the prospect of arranged marriages which are the product of pragmatic, even mercenary, motives. Polly is particularly vocal in opposition to her father's plan to "dispose of ... [his] daughter like a piece of merchandise".[16] When faced with resistance, the elder generation in these plays resort to threats and imprisonment, which of course fulfil the heroines' readerly expectations. Since the experience of the heroines of The Tender Husband, Angelica, and Polly Honeycombe matches their "guide-books", even the discovery that their lovers are not as "heroic" as expected does not lead them to renounce the lessons of their reading or regret their fate. The possible exception to this is Lydia Languish who does rail against having been a "dupe" and is eventually called upon to "lay aside some ... romance" and to have, as Mrs Malaprop insists, "no delusions to the past".[17]

The drama does not really engage with the complexity of literary quixotism. Generally the heroine's reading is simply a way in which a spirited girl asserts her independence and, indirectly or not, brings about the match she desires. These dramatic pieces do not convey the sense that the heroine is really threatened by the double delusion provided by their books and their lovers, particularly as these female quixotes often reveal a distinct trace of pragmatism under their romance ideals, as the following comment of Angelica's illustrates:

> Why, really Careless, rather than be united to so disagreeable a wretch, as Gripe ... I think - I think, I'll e'en take you, provided you promise to love me; for Oroondates, Artaban, Artamenes, and all the heroes of antiquity, lov'd their wives passionately.[18]

The implications of the plays therefore are contradictory, particularly in relation to the message given regarding the heroine's "text-book" guides. The heroine is mocked for her reading but this does not prevent her from making the choice of suitor which the play suggests to be the correct one, and it

also enables her to combat the parental opposition she inevitably faces. In contrast, by presenting the decision of Arabella's father to give his approval to the "right" man while the rival is the character who attempts to act out Arabella's romance fantasy, Lennox introduces an intriguing tension into her quixotic narrative. The interest of the piece now becomes focussed on whether the protagonist will throw away her chances of personal happiness as a result of her delusion. In this respect The Female Quixote achieves a similar mood to that which will later characterise the novels of Burney and Austen.[19]

However, the dramatic works I have been discussing are, in the main, light comic pieces not designed to be the vehicle of an urgent "message". The audience's expectations would have been geared to the familiar structure of stage comedy, namely a love relationship begun, thwarted and happily concluded. To this end the heroine's quixotism is little more than a useful device, allowing the dramatist opportunity for numerous jokes at the expense of circulating libraries, boarding school Misses, and romance idealism - and also, in the case of Polly Honeycombe and Half an Hour After Supper, the chance to indulge in parodic rewritings of novelistic conventions.[20] Occasionally lip service is paid to the idea of instruction by entertainment. The author of Half an Hour After Supper for instance refers to her

> fair countrywomen - whose literary pursuits, though she ever regrets to see them terminate in FEMALE PEDANTRY, would, in her opinion, be still more to their honour, were they not too frequently engaged in the dangerous detail of amorous adventures.[21]

To underline the point, Half an Hour After Supper depicts the errors of judgement and morality of a female reading circle while juxtaposing this against commentary from the sole older male figure, Mr Sturdy. Although this is rather schematic it

is more effective than putting anti-romance speeches into the mouths of characters like Colman's Mr Honeycombe who have previously been presented as both fool and tyrant.

Instances where the quixote figure is employed to facilitate attacks on romance and novel reading are more commonly found in contemporary essays and in the novel itself. Although The Female Quixote is an influence upon many of these, this is primarily further illustration of the fact that Lennox, like Cervantes before her, found readers who interpreted her novel purely as a satiric assault on a ridiculous and outmoded literary genre. The potential that such quixotic narratives possess to incorporate and even redeem the texts which are the subject of their ostensible parody was overlooked, and, where such interconnection was suspected, it was criticised. Ironically this was the basis of one of the points Fielding asserts in Lennox's favour in his comparison of her novel with Cervantes':

> the Incidents, or, if you please, the Adventures, are much less extravagant and incredible in the English than in the Spanish Performance. The latter, in many Instances, approaches very near to the Romances which he ridicules. Such are the Stories of Cardenio and Dorothea, Ferdinand and Lucinda, &c.[22]

Fielding's observation ignores the presence of Sir George's interpolated tale in The Female Quixote, which may be a parody but does give the novel over to a large section "in which the ingenious Relater has exactly copied the Stile of Romance" (FQ II, 49; 209). More importantly it fails to acknowledge how the attractiveness of the characteristic idealism of the quixote creates a fundamental ambivalence in the portrayal of romance in both Don Quixote and The Female Quixote. Lennox had to wait until the end of the century and the advent of Jane Austen before her novel fell into the hands of a writer capable of understanding, and redeploying, its complexities.

Before then the female quixote tends to be assigned a didactic function that is distinctly lacking in subtlety. A representative example of this is an article published in The World by Richard Berenger. This is a useful essay as it contains a compilation of common eighteenth-century prejudices concerning the dangers of frivolous reading and also because, due to the author's belief in the way "human nature is apt to be more influenced by example than precept",[23] the argument is illustrated by a cautionary tale of a female misreader. Berenger's unequivocal condemnation of the romance is couched in a concern for the welfare of "the fair sex" the "best part" of humanity,[24] contending that

> as the happiness of mankind is deeply interested in the sentiments and conduct of the ladies, why do we contribute to the filling their heads with fancies ...? Why do we suffer those hearts, which ought to be appropriated to the various affections of social life, to be alienated by the mere creatures of the imagination?[25]

Berenger's opposition to the idealism of romance is an attitude which becomes less common in the second half of the century as attention was focussed instead on the potential danger of the "low" scenes of the novel. However the familiar trepidation about the uncontrollable female imagination or, in Berenger's words, "the magic power of a lady's fancy, which creates chimaera's much faster than nature can produce realities",[26] was to remain a persistent theme.

Berenger's familiarity with The Female Quixote is shown by his inclusion of the story of Clarinda. Clarinda is given over to "the ensnaring practice of reading NOVELS and ROMANCES; of which CLELIA was her favourite" and, as with Marilla and Arabella before her, she rejects her father's choice of marriage partner because "he was not the hero which CLELIA had impressed on CLARINDA's imagination".[27] To the deluded Clarinda it is the valet, Antoine, who embodies the romance ideal and

> her imagination instantly annihilated every circumstance of his rank and fortune, and added every enchanting accomplishment to his mind and person.[28]

Again revealing her kinship to Arabella who, as Fielding points out, "conceives indeed somewhat preposterously of the Ranks and Conditions of Men; that is to say, mistakes one Man for another",[29] a reference perhaps to Edward the gardener and carp-stealer. Once Clarinda's passion for Antoine has come to grief she, like Tenney's Dorcasina, is left an old maid who has wasted her chance of happiness. Clarinda does not, however, experience Dorcasina's eventual disillusionment but continues to revel in the "visionary happiness of reading CLELIA".[30]

This relatively peaceful end is not shared by most of Clarinda's counterparts in the later eighteenth-century novel. Many of the accounts to be found here deal with the role played by romances in the fall of women from virtue. Such narratives contrast with The Female Quixote, where it is the women of the world, such as Charlotte Glanville and Miss Groves, who display the questionable morals and propensity to scandalous behaviour. Arabella's identification with the romance heroine means she accepts a strict behavioural code which if anything extends to the opposite extreme of paranoia concerning abduction and rape. As I have outlined in the last chapter, there are precedents for the "seduction by quixotism" theme in the histories of Polly Horton and Marilla. Another example, which predates The Female Quixote, is the tale of Miss Williams in Smollett's Roderick Random (1748) which, as Edward Niehus points out, gives Smollett a claim to be "the first to introduce the figure [of the female quixote] into the English novel".[31]

One notable illustration of this variety of the deluded female reader is Jenny Stevens in William Dodd's The Sisters: Or, the History of Lucy and Caroline Sanson (1754). While this novel is generally didactic, and somewhat dubious in its

ostensibly "cautionary" but actually graphic account of the degrading progress of a prostituted woman, it here produces a lively quixote with an ingenious approach to the misappropriation of the moral messages provided by the eighteenth-century novel. Dodd has two attempts to work a warning about female reading habits into his narrative. The introduction of the Sanson family includes the detail that the "vain, foolish and affected" daughters are fiction addicts: "Cassandra, Cleopatra, Heywood's novels, and above all the works of the inimitable Fielding, with a thousand more romantic books of the same kind ... were the constant employment of their days".[32] Interestingly Fielding may be "inimitable" but he is still included amongst the generality of "romantic books". However Dodd is more concerned with showing how the Sanson family falls into delusion through false pride, and the connection with reading is dropped. This is necessary to avoid the question of why, when all the girls read romance, Caroline is able to withstand hardship and temptation while Lucy succumbs and is ruined.

In the second volume the theme resurfaces with Jenny's story. Jenny is the archetypal giddy girl, her first extended appearance in the novel is during a scene where she encourages a duel between Fortebrand, her lover, and Jaison, the hero of The Sisters, her only regret being that she is not allowed to witness it.[33] During a lull in the main narrative the reasons for Jenny's behaviour are given in a mother's lament, relating back to the moment when,

> foolish and idle books of romances and novels, the destruction of youth, and the pest of the age fell into her hands, and destroy'd all love of things serious and serviceable in her mind.[34]

While Mrs Stevens is in the midst of her diatribe a letter arrives from Jenny (who has by this point become pregnant and run off with Fortebrand). Jenny reinterprets her actions

through the framework of Clarissa and then presents an account of the personal "moral" she has derived from her reading:

> I have well consider'd the reasons wherefore these persons as Miss Clarissa Harlowe, Miss Sophia Western, Arabella, Amelia, and the rest, have met with so much uneasiness and disappointment in life ... their misfortunes all arose from an absurd regard to scrupulous virtue, a false phantom, which they frighted themselves with; for if they had each given way a little, it is plain they had avoided infinite mischiefs and misery.[35]

Jenny is the worst fear of the eighteenth-century anti-fiction moralists, a female reader who, even when presented with the most unexceptionable text, can "misapply" and subvert its intended message. According to Jenny's reasoning process, if you do not possess virtue you do not have to undergo the heroine's trial.

To drive the point of his warning home Dodd puts every contemporary cliché concerning the "improving" function of the novel into the mouth of this ruined female:

> as I conceive this moral way of writing, in which we of this age so much excel, and which to be sure is the finest, best and most instructive way of writing that ever was invented, is to teach us life, and to direct us in the knowledge of things, so I have read with this view, and ... avoiding the errors there recorded ... have without any of their [the heroines'] troubles made myself happy.[36]

Jenny's complacency is undermined almost immediately, her mother's prediction that "pernicious" works of fiction lead women "into the road of pleasure, and of course into the road of ruin",[37] is proved to be correct as Fortebrand proceeds to desert Jenny, who makes a shamefaced return to her mother's protection. Not all the "reading Misses" of the late eighteenth-century novel who delude themselves into the formation of a "romantic scheme"[38] suffer Jenny's fate however. Miss Townsend in Richard Graves' The Spiritual Quixote (1773),

during her brief solo excursion to London, discovers as Marilla had done before her that "the world in reality was very different from what it appeared in poetry and romance".[39] Although she escapes the sexual ruin prepared for her, she does consider herself to have "paid dear for about ten days experience" of the world.[40]

Original treatments of the female quixote figure are few and far between in the second half of the century, and it is not until Barrett's The Heroine (1813) and Austen's Northanger Abbey (1818) that the "type" was revived by a more imaginative usage. In fact the "literary" quixotic heroine, whose imagination is fired by her reading, does only have a limited potential for development and it is not surprising that Burney, Radcliffe and Austen, in their most successful treatments of the deluded heroine, turned to the exploration of other originating causes. Their lesser contemporaries continued to provide endless variations on the theme of the "reading Miss".

Often minor novelists went to great lengths to establish the history of a quixote only to leave it undeveloped and irrelevant to the main narrative, as in the presentation of Miss Southern in John Potter's The Curate of Coventry: A Tale (1771).[41] The other common problem was introducing and ridiculing a female reader, and then proceeding to involve her in a story-line more ludicrous than the wildest romance parody. An example of this is Miss Williams in Herbert Lawrence's The Contemplative Man; or the History of Christopher Crab (1771). The character is a boarding-school Miss, "intoxicated" into delusion by her reading (she is a rare late eighteenth-century example of the heroic romance quixote). After receiving her come-uppance through a disastrous marriage she disappears from the story only to later re-emerge in the spectacularly improbable form of the Queen of "a Swarm of Gypsies", now having become a "living Cleopatra".[42] Smollett runs into the same

difficulty, albeit on a much lesser scale, in his depiction of Lydia Melford. Lydia's naivety and lack of experience is stated as being compounded by the fact she "reads romances".[43] A romance reader would, however, be perfectly at home with the chain of fortuitous circumstances and revelations regarding identity which allow the strolling player who loves Lydia to be transformed into the eminently eligible George Dennison.[44]

Of all the eighteenth-century treatments of the quixotic heroine, Lennox alone achieves something of the qualities which characterise Cervantes' originating text. That is not to say that The Female Quixote is without incongruities and problems of its own but even these bear the stamp of its predecessor. After all, the ever changing critical interpretations of Don Quixote point to an inability to resolve the question of Cervantes' true authorial intentions and, while her novel has understandably not commanded the same degree of attention, Lennox also created a text which resists attempts to extract a simple authorially sanctioned "message".

There was little consensus about the meaning of Cervantes' masterpiece in the eighteenth-century. The modern critical commonplace is that the period encompassed a transition from the seventeenth-century conception of the work as satire and the Don as a fool, to the Romantic notion of Don Quixote as a noble idealist (which paid little regard to the burlesque violence of the original).[45] In practice what this means is that every possible viewpoint was current in the eighteenth century. The belief in the satirical nature of the work remained but there was little agreement as to what was actually being criticised; Smollett allowed the anti-romance component but argued against Cervantes dismissal of chivalry,[46] while Fielding tended to stress the benefit of Don Quixote in overthrowing the "vicious Folly" of knight-errantry in Spain.[47]

One general trend was the recasting of Don Quixote as an amiable, benevolent man, and Sancho as a lovable rogue; as is the case with most interpretations of the novel this involved an occasionally selective reading.[48] Possibly the highest praise that Fielding accorded Lennox in his Covent Garden Journal review was putting her "upon an Equality" with Cervantes in relation to this aspect of characterisation, noting,

> that Care which both [Cervantes and Lennox] have taken to preserve the Affection of their Readers for their principal Characters, in the midst of all the Follies of which they are guilty. Both Characters are accordingly represented as Persons ... of great Innocence, Integrity and Honour, and of the highest Benevolence.[49]

Fielding's comment summarises the qualities of personality which were celebrated by the eighteenth-century novel. As Staves suggests, he could be as easily describing one of the most well loved of his own creations, Parson Adams, as the Don or Arabella.[50] Other figures who appear in works of fiction published after Fielding's also come to mind, the Shandy brothers or, to a certain extent, Matthew Bramble, "a Don Quixote in generosity".[51]

During his review, Fielding suggests that an advantage Lennox has over Cervantes is that quixotic delusion "seems to me more easy to be granted in the Case of a young Lady than of an old Gentleman".[52] In certain respects this is simply a recapitulation of the commonly held suspicions about female reading habits: Fielding believes "most Young Women" in the same circumstances as Arabella would share her "Follies".[53] Nevertheless his belief seems to sit rather uneasily with the fact that the enduringly famous eighteenth-century quixotes are almost invariably male. While the figure of the female quixote was often hampered by a didactic purpose or an unimaginative author, the Cervantian influence on the characterisation of men produced a gallery of what Smollett would call "originals":

male quixotes with their own distinctive qualities but an unmistakable family resemblance.

However, Fielding's remark should not be easily dismissed as it does hint at one of the most fascinating elements of eighteenth-century male quixotism, which is that to create such figures their, predominantly male, authors appropriated qualities that elsewhere in the literature of the century are specifically constructed as "feminine". The age which produced numerous "entrance into the world" novels preoccupied with the inexperienced young woman's first encounter with society, also provided a masculine counterpart in the male quixotes whose advanced years are not accompanied by a concomitant increase in sophistication - Parson Adams "as entirely ignorant of the Ways of this World, as an Infant just entered into it could possibly be",[54] Captain Crowe, "as little acquainted with the world as a sucking child",[55] or Uncle Toby who "knew little of the world".[56] Significantly, this innocence is often expressed through such characters displaying extreme modesty or ignorance with regard to sexual matters. I will return to the importance of chastity for the male quixote, but it is worth noting here that many of the qualities Arabella possesses, which are often discussed by modern critics in terms of her gender, can also be considered as traits that comprise part of an established pattern of quixotic characterisation.

The quixote traditionally substitutes reading for practical experience of society or insight into human behaviour, and this is true of the majority of eighteenth-century portrayals. "Knowledge of Men is only to be learnt from Books" declares Parson Adams as he journeys on, displaying his comic inability to see "farther into People than they desired to let him".[57] Until Adams is finally able to turn his study to a useful purpose when overcoming Wilson's suspicions of the travelling party, the physical presence of Adams' books and the

pride he takes in his learning repeatedly jeopardises him.[58] Another quixote whose ideals originate at least in part from classical scholarship is Smollett's Launcelot Greaves; however, the greatest literary influence on Launcelot is Don Quixote itself. Although, in the discussion with Ferret near the opening of the tale, Launcelot rejects the "stale" plan of setting up as a "modern Don Quixote"[59] - and there are indeed more differences than similarities between Launcelot and the Don[60] - this is one of the few occasions in the eighteenth century where it is the literary character, rather than the author behind him, who consciously acknowledges the Cervantian quixotic model, (the characters in Smollett's Humphry Clinker (1771) also use Don Quixote as a reference point[61]).

Significantly, it is not his reading that drives Launcelot out of his senses. He attributes his derangement to his belief that Aurelia Darnel has rejected him, by a letter which "even divested me of reason, and [has] driven me from the society of men, a poor, forlorn, wandering lunatic".[62] What Launcelot has previously learnt from books has engendered in him an idealism which cannot withstand such disillusionment, and has provided a template for the form his madness can take. It is generally true of the eighteenth-century male quixote that his reading is not the cause of his obsessions but rather the means through which they are intensified. Thus when Launcelot loses his love he deliberately assumes the mantle of literary knight-errantry; when Geoffrey Wildgoose develops an interest in religious affairs he "in half a year's time ... had gone through the whole library of godly discourses",[63] before taking to the road as a Methodist preacher. So too, after his injury at the siege of Namur, Uncle Toby acquires "almost as many ... books of military architecture, as Don Quixote was found to have of chivalry, when the curate and barber invaded his library".[64]

What is important here is the enormous variety of topics

on which eighteenth-century male quixotism is founded. This contrasts sharply with that of their female counterparts who are restricted to the subjects of romance, love, and courtship. It is also worth bearing in mind the sheer number of quixotic figures who appear in novels such as Joseph Andrews, Tristram Shandy (1759-67), Launcelot Greaves (1760-1) and Humphry Clinker.[65] The cumulative effect of these two aspects of the novels is that, instead of the quixote being presented as a figure isolated in his madness, he can appear to be a representative "Everyman" figure. This is occasionally made explicit, examples being the Don's final speech in Fielding's play Don Quixote in England (1734) and Captain Crowe's comment:

> Mad! what then? I think for my part one half of the nation is mad - and the other not very sound - I don't see why I ha'n't as good a right to be mad as another man.[66]

Conventionally the quixote possesses both a "sane" approach to life and a "deranged" reaction to the subject of his particular obsession, but even during the discussion of the latter he can produce the "reason in madness" associated with quixotism. The innocent insight of the quixote influences his companions, and he is often shown as drawing them into his delusion.[67]

This fits in with the eighteenth-century suspicion that what Sterne referred to as "A man and his HOBBY-HORSE"[68] was a subject with a universal relevance. The propensity to "blind-spots" is often depicted as being unavoidable. Staves argues that

> Tristram Shandy shows us not just one eccentric quixote isolated from sane humanity by his eccentricities, but rather a vision of all men as equally eccentric quixotes isolated from each other. Walter, Toby, Yorick, Tristram, and even the reader himself are all ultimately revealed as victims of one private madness or another.[69]

It is debatable whether this text does give such an alienating

impression of isolation. Mullan argues convincingly that while the novel may present a man's mind and thoughts to be incommunicable, the individual is connected to others by sentiment and fellow-feeling; in his words "Sterne's characters can rely on bonds of unspeakable sympathy".[70] Mullan is also unhappy with the critical practice of labelling Walter and Toby "madmen". There is little consensus over which of the eighteenth-century quixotes can be referred to as insane. To DePorte, Parson Adams "is not ... mad. He is idiosyncratic, but hardly unbalanced, and he cannot, therefore, be considered a true Quixote",[71] while Toby Shandy is "a perfect example of what the eighteenth century was coming to see as a quixotic madman".[72] Mullan, however, argues that there is "some kind of distance" between the Lockean conceptions of madness and "the hobby-horses harmlessly ridden through the pages of Sterne's novel".[73]

There are certainly varying degrees of eccentricity, delusion and derangement amongst the eighteenth-century male quixotes. After Locke it is possible to consider such obsessional behaviour within the parameters of the eighteenth-century conception of "madness", but this has to be qualified by recognising how the term is often stripped of its pejorative connotations. Contemporary literary quixotes are intended to evoke sympathy and affection, not fear. The lovable eccentrics whose mistakes are attributable to delusion were often the most admirable figures in the novels during which they appear, characterised by innocence and goodness rather than a threatening lunacy. The key quality is "simplicity". This is something that the eighteenth-century quixote inherits directly from the Cervantian original, where Sancho remarks of the Don that a "child might persuade him it is night at noonday, and for this simplicity of mind I love him like my heart's core" (DQ II, xiii, 491). In Adams, Fielding believed he had invented a "Character of perfect Simplicity", while Sterne's Toby Shandy is governed by the "simplicity of his heart".[74]

The representation of the quixote figure in Joseph Andrews and Tristram Shandy makes an interesting contrast with the typical treatment of the female quixote. Adams and the Shandy brothers are accepted and loved by those close to them, there being little suggestion that anyone has ever tried, or wanted to try, to "rescue" them from their hobby-horses or make them accept "reality". Their value is inextricably linked with their quirks, which are not labelled "madness". Practically every female quixote in the eighteenth century is explicitly referred to as mad by the exasperated figures around her,[75] figures who are usually engaged in a desperate attempt to enlighten the quixote before she causes her own destruction. Portrayals of female quixotism were rarely without some form of didactic intention and so the idea that the heroine could remain content in her delusion was unacceptable. However, this also highlights the relativism of the perception of madness. To be "mad" could be seen more as a failure to conform to the expectations of other people than as possessing a damaged mind. The difference between the amiable eccentric and the deluded madwoman could well be in the eye of the beholder.

The comparison of individual texts which deal with male and female quixotes respectively is, however, not as intriguing a subject as the way gender roles are represented in those novels of Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne that contain treatments of quixotism. Following Cervantes, these authors tend to depict quixotic men who are considerably older than the usual hero figures of the eighteenth-century novel. This tends to decentre the love story of the fiction as, even when there is one (in Joseph Andrews or Launcelot Greaves for example), it is in "competition" with separate narratives of quixotic behaviour. Another feature of such novels, which relates to this observation, is the division of Don Quixote's characteristics between a number of male protagonists. Numerous critics have observed how certain pairings - most noticeably Parson Adams

and Joseph Andrews, Captain Crowe and Launcelot Greaves - act in a complementary way.[76] The older men display the ridiculous and physical qualities of the Don, the ludicrous appearance and constant involvement in scenes of violence, while the younger figures are romantic heroes as well as quixotes, and it is they who are directly involved in the love plots.

Whether the male quixote in these novels is young or old, he still possesses certain qualities which differentiate him from the usual representations of the male protagonist in the contemporary novel.[77] One of the defining characteristics of these quixotes is their preoccupation with sexual chastity. This is part of the legacy of Don Quixote whose "motto is constancy" (DQ II, lix, 753) and whose model for behaviour imposes a strict adherence to sexual restraint. Hence his refusal of waiting-women while staying at the Duke's because

> such was his fear of encountering temptations that might lead or drive him to forget his chaste fidelity to his lady Dulcinea. For he had always present to his mind the virtue of Amadis, that flower and mirror of knights-errant (DQ II, xliv, 665).

This stands behind the depiction of "Male-Chastity"[78] in Joseph Andrews. For Joseph it is compounded both by the influence of Adams and his own quixotic immersion in his sister's letters:

> Mr. Adams hath often told me, that Chastity is as great a Virtue in a Man as in a Woman. He says he never knew any more than his Wife, and I shall endeavour to follow his Example. Indeed, it is owing entirely to his excellent Sermons and Advice, together with your [Pamela's] Letters, that I have been able to resist ... Temptation.[79]

It is undoubtedly the case that the treatment of virtuous male sexual behaviour is more lighthearted than that of its female equivalent. The comic scenes which record Don Quixote's unnecessary trepidation and resolutions concerning Maritornes,

Altisidora and, most humorously Dona Rodriguez,[80] are paralleled by Fielding's account of Lady Booby's horrified response to Joseph's aspirations to virtue, or Joseph's relief that a man "cannot, like a poor weak Woman, be ravished against his Will" when he successfully wards off Betty's assault.[81] Sterne's description of Uncle Toby's "extream and unparallel'd modesty of nature" has similarly arch comic undertones:

> this kind of modesty so possess'd him, and it arose to such a height in him, as almost to equal, if such a thing could be, even the modesty of a woman.[82]

The irony is that Don Quixote, Joseph Andrews, and Tristram Shandy, though sharing a delight in innuendo and bawdy humour, are fronted by figures whose concern with sexual chastity borders on the obsessive. It can therefore be argued that, although The Female Quixote does not share the burlesque sexual comedy of these other texts, critics who ascribe Arabella's preoccupation with sexual violation and abduction simply to the nature of female education or social position in the eighteenth century (or even to the supposed content of the romances she reads),[83] risk overlooking the fact that Lennox could just as easily be placing her protagonist within a recognisable tradition of quixotic behaviour that is not gender specific.

A related point concerns the way in which Arabella's conversation with the Countess regarding the inappropriateness of "Adventures" to female life,[84] has been interpreted. This passage is often read as a comment on the limitations placed upon the eighteenth-century woman's lifestyle choices. However, quixotic narratives frequently include the role of "sensible" characters concerned with dissuading the protagonists from following the paths suggested by their imaginations, a convention dating back to Cervantes. Don Quixote is offered alternatives as stultifying as those proposed to Arabella. His housekeeper's advice is "Stay at home, look after your affairs,

go often to confession, be good to the poor, and upon my soul be it if any evil comes to you" (DQ II, lxxiii, 825). The eighteenth-century male quixote is just as likely to be bombarded with similar speeches, often by his womenfolk.

The women in the novels of Fielding, Sterne, and Smollett can be broadly subdivided into three "types". The first are the predatory, sexually motivated women, the Lady Boobys and Widow Wadmans who reverse the customary contemporary sexual roles in their attempt to ensnare the innocent quixotic male. The second group are pragmatic women, often wives like Mrs Adams whose long suffering task it is to instil some degree of social responsibility into their idealistic husbands. If the quixotic man is imaginative and eccentric, these women are characterised by solidity and often blank incomprehension, the archetype being Mrs Shandy who refuses to find out the meaning of her husband's words and remains equally confused as to the import of the narrative itself - her most representative line being her last, "L--d! said my mother, what is all this story about?".[85] According to Tristram's damning verdict, "all the SHANDY FAMILY were of an original character throughout; - I mean the males, - the females had no character at all".[86]

Finally there are the heroines. The women involved in the love stories of these novels are often highly idealised figures, the extreme example being Launcelot's Aurelia who is frequently described as comparable to "some supernatural being".[87] Fanny in Fielding's Joseph Andrews is not quite as exalted a creation but neither is she a realistic portrayal of an eighteenth-century countrywoman. In this respect there is a similarity between the development of Fielding's heroines and Richardson's. Fanny and Pamela seem to be distinguished from the heroines of the pastoral romance by the use of matter-of-fact details regarding them; however, they are paragons of "correct" female modesty and virtue - in their own way as

idealised as the later figures, Clarissa, Clementina, Sophia, or Amelia. There are a set of "feminine" qualities which a female protagonist had to possess to be accepted as a heroine, whatever the variations in circumstances and social position.

Of course, standing behind the eighteenth-century representations of male quixotism is a text which engages directly with the division between "real" and "ideal" femininity. Although Don Quixote, like Joseph Andrews and Tristram Shandy, is primarily the record of male friendships which have a tendency to exclude women, it does contain one of the most celebrated accounts of the idealised heroine. From the beginning of his tale the Don shows a propensity to transform peasant women into romance heroines through imagination; the prostitutes during his first expedition become "fair maidens or lovely ladies" (DQ I, ii, 37), and later he repeatedly mistakes an inn keeper's daughter for "the fair damsel, the daughter of the lady of the castle" (DQ I, xliii, 345). Most famous though is the metamorphosis of Aldonza Lorenzo into Dulcinea del Toboso, Cervantes' masterstroke, and one which inspires the Don's most sublime moments of quixotic invention:

> God knows whether there is any Dulcinea or not in the world, or whether she is imaginary or not imaginary. These are things the proof of which must not be pushed to extreme lengths. I have not begotten nor given birth to my lady, though I behold her as she must necessarily be, a lady who contains in herself all the qualities to make her famous throughout the world (DQ II, xxxii, 606-7).

The Don claims for himself the novelist's prerogative, to create "character" from nothing; as he had earlier told Sancho "I picture her in my imagination as I would have her to be" (DQ I, xxv, 185).

This last line is part of the material which "my beloved CERVANTES"[88] provides for Sterne to recast in Tristram Shandy.

Here, though, it is utilised as part of the author's campaign to involve the reader in the quixotic realm of his characters. Now it is the reader who is called upon to create his own Dulcinea in the guise of the Widow Wadman: "Sit down, Sir, paint her to your own mind - as like your mistress as you can - as unlike your wife as your conscience will let you - 'tis all one to me - please but your own fancy in it".[89] This presentation of the Widow seems fitting because Uncle Toby is probably the eighteenth-century character who comes closest to Don Quixote in his "amours". Toby too is comparable to the "most courteous knight of romance" in his chivalrous attitude to women,[90] while his innocence blinds him to the facts of experience. Even Sterne, whose freedom from naivete was beyond question, recorded his own attraction to idealised love-objects claiming in a letter to John Wodehouse that, "I myself must ever have some dulcinea in my head - it harmonises the soul".[91]

However, Sterne's knowingness contrasts with true quixotic faith which is a belief born of innocence and extraordinarily difficult to sustain. Even Don Quixote, whose commitment to Dulcinea is unwavering, finds it increasingly problematic to maintain his ideal representation of her after Sancho creates the myth of her enchantment. Suddenly a "real" figure begins to encroach on the Don's imaginative vision; not only has Dulcinea's beauty been "transformed and changed" (DQ II, x, 477), but he is presented with "the repulsive and low form of a coarse country wench, with cataracts in her eyes and a foul smell in her mouth" (DQ II, xvi, 504). The "loss" of Dulcinea is one reason why Don Quixote's second part is darker in tone than the first,[92] notably after the Duke and Duchess intervene and make it a divisive issue between the Don and Sancho.

The fact that the ideal heroine remains an impossible aspiration in Don Quixote probably explains why references to "a dulcinea" in the eighteenth-century novel have critical

overtones. The word usually implies a woman who is either deluded herself or who deludes others by concealing a corrupted heart with an affected veneer of innocence. Almost all the women Peregrine Pickle pursues (with the exception of Emilia Gauntlet) are tagged as "Dulcineas", from the "buxom country damsel[s]" he visits, to his Parisian mistress, Mrs Hornbeck, and the Capuchin.[93] In keeping with his own unidealistic nature, Peregrine attempts a variation upon Don Quixote's act of character creation by the experiment he carries out with the beggar's daughter, a "modern Dulcinea".[94] Where the Don imagines a peasant girl to be a great lady, Peregrine sets out to make other people believe this of his "hedge-inamorata": "he hoped he should, in a few weeks, be able to produce her in company, as an accomplished young lady of uncommon wit, and an excellent understanding".[95] Peregrine is more concerned with exposing the inadequacies hidden by a social persona than creating an ideal. The more cynical application of "dulcinea" can also be observed in the conversations of Burney's Mrs Arlbery and Sir Sedley Clarendel later in the century.[96]

It could be argued that there are almost as many uses of the quixote, and of the paraphernalia of quixotism, as there are manifestations of this ever-adaptable figure. Certainly it was fortuitous that the eighteenth-century novel had at its disposal a figure capable of embodying so many of the fascinations of the age: madness and sanity, fact and fiction, truth and delusion. However, the quixote is only one way through which these concerns are worked out during this period. It is also possible that the family resemblance between them - derived from the common roots in Cervantes - means they are not the most accurate indicators of the changes in attitude towards aesthetics, imagination, and romance that occurred during the second half of the century. It is necessary therefore to turn to a consideration of these transformations and to assess their implications for the representation of the novelistic heroine.

ii. Romance, Sensibility, and Imagination: New Attitudes

The heroine in eighteenth-century fiction is almost invariably presented as the means through which the reader acquires an "improving" lesson. The employment of such figures in this capacity presupposes the existence of a network of beliefs regarding the moral efficacy of literature, the process of identification between reader and fictional protagonist, and the "duty" of the author. In this respect the heroine is something of an end product, the visible manifestation of an orthodox body of opinion which is occasionally openly articulated but often simply assumed. It might be expected, therefore, that the heroine-centred text would be finely attuned to shifts in contemporary attitudes to art, but in fact there is a fundamental conservatism behind the portrayal of women in fiction in the eighteenth century. The conventions which were set in place early in the century show a marked reluctance to respond to the new ways in which genre, imagination, and the creative powers of the artist, were being perceived by its close.

Undoubtedly this is partially the result of the emergence of the "respectable" woman novelist. As numerous critical accounts in recent years have suggested, by the mid-century female authors had renounced the licence (and vulnerability to attack) associated with Behn, Manley and the early Haywood, and acquired an accepted position as the creators of the moral text and the instructors of their sex.[1] As so many heroine-centred texts were the work of female novelists, this assumption of the educational mantle has significant implications. Publicly at least, the woman author privileged the morally improving, pedagogical function of her fiction over its status as a work of art. This goes some way to explain why such novels were unlikely to be in the vanguard of a new aesthetics; even Ann Radcliffe, whose texts were indeed innovative and influential in this respect, carried with her the familiar eighteenth-

century education and correction motifs in her representation of the heroine.

However, the dilemmas specific to the position of the writing woman at the time were only one element of a wide-ranging insecurity surrounding the novel. In the second half of the eighteenth century the novel cannot be described as a confident genre; its ambivalent status seems the more evident if the contrast is made with its place in the national literature of the next century.[2] From 1760 until the emergence of Scott, the novel was perceived to be much more a cause for concern than celebration. The genre seemed to stand outside the parameters of critical standards, its appeal to a large audience which needed no cultural preparation to understand it was a particular source of suspicion.

New ideas in aesthetics or philosophy tended to be proposed and discussed by men who considered the novel rather beneath their notice. If such concepts achieved a wide enough circulation, they often did undergo a gradual process of assimilation into contemporary fiction where, however, they had a tendency to come into conflict with the pre-existing pedagogical structure. It is noticeable, for example, how the championing of sympathy and sentiment, and the increased acceptance of the creative imagination, are at once incorporated and queried in the novels of the mid to late eighteenth century. Usually heroines possess sensibility and imagination, while authors write strictures on how these figures, and the reader, should learn to control such qualities. The theories of genre, philosophy, and literary aesthetics which will be considered in this section do not therefore always translate directly into influences upon the fictional representation of women, but they have significant implications for the later heroine-centred text and the reasons for the continued deployment of the theme of delusion.

The preoccupation with generic definition did not lessen in the second half of the eighteenth century. Although this was far from being restricted to discussion of prose fiction, it was apparent to writers at the time that, for better or worse, this was the medium which was undergoing the fastest process of expansion and alteration. As the century progressed, it became possible to assess retrospectively the significance of the developments in fiction which had occurred during its earlier decades. This is reflected in the numerous accounts given of the central issue of the relationship between romance and novel. What is particularly conspicuous in these is that, as there was a prevalent belief that the novel had somehow "replaced" romance, the romance became the safer subject of critical analysis. This is clearly displayed in Clara Reeve's The Progress of Romance where Euphrasia enters enthusiastically into discussion of romance - which has to her a distinct historical delimitation - but shows a reluctance to continue onto the "vast, unexplored regions" (PR I, 109) of the contemporary novel.

Writing the history of romance was, more generally, part of the late eighteenth-century reconsideration of its place in the national literature of Britain and in the wider context of European literature. One of the earliest expressions of the need for this reassessment is Richard Hurd's question,

> may there not be something in the Gothic Romance peculiarly suited to the views of a genius, and to the ends of poetry? And may not the philosophic moderns have gone too far, in their perpetual ridicule and contempt of it?[3]

This attitude was later echoed by Clara Reeve who gives Euphrasia the task of "proving" that

> these writings [romances] were by no means so contemptible, as they have been represented by later writers: - by those who never saw them, nor knew any particulars of them; but have condemned them

> indiscriminately, through blind prejudice; or what is worse, total ignorance of them (PR I, 51).

Interestingly Reeve is here making explicit the question mark over the agenda and judgement of anti-romance critics which I have argued to be the sub-text of The Female Quixote.

Whereas writers such as Richard Hurd and Thomas Warton, in his Observations on the Faerie Queene (1754), were primarily concerned with reestablishing the place of romance in the literary history of poetry, Clara Reeve extends the enquiry to include the development of prose fiction. What all authors on this subject share is a fascination with describing and explaining the place of romance in past ages. Whether writers are sympathetic to romance, as is the case with Hurd in the Letters on Chivalry and Romance and Reeve's Progress of Romance, or more doubtful about its literary merit, for example Blair in the "On Fictitious History" section of his Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres, and Beattie's "On Fable and Romance" in his Dissertations Moral and Critical (1783), all concern themselves with extensive accounts of the middle ages, feudalism, and chivalry.[4]

Nevertheless, if the past history of romance became the subject of scholarly interest and research, its seventeenth- and eighteenth-century manifestation, and its relationship with the novel still resisted the formulation of a critical consensus. It is confusion rather than neat categorisation which characterises discussion of the more recent developments in romance. One illustration of this is an essay published by Barbauld in 1773 entitled "On Romances, An Imitation". The piece is a relatively sympathetic account of contemporary prose writing, marked by a noticeably unspecific usage of the term "romance". To Barbauld the word can refer as easily to prose that gives "descriptions of imaginary scenes, and delineations of ideal characters" as to that which "represents common

life".5 Such avoidance of distinction between romance and novel is also a feature of Beattie's "On Fable and Romance" which draws a simple line between "Old Romance", predating Cervantes, and "New Romance", which is everything since. French heroic romance (which Beattie typically claims not to have read) is excepted as a mixed form.6

It was the kind of loose generic description employed by these writers which prompted Clara Reeve's critical history of prose writing. The argument proposed here causes her character Hortensius to remark,

> I clearly perceive the difference between the Romance and Novel, and am surprized they should be confounded together (PR I, 111).

However, there is nothing startlingly original (or conclusive) about Reeve's distinction as it is based on the old standby of probability - in other words, the method used by the seventeenth-century romance writers to reject their predecessors, by the eighteenth-century novelists to dismiss heroic romance, and by nineteenth-century authors to distance themselves from the eighteenth-century sentimental or gothic novel. The declaration that:

> The Novel is a picture of real life and manners, and of the times in which it is written (PR I, 111),

is a further example of the eighteenth-century assertion that novels such as Clarissa, Tom Jones, and Peregrine Pickle were every day tales of common folk - in Reeve's words "familiar relation[s] of such things, as pass every day before our eyes, such as may happen to our friend, or to ourselves" (PR I, 111).

The enduring significance of Reeve's essay lies in her insistence on taking romance seriously. Her own attitude is characterised by an air of judicious moderation: romances are

neither argued to be "the sublime compositions" which their advocates claim nor "so contemptible and pernicious as some prejudiced men have described them" (PR I, 105). That the detractors of romance are specifically "men" is in keeping with the clear gendering of Reeve's argument,[7] Euphrasia insistently returns to the times in the past when romances were not just seen as the stuff of the "lady's Library" (PR I, xi) but were written and read by men.[8] Alongside this is the interaction of the dialogue structure of The Progress of Romance whereby the two women display the reading knowledge of romance, while the sole male character jealously guards the preeminent position of the classical text, his moments of "conversion" bearing the stamp of wishful thinking on Reeve's part.[9]

Rather than strictly maintaining a simple female/romance, male/classicism divide however, Reeve is more concerned with expressing through Euphrasia an impartial, critical overview of prose fiction which makes its value judgements on the grounds of morality rather than genre. In this respect it is fascinating to see the "romance" which Richardson demonised and which is such a fundamental source of ambiguity in The Female Quixote becoming Euphrasia's "very harmless kind of reading" (PR I, 66), as is evinced in remarks such as the following: "The ancient and modern Romance, had each their peculiar ton, their affectation, their absurdities: - at the same time it must be confessed by those who despise them, that the enthusiasm they inspired was that of virtue and honour" (PR I, 67). Reeve was not the first to have expressed this opinion. One of the most notable alterations in the way prose fiction was perceived as the century continued is this reassessment of romance. Now, in nostalgic retrospectives, writers celebrate the innocence and exemplary morality which they claim characterised the ideal world of pre-eighteenth-century romantic fiction, however incredible its conventions may have been.

In this light it becomes easier to understand why the quixote of the heroic romance largely vanished after the century's midpoint. When the heroic romances were set back into the respectability of antiquity, they presented no danger to the contemporary reader. Instead of the early eighteenth-century warnings, critics now repeatedly assert that they wish the youth of their age were emulating the heroic romance instead of the novel. Euphrasia's remark that:

> If it taught young women to deport themselves too much like Queens and Princesses, it taught them at the same time that virtue only could give lustre to every rank and degree (PR I, 67-8),

is simply a recapitulation of a view that had been put forward as early as 1753 in an essay published by William Whitehead in The World. Whitehead had suggested that although aspects of the heroic romance "seem to us a little unnatural",

> it is not of dangerous example. There can no harm follow if unexperienced persons should endeavour to imitate what may be thought inimitable. Should our virgins arrive but half way towards the chastity of a Parthenia, it will be something gained.[10]

The years between Whitehead and Reeve had seen similar sentiments expressed by a variety of authors; Gregory in the section of A Comparative View of the State and Faculties of Man with Those of the Animal World (1765) which Reeve's Euphrasia "extracts" and uses as one of her authorities, Barbauld in her "Enquiry into those Kinds of Distress which Excite Agreeable Sensations" (1773) and Vicesimus Knox who favoured the romance technique of "exhibiting patterns of perfection ... [which] stimulated emulation to aim at it".[11] Of course, the origins of this line of argument date back as far as Johnson's famous fourth number of The Rambler, where the contradiction inherent in preferring realistic fiction while also rejecting the "mixed character" had remained unresolved.[12]

The approach towards genres of prose fiction exemplified by Reeve has enormous significance for the status of the novel. The mid-century declarations of the "new species of writing" had, in the case of Richardson and Smollett particularly, been associated with a desire to construct an amorphous category of prose "romance" (usually without any kind of named canon) onto which criticism could be deflected and the supposedly undesirable elements of fiction offloaded. Romance, therefore, was depicted as both ridiculous in its improbability and dangerous in its corrupting, licentious qualities. In his insightful account of the paradoxical position in which this strategy placed authors such as Richardson, John Mullan draws attention to the "scandal internal to even the most 'instructive' of narratives; this is the possibility that it, too, might be 'inflaming'",[13] and asserts that, "the novel of sentiment, try as it might, is never completely to rid itself of the suspicion of romance".[14] However as the novel of sentiment, and later that of sensibility,[15] developed, the "romance" which, in the early to mid-century had been the pattern of the seductive, deluding narrative, was gradually being transformed into the more acceptable model for fiction.

Ironically it was the very popularity of the novels of the 1740s and 50s which was responsible for this. Whitehead's essay in The World is again a useful precursor of the way opinion was to alter with regard to genres of fiction, asserting as he does a preference for the authors of heroic romance who "soar above nature", over contemporary writers whose work is distinctly "below nature".[16] While accepting that modern day authors "copy ... a very great original" - in other words Fielding - Whitehead believes that, "very few of them have as yet found out their master's peculiar art of writing upon low subjects without writing in a low manner".[17] As such imitations became more frequent and the association of the novel with "low subjects" more ingrained, the eighteenth-

century consensus was that vulgarity was too high a price to pay for greater credibility in fiction. This is certainly true of The Progress of Romance. To Euphrasia, the combined effect of the perceived mass production of fiction and the rise of the circulating library had often made the novel little less than "a public evil" (PR II, 7). It is largely due to this that she presents her task to be establishing a "selection" of fiction which would be appropriate for the young and inexperienced; it is also noticeable that her appended list of "Books for Young Ladies" features "Richardson's Works" as the representative of the eighteenth-century novel (PR II, 103-4).

Mullan's comment regarding the relationship between "novel of sentiment" and "romance" has therefore to be considered alongside the fluctuations in the contemporary opinion regarding the novel. The credibility that the genre gained as a result of the success of Richardson and Fielding was short-lived, while the redoubling of the criticism directed against the novel in the later decades of the eighteenth century ran concurrently with an increasing belief that the romances of the seventeenth century had been a harmless model after all. The "dangers of fiction" were now ascribed to the "modern novel" - and along with this went the inevitable moral warnings and parodies (often following the quixotic model).

If anything the novel of sensibility began consciously to move towards the idealisation of romance in order to protect itself from the contemporary reputation of the novel. Of course, the authorial claims of adherence to "nature" and probability remained, but the actual practice of such fiction involved reworking some of the most formally stylised aspects of romance. It is worth noting that this indebtedness does not necessarily involve any real knowledge of pre-eighteenth-century romance, as such elements could as easily be drawn from the work of such predecessors as Richardson and Rousseau. The

features of their novels which stood in the closest relation to romance were emulated without the psychological subtlety that had given these earlier authors their claim to "realism".

The parallels between romance and the post-Richardsonian novel are particularly apparent in the heroine-centred text as these were usually deeply concerned with avoidance of the vulgar and immoral. The possibility of a heroine of low degree diminished as the century continued: if figures like Richardson's Pamela or Fielding's Fanny with their strict adherence to standards of modesty and virtue, did not inspire imitation, a new Roxana or Moll Flanders was pretty much out of the question. Now either well-born or with an interestingly mysterious origin, the heroine's main role was conducting a courtship within the traditional parameters of romance fiction. As Barker-Benfield astutely points out:

> The language of "courting" in the literature of sensibility was the archaic and romantic language of court (or pseudocourt) etiquette proliferated in the bourgeois form of the novel ...
>
> The depiction in the fictive world of sensibility of deferential gestures was derived from the romantic or feudal past. Most apparent are the kneelings and other postures of super- and subordination, expressing a range of meanings: supplication, gratitude, and distress, for example.[18]

Feeling comes to be expressed through a system of conventional signs, actions which stand as a kind of shorthand indicator of particular forms of internal turmoil. According to Barbauld's arch account,

> an ordinary author does not know how to express any strong emotion otherwise than by swoonings or death; so that a person experienced in this kind of reading, when a girl faints away at parting with her lover, or a hero kills himself for the loss of his mistress, considers it as the established etiquette upon such occasions, and turns over the pages with the utmost coolness and unconcern.[19]

Writers somewhat out of the "ordinary" such as Richardson were capable of employing these techniques to undoubted effect. Clarissa's sensitive physical responses are compelling because her psychological credibility as a character is carefully established. Also, although Richardson comes closer to re-enacting romance conventions than he wanted his contemporary audience to believe, he does transform them through a process of self-conscious reference. There is an enormous difference between the hero of the sentimental novel kneeling to his mistress and Lovelace dropping to his "very ready knees" (Cl I, 238; 166) because that is how he knows the hero of romance is supposed to behave. Such role playing and deliberate manipulation of literary convention is similarly a feature of the other great forebear of the novel of sensibility Rousseau's La Nouvelle Héloïse. St. Preux and Julie distance themselves from romance by the simple practice of consciously evoking it:

> There, vassal, on thy knees, before thy sovereign mistress ... thou shalt vow truth and loyalty on every occasion ... You need not vow eternal fealty; but you must and shall vow to commit no act of felonious intention, and at least to declare open war before you shake off the yoke. This done, you shall seal it with an embrace and be owned and acknowledged for a true and loyal knight.[20]

This again is the familiar technique of "novelistic" incorporation and qualification. Rousseau's intention was to transform the adventures of romance into the history of sentiments, as is made explicit when St. Preux recounts the story of his love to Lord B-.[21]

The post-Johnsonian concern with the "mixed character" meant that male protagonists with the complexity of Lovelace and St. Preux rarely featured in the later eighteenth-century novel. The years of "high" sentimentalism involved an idealisation of the hero following the romance model, epitomised by the novels of Frances Brooke or the Minifie sisters,[22] and this

was to culminate in the absolute polarisation of the hero and villain figures characteristic of the gothic novel. As Barker-Benfield points out,

> central to the eighteenth-century sentimental novel were ... courteous, mannerly males, governed by a deeply internalized code of sexual morality, making the relief of distressed and reverenced women their highest purpose, fighting off monstrous and bestial figures who capture and assault women.[23]

As this suggests, the risk of sexual ruin run by the heroine does not disappear just because the threat is no longer posed by the hero himself. So even when the novel of sensibility had acquired a hero every bit as exemplary as the heroine, the use of devices such as abduction by the villain allowed it to encompass the both the "inflaming" and "instructive" in the manner traditionally characteristic of the prose romance. Comparisons can be drawn with the way the cross dressing and gender confusion of Sidney' New Arcadia (1590) coexists with a moral code that incites Pamela to reject Musidorus furiously for "offering to kiss her",[24] or how the sexually charged scenes of voyeurism in Clelia sit alongside minute analysis of the "new gallantry".[25]

The heroine-centred novel of sensibility has inevitable sexual overtones due to the emphasis placed on the female body. This is another connection with pre-eighteenth-century romance where, as the communication of feeling is obscured by stylised language, emphasis tends to shift onto conventionally recognisable physical responses. In Clelia the specification of this is precise enough for a character to be described as reacting with a "demi-blush".[26] The litany of swoons, blushes and tears becomes the lingua franca of eighteenth-century sensibility - as Mullan suggests,

> Its [sensibility's] instrument is a massively sensitized, feminine body; its vocabulary is that of gestures and

palpitations, sighs and tears.[27]

It is a "vocabulary" shared by both sexes however, evident in the hero figure of the sentimental heroine-centred novel and the feminised man of feeling,[28] the latter featured in the novels of Sterne and MacKenzie, and epitomised by Yorick of A Sentimental Journey (1768): "I burst into a flood of tears - but I am as weak as a woman; and I beg the world not to smile, but pity me".[29] Yorick here relies upon the eighteenth-century reader's agreement with Adam Smith's remark that there "is a helplessness in the character of extreme humanity which more than any thing interests our pity".[30]

The expression of the "cult of sensibility" is probably the most significant feature of the novel of the 1760s and 70s. The comment, criticism, and parody it inspired continued into the next century and has importance for this thesis in that the deluded heroine of these years is often originally lead astray by the "evils" of exaggerated sensibility. The concept of sensibility also possesses great relevance as an indicator of the contemporary belief in literature's affective powers. This is taken to an extreme in the narrative of the "man of feeling". At the mid-century, it was the protagonist of a novel who possessed what Clarissa calls "the finer sensibilities" (Cl III, 255; 507), and displayed these through trial; now - possibly taking the hint from the final volumes of Clarissa - the emphasis is placed upon the observer of the "affecting scene". MacKenzie's Harley or Sterne's Yorick mediate between scenes of distress they witness and readers of the sentimental novel, presenting a model of the proper emotional response.

The focus on the spectator rather than the sufferer reflects the way that philosophical theories of moral sentiment and sympathy had developed by the mid-century. The initial optimism of Hume's philosophy, based on the idea that the bond

of sympathy between men was innate and spontaneous, was modified both in his later work and in that of Adam Smith.[31] Smith has no faith in the possibility of all men possessing, or being able to acquire, fellow-feeling, asserting that the "amiable virtue of humanity requires, surely, a sensibility, much beyond what is possessed by the rude vulgar of mankind".[32] The expression of sympathy is something requiring practice and effort, possibly explaining why the novel took it upon itself to provide textbook examples of appropriate responses. As many critics have pointed out, the novel of sensibility could avoid the philosophical problems of ascertaining whether sympathy was the property of the many or the few. The novel was able to privilege the character of feeling, who represented rare humanity in a harsh world, and "position each private reader as the exceptional connoisseur of commendable sympathies".[33]

The aspect of Smith's theory which has the most interesting implications for the novel is his concept of the sympathetic imagination. Smith privileges imagination as the means through which an empathetic identification between two people is achieved, the most significant part of this being his belief that sympathy is only achieved by the onlooker "changing places in fancy with the sufferer":

> that there may be some correspondence of sentiments between the spectator and the person principally concerned, the spectator must, first of all, endeavour, as much as he can, to put himself in the situation of the other, and to bring home to himself every little circumstance of distress which can possibly occur to the sufferer. He must adopt the whole case of his companion with all its minutest incidents; and strive to render, as perfect as possible, that imaginary change of situation upon which his sympathy is founded.[34]

The imaginative process by which "spectator" and "agent"[35] can momentarily exchange places in life, is not unrelated to the identification between a reader and a fictional character,

particularly, of course, in the novel of sensibility.[36] What is important is that the imaginative involvement which is being actively advocated here is distinctly reminiscent of the quixotic transformations that had been such a notable source of concern to the eighteenth-century moralist. There are other sections in Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments that further highlight such parallels, for instance his account of the influence which noble characters in "history" (a less controversial choice than romance) have upon the reader:

> In imagination we become the very person whose actions are represented to us: we transport ourselves in fancy to the scenes of those distant and forgotten adventures, and imagine ourselves acting the part of a Scipio or a Camillus, a Timoleon or an Aristides.[37]

In fact, as the century progresses, and both criticism and philosophy began to take a more positive approach to the subject of the literary imagination, non-pejorative accounts of intense readerly identification with creative works of art become increasingly common.

The new acceptance of imagination is unmistakable. By 1767 William Duff could confidently assert: "That Imagination is the quality of all others most essentially requisite to the existence of Genius, will universally be acknowledged".[38] Writers on aesthetics began to pay much more attention to what constituted "genius". The belief that it was an innate, instinctive quality which allowed an author access to the mysteries of the sublime led many commentators to describe genius in terms of divine inspiration.[39] One result of attributing such "magical"[40] powers to the writer of genius is that the constraints which were placed upon them by the critical advocacy of probability and following "nature" became open to question.[41] The standards of judgement held earlier in the century were argued to be too concerned with propriety and not appreciative enough of creativity, the "regular and

correct" in poetry particularly was believed to exclude its "most essential excellencies, in FICTION and in FIRE",[42] while a general reevaluation of Augustan poetry within these terms took place.[43]

However, interest was not exclusively focussed on the qualities of imagination possessed by the author. The literary text exists to communicate the author's vision to the reader and in the late eighteenth century a great deal of emphasis was placed on the affective potential of the work of genius, taking into account the kind of responses they could elicit. To Duff a writer of original genius can,

> convey the same lively and fervid ideas to the mind of the Reader, which possessed and filled the imagination of the Author ... and by the strength of his representation, will give to an illusion all the force and efficacy of a reality.[44]

To Young,

> then are we at the Writer's mercy; on the strong wing of his Imagination, we are snatched from Britain to Italy, from Climate to Climate, from Pleasure to Pleasure; we have no Home, no Thought, of our own; till the Magician drops his Pen: And then falling down into ourselves, we awake to flat Realities.[45]

Such descriptions can give the impression of the reader's response being passive, simply a matter of being overcome by the force of the author's imagination. However, to be emotionally and mentally affected by the experience of reading necessitates an imaginative involvement mirroring that of the creator of the text, the reader also possesses what Young calls "the little World, the minute but fruitful Creation, of his own mind".[46]

The imaginative engagement presented here would have been broached with considerably more caution earlier in the century. In particular Duff's idea that the "illusion" of the text can

seem like "reality", or Young's belief that existence is "flat" compared to the realm of imagination, would have been cause for concern rather than a way of paying tribute to the author's invention. Now the use of "fancy" to elude or cheat "reality" is often shown to be welcome. Sterne's Yorick is a great advocate of the technique, displayed in action during his reading of Much Ado About Nothing,

> I transported myself instantly from the chair I sat in to Messina in Sicily ... [and] thought not of Versailles, the Count, or the Passport.
>
> Sweet pliability of man's spirit, that can at once surrender itself to illusions, which cheat expectation and sorrow of their weary moments![47]

The use of literature to transcend imaginatively the limitations of existence is a theme Young takes up when discussing the reasons for Shakespeare's preeminence over modern dramatists: "In the theatre, as in life, delusion is the charm; and we are undelighted, the first moment we are undeceived".[48] However, not every writer in the later decades of the eighteenth century would have agreed with Young's belief that "delusion is the charm". For instance, in the Preface to Shakespeare which Johnson published in 1765 the diametrically opposed viewpoint is presented,

> It is false, that any representation is mistaken for reality; that any dramatick fable in its materiality was ever credible, or, for a single moment, was ever credited.[49]

Yorick may be "transported" from his chair but Johnsonian spectators are proof against such delusion, "always in their senses, and know[ing], from the first act to the last, that the stage is only a stage".[50]

Johnson is not alone in displaying such a pragmatic approach to the possibility of the suspension of disbelief. The second half of the eighteenth century was a time of

transitional changes in aesthetic theory, while the artistic manifestos of the Romantic movement were still in the future. Even while asserting the preeminent position of imagination and genius, writers at this time frequently reveal their debt to earlier critical standards. In particular, imagination is still not permitted to run unchecked, the control mechanism of judgement being required to avoid the over fanciful realm of the "romantic visionary".[51] The process of involvement between reader and text is also held back from the total identification associated with the quixotic, deluded, reader. An account of this, which admirably conveys the interweaving of the "old" and "new" aesthetics, is Duff's analysis of reader response to the "ALLEGORICAL fable",[52] specifically The Faerie Queene:

> We are in this case in a great measure upon our guard against the delusions of fancy ... Yet such is the power of ingenious fiction over our minds, that we are not only captivated and interested by a relation of surprising incidents, though very improbable, but, during the time of the relation at least, we forget that they are fictitious, and almost fancy them to be real. This deceit, however, lasts no longer than the perusal ... when that is over, the inchantment vanishes in the cool moment of deliberation; and, being left at leisure to think and reason, we never admit as true what is not strictly probable.[53]

It is not exactly surprising therefore to find the familiar warnings against imagination coexisting with the celebrations of its powers. In 1783 for example Beattie was sternly insisting in an essay entitled "Of IMAGINATION" that "the right government of this faculty must be a matter of the greatest importance to all men", before proceeding to an attack on the "delusive pictures of happiness" and tendency to "encourage wild expectation[s]" which were the properties of "romance", (it should be remembered that "Romance-writing" to Beattie includes all forms of prose fiction[54]). Control of imagination might well be necessary to "all men" but the novel remained focussed on the propensity to imaginative delusion of the youthful female. Indeed it is sometimes possible to get

the impression that, despite new developments in aesthetics and philosophy, the only thing that has altered for the heroine (and by implication the female reader) is that she is now being presented as the deluded victim of the sentimental novel rather than the heroic romance. This is reinforced by an exchange between Hortensius and Euphrasia in The Progress of Romance where, after Hortensius has discussed the "false expectations" raised by fiction, he continues:

> A young woman is taught to expect adventures and intrigues, - she expects to be addressed in the style of these books, with the language of flattery and adulation. - If a plain man addresses her in rational terms ... her vanity is disappointed, she expects to meet a Hero in Romance.

Euphrasia corrects him by pointing out that this would be caused by "a fine Gentleman in a Novel" rather than "a Hero in Romance" (PR II, 78).

The most accomplished authors of heroine-centred fiction in the final decades of the eighteenth century and the opening years of the nineteenth - Frances Burney, Charlotte Smith, Ann Radcliffe, and Jane Austen - do however place their novels within the context of the debate regarding sensibility and imagination, not surprisingly paying more attention to the implications for women than most of the authors discussed in this section. Most significantly, the ambivalence which characterises the attitude of these novelists meant that again it is through the representation of delusion that extremes of sensibility, imagination and "romantic quixotism" are examined, criticised, and parodied. The use of such techniques by the earlier of these novelists, Burney and Smith, will be the subject of the next section.

iii. "The Syren Voice of Hope":[1] Daydreams and Delusions in the Novels of Frances Burney and Charlotte Smith

The ambivalence which characterises the later eighteenth-century attitude towards the imagination is as apparent in the fiction of the period as it is in the work of aesthetic theorists. The novelist does however have certain advantages, denied to the critic or philosopher. Principal amongst these is freedom from the need to display commitment to a specific viewpoint. The novel, particularly through the medium of characterisation, is able to encompass, and hold in juxta-position, a broad range of contemporary opinions upon a subject. So, while the shifts from celebrating imagination to supplying cautionary warnings regarding it can seem to imply uncertainties in the author's thinking in a text such as Duff's Essay on Original Genius, the novelist is able to employ such contrasts more productively.

The capacity to internalise debate within its structure is one of the novel's greatest strengths. This need not be presented formally, indeed it is often more effective when it functions by implication. Thus a single work of fiction at this time could include depictions of characters who present the conservative account of the necessity of controlling imagination (and whose "authority" can be undermined by their role in the action of the plot), of cynical figures who read all idealism as hopelessly quixotic and "romantic", as well as representations of the imaginative protagonist, often the heroine or hero. While the way in which the story progresses and is concluded - or the use of authorial comment - can give the reader indications as to which individuals are intended to be considered in a sympathetic or critical light, none of these figures need receive the unequivocal sanction of their creator.

Due to the multivocal qualities of fiction it is necessary

to exercise caution in labelling any novel "didactic". The form has an inbuilt resistance to the communication of a simple message and, while it is sometimes possible to isolate "a moral",[2] it is unlikely that this will satisfactorily represent the text's examination of morality. As I have discussed previously, the novelist, and especially the female writer, of this period held a peculiarly ambiguous position. Committed to channelling the affective power of literature into moral improvement while at the same time creating imaginative fiction, it was the novelist's task to negotiate between the disparate roles of "instructive guide" and "original genius".[3] One of my intentions here is to show how this is reflected by the interaction between "didactic" and "imaginative" characters within the texts these authors produced.

The two authors with whom I will be primarily concerned in this section are both skilful practitioners of this technique. Although Frances Burney and Charlotte Smith have traditionally been separated along the dividing lines of "conservative" and "radical", "realistic" and "romantic",[4] their novels clearly display mutual influence,[5] and reveal many points of comparison, especially in the treatments of the imaginative and the quixotic. Both writers exploit the novel's potential for inclusiveness to create texts which function on a number of levels. On the surface their fiction can be read as the vehicle of eminently respectable instruction. Youthful innocence, often in the form of a heroine who may be misguided but is always innately good and well-meaning, gains knowledge of "the world" usually under the influence of an experienced, older character. That the contemporary audience accepted these novels as viable pedagogical tools is indicated by the removal of Mr Tyrold's "Sermon" from Camilla to be bound with Gregory's popular conduct book A Father's Legacy to his Daughters.

However, as Richardson's Moral and Instructive Sentiments

also illustrates, a passage that in context is open to varying interpretations can become frozen into didacticism when extracted.[6] Within the novel overt guides to conduct and propriety have to coexist with other aspects of the text which can act to qualify, or even undermine them. At this level it is possible for the status and authority of the "mentor" figures to be challenged, the "necessary" loss of innocence to be lamented and, most importantly, the author's attraction to the imaginative, "romantic" characters to be suggested. As is the case with Richardson and Lennox, the primary tension is between "text as instruction" and "text as fiction", the two being ultimately irreconcilable as the desire to construct a model for real life from the novel conflicts directly with the formal organisation of a work of fiction - its order, its "connectedness", and the dynamics of plot and resolution. The heroine's (occasionally the hero's) experience of delusion is the focal point, as it is here that the improving and the imaginative collide.

Both Burney and Smith place a great deal of emphasis on recording the mental life of their protagonists. Indeed, in novels such as Camilla or Celestina (as is later the case with Austen's Emma), the "action" of the story derives less from external events than from the consequences of the dreams, delusions, and misunderstandings experienced by the central figures. The heroine's imagination therefore plays a crucial role in the narrative, and this is often expressed to the reader by insights into her hopes. Hope could be described as a key structural principle of these novels. When the heroine is introduced to the reader her future is always entirely uncertain, either her name, inheritance, family, class, partner, or a combination of these will be in doubt.[7] What the reader does have access to, though, are the author's descriptions of her hopes, both at the opening of the tale and developing throughout the story.

These imaginative dreams of the future have a threefold significance for the reader. They establish the focus of the text or the ideal goal of the heroine; they shape the dynamics of the plot, which will either throw up a seemingly inescapable bar to the heroine's happiness or suggest that her hopes were delusory to begin with; and finally they give the reader some idea of how the story will end. This is because the novels of Burney and Smith tend always to conclude with an enactment of the hopes of the protagonist.

The importance of this last point is that even if the heroine has been shown to hold delusory expectations and over-indulge in imaginative fancy (in the view of either experienced characters in the novel or the author), her "reward" actually validates her dreams. There is a sense that the "text as instruction" and the "text as fiction" coexist in a dialogic relationship. Neither ultimately "wins" but instead they constantly inform and critique each other. Each novel presents variations on this balance. For some, like Cecilia or The Old Manor House, the length of the protagonists' trial can create a partial disillusionment in the achievement of their hopes and hence a compromised "happy ending", whereas in others the distances between the dream and the outcome is much narrower, examples being Evelina or Celestina. It is this which seems to influence the position of a novel in a scale that runs from "realism" to "romance".

To illustrate the function of hope in these novels it is necessary to consider some specific examples. The relatively compact, linear development of Burney's Evelina make it a useful starting point. Evelina is ostensibly presented as the tale of a controlled experiment, devised to illustrate how the tempering of imagination by experience leads to acceptance of "reality". Lady Howard's argument as to why Evelina should be allowed to go to London summarises this:

> When young people are too rigidly sequestered from it [the world], their lively and romantic imaginations paint it to them as a paradise of which they have been beguiled; but when they are shown it properly, and in due time, they see it such as it really is, equally shared by pain and pleasure, hope and disappointment (Eve I, 13; 17).[8]

The juxtapositions being made here are very similar to those of Smollett's depiction of Lydia Melford, seven years before the publication of Evelina. Lydia writes to her friend Laetitia Willis that "People of experience ... see with very different eyes from those that such as you and I make use of" as to her, for example, "Ranelagh looks like the inchanted palace of a genie ... I really thought myself in paradise",[9] a sense of wonder shared by Evelina who responds to the same location as though "I was in some inchanted castle, or fairy palace, for all looked like magic to me" (Eve I, 50; 37).

Of course, Ranelagh itself is very much in "the world" and it is exactly this "lively and romantic" way of perceiving her surroundings that Evelina is supposedly learning to overcome. However, although the heroine proceeds to run the gauntlet of social humiliation and perceived impropriety, her attitudes remain more conditioned by the moods of her mind than her environment; the fluctuation between hope and disillusionment does not for her depend upon location. This is shown by an important letter Evelina writes to Maria Mirvan after her reluctant return to London with Madame Duval:

> Tell me, my dear Maria, do you never re-trace in your memory the time we past here when together? to mine, it recurs for ever! And yet, I think I rather recollect a dream, or some visionary fancy, than a reality. - That I should ever have been known to Lord Orville ... seems now a romantic illusion: and [his qualities] ... I now re-trace the remembrance of, rather as belonging to an object of ideal perfection, formed by my own imagination ... (Eve II, 76-7; 172).

Such a retrospective interpretation of the London experience is

not what Lady Howard had in mind when removing Evelina from Berry Hill. It is when Evelina was meant to be undergoing the trial of life "as it really is" that she feels herself to have enjoyed an existence that can only be described by its closeness to "dream", "vision" and "romantic illusion". At this stage Evelina has faith that her "reality" can have aspired to such an exalted level, ironically it is later on when she comes to believe that her impression of Orville was indeed nothing more than "ideal perfection, formed by my own imagination" that she is truly deluded.

The impetus of the plot is provided by the two distinct hopes for the future which Evelina comes to acquire; the first of these depends upon Orville. Burney's heroines do not display the Richardsonian heroines' extreme reluctance to reveal their "prepossessions", although they use the language of circumlocution necessary to avoid the impropriety of an unsolicited, and hence possibly unrequited, declaration of love. As Mr Villars points out (Eve III, 72; 308), Evelina's attraction to Orville has been apparent from the first and even the minimal amount of reading between the lines required by Evelina becomes unnecessary with the shift from epistolary structure to narratorial comment in Burney's later novels.

The second area of uncertainty in Evelina's life is whether she will be "owned" by her father, with all the implications of "name", inheritance, and social status that this encompasses.[10] Her mental preoccupation with this comes to the surface when Lady Howard writes to Sir John Belmont:

> My imagination changes the scene perpetually: at one moment, I am embraced by a kind and relenting parent ... at another, he regards me with detestation, considers me as the living image of an injured saint, and repulses me with horror! (Eve I, 231; 130)

The "either ... or" structure of "the melancholy phantasms of

my [Evelina's] brain" (Eve I, 231; 130) draws attention to the close proximity in which hope and dread are placed in the eighteenth-century novel. Most contemporary heroines display both an optimistic attitude to futurity conveyed through "visionary fancy" and painful anticipations of disaster - what Celestina for example feels as "the tormenting apprehensions that corroded her heart" (Cst II, 22). Either state contains the potential for delusion. As discussed earlier with regard to Richardson's fiction, the depiction of imaginative apprehension allows an author to transfer the character's suspense to the reader, and it is a technique on which many of the gothic effects of Smith's and Radcliffe's fiction were to rely. Such suspense though does not necessarily overcome the reader's sanguine expectations of the outcome, the faith in "story-book" endings archly acknowledged by Austen in Northanger Abbey.[11] Interest is instead centred on the author's ingenuity in first establishing and later removing the obstacles to the heroine's "reward".

It remains to be seen whether Evelina's imagination does actually endanger her. She is warned of its capacity to do so often enough, in particular by Mr Villars who has "only to hope that the liveliness of your fancy may not deceive you" (Eve I, 27; 25). There are two crisis points in the novel which are directly associated with self-deception, both of these relate to Orville. The first is the aftermath of the letter Evelina receives which she believes is from Orville. This is a time when Evelina does indeed believe that she has been living in a dreamworld from which she must awake (Eve II, 240-1; 257):

> Yet I cannot but lament to find myself in a world so deceitful, where we must suspect what we see, distrust what we hear, and doubt even what we feel! (Eve II, 244; 259)

However, the later revelation that the letter is itself "an

artifice" (Eve III, 171; 359) of Sir Clement Willoughby's, overturns the conclusion Evelina draws here. Her instinct and imagination have in fact given her access to the truth which surface appearances belie, Evelina's error is being "so well convinced of my mistake" not, as she thinks now, having "fancied him [Orville] the noblest of his sex" (Eve II, 243; 258).

The fact that Evelina can be least deluded at the precise point when she, and others, believe that the opposite is the case is further illustrated by the ambiguities surrounding the letter of warning Mr Villars writes to Evelina while she is staying with Mrs Beaumont. The letter is one of the set piece moments of instruction which are often responsible for the eighteenth-century novel being termed didactic. The mentor figure steps in to "destroy" the heroine's "illusion" (Eve III, 74; 309), pointing out why she has gone astray and how she can rectify her situation. Mr Villars has no doubts as to what has misguided "my dear, my deluded child" (Eve III, 74; 309):

> Young, animated, entirely off your guard, and thoughtless of consequences, imagination took the reins, and reason, slow-paced, though sure-footed, was unequal to a race with so eccentric and flighty a companion. (Eve III, 72; 308)

This moment in Evelina is closely paralleled by the content of the "Sermon" Mr Tyrold writes to the eponymous heroine in Camilla. In both instances the intention of the "authority" figures is to make the heroine "recognise the fallacy of a cherished and darling hope" (Cam III, 60; 355). Evelina has to renounce her visionary expectations of union with Orville, Camilla to accept the futility of her hopes regarding Edgar. The language of the letter in which Mr Tyrold attempts to bring about this disillusionment mingles sympathy with urgency:

> Nor is its [hope's] downfal less terrible to its visionary elevator, because others had seen it from the beginning as a folly or a chimera; its dissolution should be estimated, not by its romance in the unimpassioned examination of a

> rational looker on, but by its believed promise of felicity to its credulous projector.
>
> Is my Camilla in this predicament? had she wove her own destiny in the speculation of her wishes? Alas! to blame her, I must first forget, that delusion, while in force, has all the semblance of reality, and takes the same hold upon the faculties as truth (Cam III, 60; 356).

Taken at face value both passages assert the conventional distrust of "fancy", emphasising its ability to endanger the heroine's happiness by the substitution of delusive visions for reality. Villars and Tyrold use this as a starting point for advocating "self-conquest" and the necessity of prudence. Both heroines accept these strictures without question, Camilla "offered up the most solemn vows of a strict and entire observance of every injunction which the letter contained" (Cam III, 78; 363), while Evelina laments "How vainly have I flattered, how miserably deceived myself!" (Eve III, 98; 321).

In this reading the novels appear to be conforming to the structural paradigm of "imagination leading to delusion, instruction leading to correction" but, before this is stamped "Burney's didactic intention", it should be pointed out that in context both Villars and Tyrold are entirely wrong.[12] The reader knows that the hopes of the heroines are not misguided at all; in both cases the desires which create their dreams of the future are reciprocated by the men of their choice.[13] It can be argued that the heroines' imagination is a more effective guide to the reality of their experience than the monitory advice of their guardians. If Evelina had left Mrs Beaumont's house immediately with Mr Villars', "imprudence is much sooner regretted than repaired" (Eve III, 75; 309) ringing in her ears, she would have indefinitely postponed, and even entirely jeopardised, her chance of coming to an understanding with Orville. Burney's strategy is more complex than it seems, allowing the plot to reveal a positive role for "romantic visions" which is masked, but not negated by moral instruction.

The transformation of the hopes of the heroine into her reality can also be observed in Cecilia, albeit in a modified form as the heroine in this novel enters a darker world than Evelina does. Like Evelina, Cecilia's imaginative life comes to possess a double focus but, while Evelina's hopes for marriage with Orville and reunion with her father are not mutually exclusive (especially since Orville neglects to make "minute enquiries into my [Evelina's] family and connections" (Eve III, 231; 389) before proposing), Cecilia seems to be unable to achieve one of her desires without abandoning the other.

Cecilia's first "scheme of happiness" (Cec I, 92; 55) relates to her choice of life-style. This is a decision which is usually out of the hands of the eighteenth-century heroine. Cecilia, as both orphan and heiress, is a special case but, like Clarissa before her, she is to discover that possessing the wherewithal of wealth and status is no guarantee of independence. There are similarities between the projections Clarissa and Cecilia make of their future establishments, both are based on principles of order, civility, and charity.[14] The practice of benevolence is central to Cecilia's intentions:

> Many and various, then, soothing to her spirit and grateful to her sensibility, were the scenes which her fancy delineated; now she supported an orphan, now softened the sorrows of a widow, now snatched from iniquity the feeble trembler at poverty ... The prospect at once exalted her hopes, and enraptured her imagination ... so animating are the designs of disinterested benevolence! so pure is the bliss of intellectual philanthropy! (Cec I, 93; 55-6)

Of course Cecilia has here hit upon the one way she can exercise her wealth, power, and ambition without offending "feminine" proprieties. Similar plans are suggested by many "heroines of means" in the English novel between Clarissa and Middlemarch, and like the related wish to "live single" they are respectably free from improper desires.

Delvile overturns any tranquillity or equilibrium Cecilia creates for herself. Even when she has only encountered him as the white domino at the masquerade, the immediate result is a sense of dissatisfaction with the solitude she had previously chosen (Cec I, 222-3; 130-1). As her contact with Delvile increases, it

> opened to her views and her hopes a scene entirely new, for neither the exertion of the most active benevolence, nor the steady course of the most virtuous conduct, sufficed any longer to wholly engage her thoughts, or constitute her felicity (Cec II, 143; 252).

In many ways this is no bad thing, Cecilia's idealistic schemes of her future life tend to overlook the likelihood of her experience of emotional or sexual desires. Undoubtedly though, Cecilia feels a safety in her earlier state which is denied by the turmoil of her love. The novel tends to oscillate between periods of optimism when her hopes are fixed upon union with Delvile and times when the seeming impossibility of this leads to retrenchment and attempts to find peace in her independent lifestyle. At one point Cecilia tells Dr Lyster of a sentiment which has (rather ironically) been expressed to her by Delvile,

> he long since said 'tis suspence, 'tis hope, that make the misery of life, - for there the Passions have all power, and Reason has none. But when evils are irremediable, and we have neither resources to plan, nor castle-building to delude us, we find time for the cultivation of philosophy ... (Cec IV, 296; 696).

However worthy this sounds, it is not a viable option for Cecilia. Hope is inevitable and for the heroine to resign her dreams involves the stifling of her feelings. The pain this causes her is apparent later when the chance of breaking the stalemate with the Delviles arises: "And thus, again, was wholly broken the tranquility [sic] of Cecilia; new hopes, however faint, awakened all her affections" (Cec V, 170; 810).

The issue of delusion is raised time and time again during Cecilia's relationship with Delvile. The extreme uncertainty of the early stages mean she has to rely on guesswork and speculation, while at the same time protecting herself from a possibly unreciprocated attachment, to this end she

> denied herself the deluding satisfaction of dwelling upon the supposition of his worth, was unusually assiduous to occupy all her time, that her heart might have less leisure for imagination (Cec II, 141-2; 251).

Gradually a pattern emerges whereby certain incidents occur, such as the "sympathy of sentiment" (Cec II, 140; 250) over the letter to Belfield, or Delvile's realisation that she is not engaged to Sir Robert (Cec II, 239-45; 307-10), which appear to sanction Cecilia's desire to "cherish the partiality she at first had repressed" (Cec II, 144; 253). When she receives no further encouragement the baffled heroine believes that her imagination has got the better of her, creating delusions of "visionary happiness" (Cec II, 196-7; 282-3: II, 262; 320). She retreats behind her pride - twice preparing herself for scornful rejections of advances by the Delvile family which never materialise (Cec II, 162-3; 263: III, 309-13; 497-9). After the last of these she believes herself "Undeceived in her expectations and chilled in her hopes" (Cec III, 318; 501).

While Cecilia has cause to believe her feelings are unrequited this is not the case. She is simply in the dark about the Delviles' horror of the consequences of the "name" clause in her uncle's will. If anything, she is the victim of the delusions of others as even Delvile admits that his change of title would be more an "imaginary than an actual evil" (Cec IV, 66; 563). But while Cecilia's hopes of marriage with Delvile are not delusive and will eventually be realised, Burney does present a more qualified representation of the imagination in this novel. Although the author never seems

fully to sanction the direct correlation between "fancy" and "delusion" which is made by some of her characters, she does inherit the fear, prevalent in the earlier eighteenth century, that imagination had the potential to develop into obsession. There are times when both of Cecilia's hopes are shown to take on a centrality in her mind that endangers her perspective. When she throws herself into "fanciful projects of beneficence" after Mrs Delvile has engineered the "final" separation between the hero and heroine, Burney describes her dream:

> In her sleep she bestowed riches, and poured plenty upon the land; she humbled the oppressor, she exalted the oppressed; slaves were raised to dignities, captives restored to liberty; beggars saw smiling abundance, and wretchedness was banished the world. From a cloud in which she was supported by angels, Cecilia beheld these wonders, and while enjoying the glorious illusion, she was awakened by her maid, with news that Mrs. Charlton was dying! (Cec IV, 324; 711)

The juxtaposition may be rather schematic but it clearly illustrates how even the most well-intentioned motivations can be exaggerated to the point when their influence is detrimental or ridiculous, allowing the mind to lose any connection with actual circumstances. Losing herself in dreams of benevolence is not the greatest threat to Cecilia however. This comes about as a result of her involvement with Delvile.

Notoriously, Cecilia's marriage to Delvile which is the fulfilment of her desires, is not the end of her problems. Due to the trauma of the initial abortive wedding, her marriage takes on an air of unreality: "she could not reconcile it with possibility; she fancied it a dream" (Cec V, 208; 832).[15] It is only after the wedding that the strain of the lengthy period of trial she has undergone becomes truly apparent and, when this is exacerbated by the duel and her dispossession, the heroine begins to show increasing signs of mental alienation. The culmination of this in scenes where Cecilia succumbs to

madness is another illustration of the imaginative idée fixe leading to breakdown, Cecilia's focus being the possibility of Delvile's murder, "the single idea of Delvile's danger took sole possession of her brain" (Cec V, 320; 896). The sobriety of the ending represents a restoration of balance to the subjects which have preoccupied Cecilia's imagination for so long. The intensity of feeling in her relationship with Delvile has been tempered by suffering, while experience has taught her moderation in the practice of benevolence.[16]

Responsibility for Cecilia's madness does in the final reckoning rest with those who have repeatedly disturbed her peace and betrayed her trust rather than any leading flaw in her personality. As Doody points out,

> Burney is certainly not employing the conduct-book formula of novel-writing whereby a heroine's errors are incessantly pointed out in order to be corrected. There is nobody in Cecilia's world capable of correcting her.[17]

Burney's first and third novels can appear to have more connection with "the conduct-book formula": Evelina's faux pas make her believe that "my intentions are never wilfully blameable, yet I err perpetually!" (Eve III, 69; 306), while Camilla is depicted as having a "radical defect" ("an imagination that submitted to no control" (Cam I, 195; 84)), which leads her into mistakes. However, compared to the immorality, corruption and insensitivity which surrounds them, the errors of the heroine seem comparatively harmless. In Camilla particularly, the fact that most characters are under the influence of some form of personal delusion casts into question the authority they have to judge Camilla's behaviour.[18] It is also hardly surprising that Burney's heroines turn to imaginative visions which can partially compensate for their lack of real control over the decisions which shape their lives.

Many aspects of the narrative structure in Burney's novels are also to be found in the work of her contemporary, Charlotte Smith. Like Burney, Smith avoids the straightforward employment of the "mistake and correction" paradigm in the representation of her heroines, and allows the visions of their imaginative life to be realised in their experience of the events of their story. Emmeline particularly, contains many echoes of Evelina and Cecilia. The heroine is also an orphan, her illegitimacy reminiscent of Evelina's, while her relationship with Lord and Lady Montreville recalls that of Cecilia with the Delviles. In the latter case the point of contrast is Emmeline's freedom from strong attachment to Delamere. Lord Montreville is mistaken in accusing Emmeline of entertaining "visionary hopes" (Eml II, 13; 124) concerning his son. It is only when Emmeline receives her "release" from engagement to Delamere that she allows her fancy free rein:

> The events of the two last days appeared to be visions rather than realities. From being an indigent dependant on the bounty of a relation ... she was at once found to be heiress to an extensive property. From being bound down to marry, if he pleased, a man for whom she felt only sisterly regard ... she was now at liberty to indulge the affections she had so long vainly resisted, and to think ... of Godolphin. In imagination, she already beheld him avowing that tenderness which he had before generously struggled to conceal ...
>
> From this delicious dream of future bliss, she was awakened somewhat suddenly by Madelon (Eml IV, 54-5; 376-7).

With Madelon comes news of the arrival of a boat and with it Godolphin who, far from avowing his love, breaks news of Delamere's illness in a way that leads Emmeline to believe the two men have met in a duel. If this seems a transition from the realm of the imagination to reality similar to that experienced by Cecilia after her dream it should not be overlooked that Emmeline's fantasy is an accurate prediction of her future. The union of Emmeline and Godolphin also gives the lie to Godolphin's belief that he will never achieve more than

"fictitious happiness", expressed in the sonnet he writes lamenting the impossibility of his love for Emmeline,

> Alas! these joys are mine in dreams alone,
> When cruel Reason abdicates her throne!
> Her harsh return condemns me to complain
> Thro' life unpitied, unrelieved, unknown:
> And, as the dear delusions leave my brain,
> She bids the truth recur - with aggravated pain.
> (Eml III, 256; 328).

The fact that Godolphin describes his "delusion" as "dear" to him is as characteristic of Smith's fiction as the way such "delusion" later becomes actuality. Smith's protagonists tend to be poets and dreamers whose imaginative life is as significant a part of their story as external events. Within the novels their idealism is usually juxtaposed against both the ironic comments of the narrator and the voices of experienced characters, like Celestina's Mrs Elphinstone who remarks at one point, "in acquiring patience, hope, I own, has escaped me: nor have I now any other wish, than to see my children well, and to be able to find them bread" (Cst II, 309-10). The tone of resignation here is very similar to the manner in which Smith represents herself in the prefaces to her novels.[19] The personal trials the writer has endured are given as her "authority", the first-hand knowledge of human nature and social ills which the text is to pass on to the reader. It is also presented as the reason for her authorship - Smith too was concerned with finding her children "bread".[20] But, possibly owing to the hardships of her life, she has a sympathy with the optimistic hopefulness of her young protagonists, often expressing regret that (as Carr tells Orlando Somerive) "such an heart as yours should ever lose this amiable warmth, and become hackneyed in the ways of men!" (OMH IV, 162; 451).

Associated with this is the author's understanding of why such figures indulge in what Cecilia calls "castle-building".[21]

In an important passage in Celestina, the narrator's discussion of the reasons why Montague Thorold continues his pursuit of Celestina, when he knows of her unbreakable attachment to Willoughby, shifts suddenly into the following direct address to the reader:

> The human mind, however strong, yields too easily to these illusions, whence, at least, it enjoys the soft consolations of hope, and sees rays of light, which, though imaginary, perhaps are all we often have to carry us on with courage over the rugged way, too thickly sown with real, or, missing them, with imaginary and self-created evils (Cst III, 84).

It is significant that there is a double function ascribed to the imagination here. On one hand it is the cause of unnecessary torment, responsible for the miseries of apprehension and fear. Smith's heroines, like their predecessors in the novels of Richardson and Burney, are quick to use this as the basis for self-criticism, hence Monimia's lament "Good God! how weak I was to add imaginary horrors to the real calamities of my situation" (OMH IV, 224; 476). But the imagination can support the mind as well as undermine it, the possession of hopes and dreams being a vital part of human experience: the consequences of their absence shown by Adelina's rejection of "The faithless flatterer Hope" in her "Ode to Despair" (Eml IV, 254; 464).

In both the hint that the illusions of the mind can have a beneficial role, and the tentative way in which the suggestion is made, Charlotte Smith shows her affinity with authors of aesthetic theory in the second half of the eighteenth-century, such as Edward Young and William Duff. Interestingly Smith makes frequent allusions to the lines from Sterne's A Sentimental Journey, which I discussed in the last section. Although she usually quotes only the "Sweet pliability of man's spirit'" opening, it invites reference to the continuation, "that can at once surrender itself to illusions, which cheat

expectation and sorrow of their weary moments!",[22] and has obvious relevance to the sympathetic presentation of her daydreaming protagonists.

The occasion when this line is evoked in The Old Manor House is especially significant. At the time, Orlando's prospects are at their most promising and he feels justified in indulging in "enchanting visions" (OMH III, 160; 308) and "bewitching scenes of future happiness" (OMH III, 161; 308). After citing Yorick's sentiments, Smith provides another interpolated comment through the voice of the narrator,

> Happy that period, when youth, and health, and hope, unite to paint in brilliant colours the uncertain future - when no sad experience, no corrosive disappointment, throws dark hues over the animating landscape (OMH III, 161; 308).

The implication is that Orlando's reverie is a "surrender" to the consolations of imagination which, however understandable, will be subject to later disillusionment. While it is the case that Smith's novels show innocence and idealism under siege by "sad experience" and "corrosive disappointment", like Burney she does not deny the potential which imaginative dreams have to become truth within the parameters of fiction.

This can be illustrated by examining Orlando's experience in The Old Manor House. The crux of the novel is whether it is Orlando's apprehensions or his hopes which will be realised. This is, rather melodramatically, embodied in the use of two contrasted motifs concerning the possession of Rayland Hall, "'Orlando will revisit these scenes no more!'" which occurs during scenes of brooding despair, and the above mentioned moments of optimism when it appears that "'Orlando will be the master of these scenes!'".[23] As Joseph Bartolomeo has pointed out, the hero is handled with a great deal of authorial irony,[24] and again this results in the recurrence of the

"double plot" structure. On the level of "instruction", Smith takes a hero lost in "fairy dreams" who is defined by the "romantic enthusiasm of his character" (OMH I, 53; 23), and subjects him to a relentless programme of ridicule, disappointment, and defeat, until her suitably chastened protagonist can come to "wise" conclusions such as the following:

> He felt, with cruel acuteness, all the calamities which a few short years had brought upon his family: - all their hopes blasted ... He now remembered that he used to think, that, were he once blessed with Monimia, every other circumstance of life would be to him indifferent: yet ... the romantic theory, of sacrificing every consideration to love, produced, in the practice, only the painful consciousness of having injured its object (OHM IV, 326-7; 517).

However, the contrasting "imaginative" plot reveals a situation whereby the hero, aided by a gradual accumulation of fortuitous coincidences, sees his "delusive" visions realised in a denouement that acts to unsettle such neat categorisation between the "romantic" and the "real".

Such references to the "romantic" are of significance in the novels of both Burney and Smith, not least because they draw attention to connections between two key elements of the texts. The question of whether the instructive can contain the imaginative is closely associated with the extent to which the novel can encompass the romance. In terms of formal public pronouncements, the eighteenth-century author's stance on this latter point is unequivocal: the status of the novel depends on casting out romance and so, conventionally, novelists assert this as their desire. Burney's preface to Evelina is as good an example as any of the "Marvellous" and the "fantastic regions of Romance" being dutifully shelved in favour of "sober Probability" and "Nature" (Eve I, xiii; 8).

What is interesting about this preface, though, is the

ambivalence Burney displays with regard to the novel. This seems to be a reflection of the increased production of fiction in the later eighteenth century, which I mentioned in the last section. When Burney is thinking of the great novelists of the mid century, her preface reads like a defence of the genre, but her conflicting impression of the novel as a "contagion" spreading its "distemper" to the "boarding-school damsels" immersed in the latest circulating library thriller (Eve I, xiii; 8), undermines her confidence and results in the kind of half-apologetic presentation to which Austen later responded.[25]

The insecurity that Burney displays over the way in which genres of prose fiction were perceived is mild in comparison with Smith's. It could of course be argued that Smith had a genuinely low view of both fiction in general and her own novels, her personal circumstances forcing her to churn out formula fiction to suit the market because there was no money to be made from poetry.[26] Smith's novels were undoubtedly affected by the pressure of publication dates and the need to fill a required number of volumes, but there is evidence of care taken over revision and attention given to experimentation with narrative structure.[27] Smith could well have appreciated the freedom which the genre gave her to air her opinions on political and social issues, she would hardly have done this in texts she felt to be beneath serious attention.[28]

The critique of "romance and novel" which Smith writes into her fiction is therefore more likely to relate to a desire to indicate how her own texts should be set apart from the majority of her predecessors and contemporaries.[29] Smith makes vague attempts to differentiate between genres of prose fiction. Some distinctions are drawn between the conventions of the "old romance" and the modern "circulating library novel" but this is of secondary importance to stressing the ludicrous improbability they share. Occasionally this is done through

direct comment but, in addition, Smith's characters never miss an occasion to make a slighting reference. Here is Emmeline's Mrs Stafford (a figure often associated with Smith herself[30]):

> Mrs. Stafford turned her eyes on Fitz-Edward, with a look sufficiently expressive of incredulity - 'Does a modern man of fashion pretend to talk of madness and death? You certainly imagine, Sir, that you are speaking to some romantic inhabitant of a Welch provincial town, whose ideas are drawn from a circulating library' (Eml I, 117; 48).

Such passages have wider implications than may first be apparent. Fitz-Edward's account of Delamere is by no means an exaggeration of the behaviour of which he is capable, in satirising it Mrs Stafford draws attention to the elements that Smith's texts share with the despised "romances and novels". By aligning herself with comments made by such characters Smith could be seen to be attempting to create an ironic detachment from aspects of the content of her own fiction.

This becomes clearer when one particular "sub-category" of these references is taken into consideration. There are numerous occasions in these novels when characters who are involved in aspects of the plot which have a clear derivation from traditional prose fiction consciously point out the comparison themselves. When Mrs Elphinstone and Celestina are travelling to Scotland the older woman remarks,

> It is something like the personages with whom we are presented in old romances, and who meet in forests and among rocks and recount their adventures; but do you know, my dear Miss De Mornay, that I feel very much disposed to enact such a personage, and though it is but a painful subject, to relate to you my past life? (Cst II, 247-8)

Celestina enters into the "joke", exhibiting the same awareness of the conventions of the genre, "no wandering lady in romance had ever more inclination to ... [listen] to the history of

some friend who has by chance met her" (Cst II, 248). There is no question of her showing the quixotic faith in the reality of such occasions which Lennox's Arabella displays when celebrating the stroke of good fortune of the "great many beautiful Princesses" who "chanced to meet at one time in the City of Alexandria, and related their miraculous Adventures to each other" (FQ II, 133; 261). However, Celestina is at this time involved in a "wild, romantic" (Cst II, 236) expedition of her own, and Smith is using the narrative device of the inset history in exactly the same way as the authors of Arabella's romances. Smith's characters frequently find themselves in the position of "enact[ing] such a personage" from romance. Later in this novel, during his stay in Rochemorte castle, Willoughby "fancied himself a knight of romance; and that some of the stories of enchanted castles, and wandering adventures ... were here realized" (Cst IV, 231). At the end of The Old Manor House, there is an extended comparison between Orlando's discovery of Mrs Rayland's will and the denouement of a romance narrative (OMH IV, 340-51; 523-7).

The knowing self-consciousness of such instances marks them as a peculiarly novelistic strategy. Simpler narrative forms do not tend to throw such self-reflexive emphasis on the story's status as a constructed text. Whether it is intentional or not the insistent repetition of occasions, in The Old Manor House for example, when other characters refer to Orlando and Monimia as the "hero" or "heroine" of a novel (OMH III, 126; 293: IV, 252; 487) are a constant reminder of the fictitious nature of the narrative. The reader is being presented with a structurally organised text which is not "like life" and does not necessarily comply to the same laws and standards. This impression is reinforced by the amount of thematic and plot material which the novels of both Burney and Smith take from the traditional narratives of prose fiction, the pervasive presence of coincidences,[31] the talismanic power

of family resemblance,[32] the inset histories and all the machinery of abduction, mysterious birth and the "fair unknown",[33] can not be entirely counteracted by ironic references to their existence.

The uncertainty eighteenth-century authors of fiction felt about the form could have a positive influence on their writing. There is a fascinating complexity in the novels of Burney and Smith which derives from their self-referential ambiguity. This can be illustrated by considering a representative passage, taken from a section of Burney's Camilla concerned with Eugenia's dilemma over Bellamy's courtship,

> Having read no novels, her imagination had never been awakened to scenes of this kind; and what she had gathered upon such subjects in the poetry and history she had studied with Dr. Orkborne, had only impressed her fancy in proportion as love bore the character of heroism, and the lover that of an hero. Though highly therefore romantic, her romance was not the common adoption of a circulating library: it was simply that of elevated sentiments, formed by animated credulity playing upon youthful inexperience (Cam II, 392; 315).

This comment comes after an exchange between Eugenia and Molly Mill over whether she should receive a letter from Bellamy. The entire conversation is reminiscent of those between Arabella and Lucy - the serving class girl taking money to deliver the letter, the criticism she receives and the emphasis she places on the sufferings of the lover.[34] Eugenia, however, can only consult her knowledge of propriety, she has no inkling of the precedents and rules Arabella applies because she has "read no novels". It might have been better for her if she had, particularly if she had cast an eye over Clarissa.

Bellamy can be placed amongst the descendants of Lovelace, Molly's comment "He'd been there ever since six in the morning, without nothing to eat or drink, a riding up and down the road"

(Cam II, 391; 315), recalls both Lovelace's obsessive haunting of Harlowe place and his tortured wait for news of Clarissa's death.[35] A novel reader, therefore, would be presented with a clue to Bellamy's real nature which Eugenia misses completely.[36] This situation is exactly paralleled in Emmeline. Delamere is another "sub-Lovelace" figure, and when the heroine receives a letter from him telling her to meet him at "a door from the garden into the stable-yard, which opens into the fields" (Eml II, 62; 143), the experience of Richardson's heroine should make her pause for thought. However, Emmeline has been repeatedly shown failing to read novels (Eml I, 53; 22). Ironically, even during the abduction scenes that inevitably follow from Delamere's letter, she is still reading "in some a page, and in others a chapter, but ... [finding] nothing in any, that tempted her to go regularly through the whole" (Eml II, 128; 169). Delamere meanwhile, in both his exultation and his letter to Fitz-Edward, has emphatically displayed his debt to his role-model (Eml II, 75; 148: II, 88-9; 153).[37]

The heroines Smith creates who do have knowledge of fiction find it stands them in good stead. Medora makes the timely decision to escape from Adolphus Delmont based on "the few novels and romances my mother had given me to read" in which such men are shown "carrying off damsels, and involving them in very disagreeable adventures" (YP IV, 290). Monimia's attitude to the same circumstances is representative of the complications which arise from such reference:

> Though I had often ridiculed the stories in novels where young women are forcibly carried away, I saw great reason to believe some such adventure might happen to me (OMH IV, 230; 478-9).[38]

The inescapable conclusion is that both Emmeline and Eugenia ought to be aware of what happens to the heroines of novels because, as themselves characters in a fiction, it is the best

guide to the trials they will face. The suggestion that Eugenia should have an imagination "awakened to scenes of this kind" (Cam II, 392; 315) is supported by the later events of Camilla, Eugenia is not only abducted but it is by a character in a novel who has created a fictional persona in transforming himself from Nicholas Gwigg to Alphonso Bellamy, a girl would need all the "romance ... of a circulating library" to protect herself from such circumstances.

In the description of Eugenia cited above, Burney makes a significant distinction between a positive and negative usage of "romantic", the former being suggestive of high sentiment and honour, while the latter is the ridiculous or hackneyed behaviour Burney associated with formula fiction. Richardson, Burney, and Smith all show worldly characters criticising the youthful figures for being "romantic".[39] In Burney's novels, for example, Evelina writes that Mrs Selwyn believes her involvement with Mr Macartney to be "a most romantic affair ... [she] spoke her sentiments with great severity" (Eve III, 60; 302), Mrs Arlbery calls Camilla's view of marriage and rejection of Lord Valhurst, "the romance of false reasoning" (Cam V, 219; 780), while to Mr Monckton, Cecilia's schemes of benevolence are "such romantic proceedings" (Cec V, 101; 771). In every instance the heroine's beliefs and actions are founded in principles of which the author approves and there is no question of the elder figure's pronouncements being of superior validity, they usually in fact reveal motives that are at best questionable.

This pejorative use of "romantic" can therefore indicate a character's inability to appreciate any form of idealism. This is certainly the case in Smith's novels, where the heroes and heroines represent an élite whose behaviour conforms to a standard that is frequently misunderstood. The "delicacy of ... [Godolphin's] honour" produces sentiments "which to common

minds might appear chimerical and romantic" (Eml IV, 313; 491), Celestina possesses "ideas [which] were what would be generally called romantic" but reveal "a high sense of the tender duty she wished to pay to the man with whom she was to pass her life" (Cst IV, 300-1), while the exemplary Miss Cardonnel in The Young Philosopher "was not without a considerable share of that sort of imagination, which produces what is termed a romantic turn of mind" (YP IV, 151). It is in the latter novel that Smith produces her most important analysis of this, showing that, like Burney, her doubts concerning the "romance" do not extend to blanket condemnation of everything "romantic".

> Oh! what romantic stuff! is a common exclamation, if any one ventures to feel or to express themselves out of the style of common and every day life. But why is it romantic? I should be sorry, it is true, that a daughter of mine, suffering her imagination to outrun her reason, should so bewilder herself among ideal beings as to become either useless or ridiculous; but if affection for merit, if admiration of talents, if the attachments of friendship are romantic; if it be romantic to dare to have an opinion of one's own, and not to follow one formal tract, wrong or right, pleasant or irksome, because our grandmothers and aunts have followed it before ... oh! may my Medora still be the child of nature and simplicity, still venture to express all she feels, even at the risk of being called a strange romantic girl (YP II, 13-15).

It should initially be pointed out that this is not direct authorial comment and therefore "Charlotte Smith's opinion", but a speech made by a character, Mrs Glenmorris. While such an impassioned plea stays with the reader it is also qualified by other viewpoints expressed within the novel, and problematised by the events of Mrs Glenmorris's story. Her tale has two distinct elements, a past history of wild adventure in the Scottish Highlands, and a more "realistic" narrative of financial and legal persecution in London, culminating with incarceration in a madhouse. Smith presents her sympathetically but not uncritically, and, unusually, constructs the novel to reveal the contrast between Mrs Glenmorris' "too acute

sensibility" and her daughter's "fortitude" (YP I, vii).[40]

That said, her view is one which possesses fascinating implications for the representation of the heroine in the contemporary novel. It is a further support for the attribution of the word "romantic" to qualities that are valorised in eighteenth-century fiction, but, more significantly, it asserts the need for distinctions to be drawn between such positive idealism and delusion: "suffering" the imagination to "bewilder" the mind with "ideal beings". This is a crucial differentiation when applied to the novels of Burney and Smith. The heroines created by these authors always possess imaginative minds, hence the centrality of hopes and dreams. Their imaginings facilitate the idealism which is often criticised as "romantic" illusion by other characters in the fiction but not presented as such by the author. This therefore is the level on which these novels sanction the visionary qualities of the mind: imagination as "romanticism". What the heroine rarely displays is the attributes of the other side of the equation, imagination as "quixotism", expressed through the bewilderment of self-created delusion.

Both Burney and Smith use the same strategy to distance their heroines from the quixotic: the appearance in the same narrative of female quixotes who act as a counterpoint to them. Thus Cecilia's hopes are contrasted with Harriet Belfield's "delusive visions" (Cec V, 274; 870), while Camilla is set in juxtaposition with Eugenia on one hand and Mrs Berlinton on the other. Smith's novels abound with "reading-Misses"; Augusta Delamere, who cannot believe Emmeline will not marry Delamere because it would breach "novelistic convention", the Ashwood girls in Emmeline, the young Jewess who is so taken with Orlando in The Old Manor House, and Miss Goldthorp in The Young Philosopher. Female quixotism in Smith's novels is complicated by the fact that the woman reader can have a better insight

into the dynamics of the plot than the heroine. It is also sometimes the case that these supposedly ridiculous figures have considerably more vitality than the leading lady. This is true of Miss Goldthorp who "was very deeply read in romance and novels, by some one or other of the heroines of which she occasionally 'set her mind,' so that with a great versatility of character she rarely appeared in her own" (YP I, 110). An independently-minded heiress, Miss Goldthorp uses the lessons of her "text-books" to avoid being cajoled into marriage with her cousin, and even when "deluded" into accepting the hero's adventurer brother as her husband, manages to keep him, and her money, in control - Medora, the innocent, Rousseauesque heroine, can appear rather anodyne in comparison.

Quixotism may be unacceptable for the heroine but that is not to say that it is always presented disparagingly.[41] The quixote figure makes more self-deceptive errors but also shares the imaginative, romantic idealism of the heroine - and the hero. It should be noted that contrasts between personality types tend not to be made on the basis of gender in the novels of Burney and Smith, the fundamental distinction being between youth and age, not feminine and masculine. The heroine, hero, female, and male quixote have much more in common with each other than with the "authority" or "tyrannical" figures of the elder generation. The closing of the gender gap is associated with the "feminisation" of the male character that I mentioned last chapter in relation to the novel of sensibility. The "ideal man" in the novel of the late eighteenth century possesses the same belief in delicacy,[42] honour, and propriety as the "ideal woman"; he even displays the same weaknesses, particularly the propensity to nervous illness.[43] The fact that the male protagonists have greater freedom of movement and action only seems to give them an increased likelihood of appearing quixotic.

Few leading men in the contemporary novel escape having their behaviour interpreted as quixotism; to Mrs Selwyn, Evelina has "an excellent subject for Quixotism" in Lord Orville who is "almost as romantic as if he had been born and bred at Berry Hill" (Eve III, 192; 369), while Smith's Orlando is accused of "romantic quixotism" and "knight-errantry" by practically every (male) figure in the narrative.[44] The use of "romantic" in these examples does however hint that the reader need not be seeing the behaviour of such figures in a critical light. The novel at his time does seem to suggest the existence of two different behavioural codes for men. There is "gallantry", the law of the man of fashion which imposes standards of "politeness" and "honour" that are as empty of real worth as the "accomplishments" of ladies, hence Mr Thorold's speech concerning Vavasour, the rake in Celestina,

> He is called, and I believe is, a man of honour, in the common acceptation of the term; but I am afraid there is little real honour among those who are in any respect so very licentious ... in regard to your sex (Cst II, 170).

"Real honour" is embodied by men who follow the second code, "knight-errantry",[45] which particularly implies a standard of conduct towards women that appears comically "romantic" and idealistic to the uninitiated. The term "knight-errantry" tends to appear in the form of depreciatory criticism - it always evokes knowledge of Don Quixote and as is the case with internal reference to a "dulcinea",[46] or "Quixotism" itself,[47] is usually employed by cynical, worldly characters. Burney's heroes therefore are always being rather shamefaced and self-mocking when applying such language to their own behaviour.[48]

Burney's heroes, like her heroines, tend to be positioned against overtly quixotic figures who act as a foil to them. Delvile has Belfield, Edgar Mandlebert, Melmond. Both Cecilia and Camilla have entire "quixotic sub-plots" running alongside

the main love story, the cross influence between the two greatly increases the subtlety and depth of the novels, particularly enriching the representation of imagination and delusion. The specifically quixotic character will clearly display delusion. This is illustrated in Camilla by the sub-plot concerning Eugenia, Mrs Berlinton and Melmond, three figures whose vivid imaginative life leads them to create mistaken images of others. Eugenia allows herself to be "soothed with the delusions of her romantic but innocent fancy" into feeling a "reverential regard" for Melmond (Cam IV, 284; 634), whose behaviour shows him to be unworthy of it. Mrs Berlinton plays a more dangerous game in her "exalted league of friendship" (Cam V, 359; 835) with Bellamy, while Melmond is unable to see how Indiana can look like his vision of perfection, "she is all I ever read of!" (Cam I, 242; 103), but not possess the qualities of personality he values.

In typically quixotic fashion, each character's errors are made by an attempt to apply a literary model to their lived experience. Eugenia's classical learning instils in her a personal code of "heroism" which does her no favours when she is dealing with an individual like Bellamy, who uses her sense of honour to his advantage.[49] Both "the Melmonds", who Mrs Arlbery describes as "half crazy, romantic, love-lorn, studious, and sentimental" (Cam III, 214; 418), are influenced by "the Poets" (Cam III, 389; 487),[50] (Thomson, Akenside and Collins being named specifically), combined, in the case of Mrs Berlinton, with "some common and ill selected novels and romances" (Cam III, 388-9; 487). Only in the last instance does Burney suggest a critical attitude towards the texts themselves. Generally the reading material of the quixotes is condoned along with much of the influence it has upon the formation of their idealistic qualities. This is emphasised by comparison with the personalities of those - Lynmere, Lionel and Indiana included - who scorn attempts to educate them.

The quixotes may make a too literal application of the lessons they learn from their reading but they remain attractive in their delusion. Eugenia is one of the most complex and admirable figures in the novel. Her steadfast behaviour, both during the disappointment caused by Melmond's defection and her trials at the hands of Bellamy, is presented as a model for the heroine, and is rewarded by her eventual marriage - Melmond having by this point seen the error of his ways. Mrs Berlinton is more of a warning than an example, but Burney's "enchantress" (Cam III, 339; 468) with "an heart the most susceptible, sentiments the most romantic, and an imagination the most exalted" (Cam III, 388; 487), never entirely foregoes the author's pity even during the height of her delusion. It is noticeable that Mrs Berlinton's impressionability remains relatively harmless when it is simply a question of susceptibly to literary influence, the corrupting effect of sophisticated fashionable behaviour is held predominantly responsible for bringing her to the brink of ruin.

It is in Burney's Cecilia however that the sympathetic representation of the quixote is most apparent. As with Camilla this focuses on a brother-sister pairing, in this case the Belfields. While Henrietta's function within the text is primarily to stand in contrast to Cecilia with regard to Delvile, her extreme self-deception casting a favourable light on the heroine's struggle to think clearly and act properly, Henrietta is still an engaging character in her own right. The deprivations she has experienced makes her impulsive, open behaviour seem more admirable, and explains why she should be drawn towards the seductions of imaginative daydreaming,

> when I have been in his [Delvile's] company, and seen his civility and his sweetness, I have fancied I was rich and grand myself, and it has quite gone out of my head that I was nothing but poor Henrietta Belfield! (Cec V, 113; 778).

Burney's greatest achievement with regard to this particular form of characterisation is however Henrietta's brother, one of the most skilfully drawn quixotes in the eighteenth-century novel. Much of her success in the creation of Belfield derives from the subtly incremental development of his character. The "tall, thin young man, whose face was all animation, and whose eyes sparkled with intelligence" (Cec I, 15; 11-2) arguing eloquently for the necessity of independence and originality at Monckton's house, is set among a chorus of voices to which the reader is being familiarised. Again, at the masquerade, he is one of a crowd, although his skilful enactment of the part of Don Quixote hints to the reader that it is not just his physical build that Belfield has in common with Cervantes' hero,[51] an impression reinforced by his duel with Sir Robert Floyer.

It is not until Cecilia makes her shock discovery of Belfield in his proud retreat that the true importance of the "MAN OF GENIUS" (Cec II, 73; 212) becomes clear and, even after this, Belfield disappears out of the narrative for long stretches of time, usually when undergoing the transition from one wild scheme of living to the next. It is Belfield's indefatigable enthusiasm for his projects that makes him such a notable instance of Cervantic imitation. His involvement with the literary is something which he shares with most eighteenth-century quixotes:

> literature has been the favourite object of my pursuit, my recreation in leisure, and my hope in employment. My propensity to it, indeed, has been so ungovernable, that I may properly call it the source of my several miscarriages throughout life (Cec V, 42; 737).

His "modesty and propriety" (Cec V, 86; 762) is conventional, but while most other quixotes obsessively adhere to one particular lifestyle, Belfield has a different idea every time he resurfaces. From rejecting the "delusive expectations" (Cec

IV, 242; 665) which he and his family had held regarding his position in high life in order to embrace "Labour with Independence" (Cec IV, 233; 659), to fleeing this "ill judged" attempt (Cec V, 36; 733), and entering the literary world only for this in turn to be dismissed as "the seduction of a chimera" (Cec V, 295; 882) when he reappears having "turned book-keeper" (Cec V, 294; 881), Belfield's constant metamorphoses can make the other figures in the novel seem singularly static and uninventive. He is the embodiment of the later eighteenth-century fascination with "originality" and "genius" and, like Lovelace, Arabella and the other "imaginative, wild and eccentric" (Cec V, 47; 740) characters before him, tends to take centre-stage within the fiction in every scene in which he appears.

Just as contemporary aesthetic theorists were only prepared to go so far in their celebration of the imagination before making a retreat, Burney reins in her exuberant quixote by numerous qualifying comments, the most explicit being Cecilia's:

> I knew not ... the full worth of steadiness and prudence till I knew this young man; for he has every thing else; talents the most striking, a love of virtue the most elevated, and manners the most pleasing; yet wanting steadiness and prudence, he can neither act with consistency nor prosper with continuance (Cec V, 47; 740).

Cecilia's attitude to Belfield is of particular interest as there is a sustained subtext within the novel suggesting him as a viable alternative to Delvile as the heroine's partner. Once an eighteenth-century heroine has established a "partiality" for a lover she becomes emotionally committed to him at the exclusion of all others (Emmeline only falls in love with Godolphin as she has no strong feelings for Delamere), therefore Belfield is never an option in Cecilia's mind. The reader however, possibly influenced by the number of people who

do match Cecilia and Belfield, is able to appreciate what might have been. Belfield's idealistic imagination perfectly complements that of the heroine, while her personal qualities, wealth, and status could provide the steadiness which she perceives he lacks. Above all Belfield, in his passionate convictions and active existence, is infinitely more compelling than the ineffectual Delvile. It is rather apt that Delvile at one point sees himself as playing Sancho Panza to Belfield's Don Quixote (Cec I, 251; 147). To Delvile, "gallantry" is being covered with tea to spare the heroine's dress (Cec II, 206-7; 288); no wonder he becomes distraught when he fears he has Belfield for a rival.

Belfield does, however, have one serious character flaw that he shares with many other quixotic men in the novels of both Burney and Smith: this is selfishness. Doody draws attention to the fact that Belfield's opportunities in life have been offered to him at the expense of his sisters,[52] and his self-regarding pride leads him to ignore repeatedly the concern his mother and Henrietta feel when he vanishes. Melmond, too, for all his poetry and idealism, is unthinkingly cruel in his initial relationship with Eugenia, while Smith's Montague Thorold's obsessive love for Celestina, the keystone of his "wild Quixotism" (Cst III, 83), often seems tantamount to persecution. His refusal to accept repeated rejections selfishly disregards Celestina's own unhappiness and her commitment to Willoughby. The quixotes in these novels then are an extreme case of the need for innocent, young characters to be "socialised" by the experiences they undergo within the text, forcing them to think beyond a self-absorbed preoccupation with personal happiness and love.[53] This is a process which Smith is adept at illustrating, most notably in the case of Orlando in The Old Manor House.

Orlando's concentration on his relationship with Monimia

can make him appear callous towards others. When, for example, Isabella is committed to her undesirable marriage with General Tracy, Orlando admits that he thinks it a ridiculous match but half approves as the wedding will give him an unexpected chance of seeing Monimia (OMH III, 82-3; 278). It is, therefore, no surprise when Orlando's father makes exasperated outbursts such as the following, "Just now, Orlando, you talked of living only for your family - for your mother - for your sisters; and now this angel is the only object of your future life!" (OMH III, 49; 264). When Orlando returns from America later in the novel his obsession with finding Monimia leads him to be impatient when Selina recounts the tragic events the family have endured in his absence (OMH IV, 102-25; 427-36) and, even when Monimia is discovered, his jealousy overshadows appreciation of the courage she has displayed in her trials (OMH IV, 225-56; 476-89). The stay in London after his wedding with Monimia, and the continued frustration and hardship that the hero and heroine endure, is therefore the time when Orlando is forced to realise that the desired marriage only increases his responsibilities and is far from an end to his difficulties.

It is, however, interesting to remember the factor which does finally provide an ideal resolution, that is Mrs Rayland's will. Orlando's "romantic quixotism" (OMH II, 88; 152) may be something the novel insists must be modified by experience, but it is also the reason why he is to inherit Rayland Hall rather than the heir at law, his elder brother Philip. Behind Orlando stands the figure of his benefactress, Mrs Rayland, a female quixote who has the wealth and power to back up her own imaginative idealism and whose wishes are finally realised in the "story-book" conclusion of the novel.[54] Mrs Rayland is another illustration of quixotic characterisation which emerges gradually throughout the fiction, again this renders her a more complex, subtly drawn creation. The ridiculous, proud, old woman becomes slowly more sympathetic, especially due to her

affection for Orlando, her equally quixotic protégé. She sees him as "a creature of her own forming" (OMH III, 157; 307), the "young hero" whose name and conduct evoke remembrance of "heroes past" (OMH II, 267; 223). As, for Mrs Rayland,

> the age of chivalry did not seem to be passed; for she appeared to consider Orlando as a Damoisell, now about to make his first essay in arms. Indeed, while she talked much of modern immorality and dissipation, she knew very little of modern manners, seldom seeing any of those people who are what is called people of the world ... [she] made around her a world of her own: and when Orlando became an inhabitant of it, all that regarded him was assimilated to her own antediluvian notions (OMH III, 12-13; 249-50).

By the time of the publication of The Old Manor House in 1793, the later eighteenth-century reassessment of romance and imagination, with which this chapter has been concerned, was reaching its apotheosis in the early stages of Romanticism. Mrs Rayland's quixotic absorption in her dream of a vanished era captures the spirit of the age in which Smith was writing - the fascination with the past, either of history or of romance, pervades texts as apparently disparate as the gothic novels, Burke's Reflections on the Revolution in France, the poetry of Coleridge and Keats, or the novels of Scott. Here, as is frequently the case in the fiction of both Charlotte Smith and Frances Burney, it is the representation of quixotic delusion which enables the author to capture the new significance of the imagination, both in its transitional tensions and its Romantic culmination.

CHAPTER THREE: CONTINUITY AND CHANGE - THE MID TO LATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Section i: Notes

1 Henry Fielding, The Covent Garden Journal no. 24, (24.3.1752): repr. in The Criticism of Henry Fielding ed. I. Williams, (London, 1970), p. 191. For the contemporary view of the distinction between "originality" and "imitation" see Edward Young, Conjectures on Original Composition, in a Letter to the Author of Sir Charles Grandison (London, 1759), p. 10.

2 Catherine Talbot, 22.4.1752, A Series of Letters Between Mrs. Elizabeth Carter and Miss Catherine Talbot ed. M. Pennington, (London, 1809), II, 76.

3 Frances Burney, Camilla: Or, A Picture of Youth (London, 1796), III, 212. Further references are included in the text abbreviated as Cam, followed by the corresponding page number in Camilla eds. E.A. and L.D. Bloom, (London, New York, Toronto, 1972). The latter is indicated in the notes by Cam (1972). Maria Edgeworth's "Angelina; Or, L'Amie Inconnue" also demonstrates the currency of Lennox's novel at the end of the century; here Lady Frances suggests to the quixote Angelina that "as you like romances, we'll read Arabella, or the female Quixote; and you shall tell me which, of all your acquaintance, the heroine resembles most". See Moral Tales for Young People (London, 1801), II, 124. For the influence of The Female Quixote upon Jane Austen see below, chapter five, section ii.

4 Anon, dedication, Angelica; or Quixote in Petticoats, A Comedy in Two Acts (London, 1758), [p. iii].

5 c.f. Steele, The Tender Husband, Plays p. 241.

6 Anon, dedication, Half an Hour After Supper: An Interlude, in One Act (London, 1789), [p. 3].

7 Angelica p. vi.

8 ibid., p. iv. The "heroic part of Careless" approximates more closely to Lennox's Sir George than Glanville, the true "hero" of The Female Quixote.

9 In Angelica the author claims that "The heroines generally speak of themselves in the plural number", p. 13n.

10 See Dalziel, note to p. 10, FQ (1979), p. 390.

11 Exceptions include Miss Williams in Herbert Lawrence's The Contemplative Man (1771), discussed below, and Catherine Meredith in Agnes Maria Bennett's Ellen, Countess of Castle Howel (London, 1794), I, 7, 75 and 102.

12 Angelica pp. 14, 19 and 21 respectively.

13 ibid., p. 29, (mispaged "20").

14 ibid., pp. 19 and 14 respectively.

15 e.g. Colman's Polly Honeycombe pp. 6, 21; Richard Brinsley Sheridan's The Rivals, The Dramatic Works of Richard Brinsley Sheridan ed. C. Price, (Oxford, 1973), I, 135; and Anon, Half an Hour p. 14.

16 Polly Honeycombe pp. 19-20.

17 Sheridan, Dramatic Works I, 126, 125 and 143 respectively.

18 Angelica p. 31.

19 Arabella's discovery of "the true State of her Heart" (FQ II, 271; 349) after the Princess' "revelations" is relevant to the later experience of Elizabeth Bennet and Emma Woodhouse, see below chapter five, sections i and ii.

20 See Polly Honeycombe pp. 1-2; Half an Hour pp. 7-8.

21 Half an Hour p. 5.

22 Henry Fielding, Journal in Criticism p. 193. Discussed in Small, Charlotte Ramsay Lennox pp. 94-97; M.C. Battestin, The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art: A Study of "Joseph Andrews" (Middletown, Connecticut, 1959), p. 86; S.M. Tave, The Amiable Humorist: A Study in the Comic Theory and Criticism of the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries (Chicago, 1960), p. 159; Staves, "Quixote in England" pp. 197 and 205-6; and Reed, Exemplary History p. 125.

23 Berenger, The World (1754), II, 475.

24 ibid., II, 473.

25 ibid., II, 474.

26 ibid., II, 474.

27 ibid., II, 476.

28 ibid., II, 476.

29 Fielding, Journal in Criticism p. 193.

30 The World II, 478.

31 E.L. Niehus, "Quixote Figures in the Novels of Smollett", DUJ n.s. XL (LXXI), (1978-79), 234.

[32] William Dodd, The Sisters; or the History of Lucy and Caroline Sanson, Entrusted to a False Friend (London, 1754), II, 4. Foster discusses Dodd's life in Pre-Romantic Novel pp. 100-3, also pp. 27 and 104.

[33] ibid., II, 29-33.

[34] ibid., II, 81.

[35] ibid., II, 84.

[36] ibid., II, 84-5.

[37] ibid., II, 81.

[38] Richard Graves, The Spiritual Quixote (1773), ed. C. Tracy, (London, New York, Toronto, 1967), p. 84.

[39] ibid., p. 87.

[40] ibid., p. 96.

[41] See John Potter, The Curate of Coventry: A Tale (London, 1771), I, 37-73.

[42] Herbert Lawrence, The Contemplative Man; or the History of Christopher Crab, Esq. of North Wales (London, 1771), I, 90 and 72 respectively.

[43] Tobias Smollett, The Expedition of Humphry Clinker (1771), ed. L.M. Knapp, (London, New York, Toronto, 1966), p. 12.

[44] ibid., pp. 328-32.

[45] See Tave, Amiable Humorist pp. 151-63; Staves, "Quixote in England", pp. 193-4 and 204-7; DePorte, Nightmares pp. 110-12; and Niehus, "Quixote Figures", p. 233 and 243.

[46] See Staves, "Quixote in England", p. 205.

[47] See Fielding, Journal in Criticism p. 192.

[48] The idealisation of the Don and Sancho neglects the moments of tension and antagonism between them, particularly created by Sancho's failure to carry out his part in Dulcinea's "disenchantment", e.g. DQ II, lx, 756-7.

[49] Fielding, Journal in Criticism p. 192.

[50] Staves, "Quixote in England", p. 206.

[51] Humphry Clinker p. 267.

[52] Fielding, Journal in Criticism p. 193.

[53] ibid., p. 193.

[54] Henry Fielding, Joseph Andrews p. 23.

[55] Tobias Smollett, The Life and Adventures of Sir Launcelot Greaves (1760-1), ed. D. Evans, (London, New York, Toronto, 1973), p. 2.

[56] Laurence Sterne, The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman (1759-67), ed. I.C. Ross, (Oxford, 1983), p. 468.

[57] Joseph Andrews pp. 176 and 144 respectively.

[58] e.g. at the "trial" of Adams and Fanny, pp. 145-9, and his near argument with the innkeeper later on, pp. 180-4.

[59] Launcelot Greaves p. 12.

[60] See Boucé, Novels of Tobias Smollett pp. 92-3 and P. Wagner, introduction, Launcelot Greaves (Harmondsworth, 1988), pp. 12-13.

[61] Humphry Clinker pp. 68, 188, and 267 for example.

[62] Launcelot Greaves p. 123.

[63] Spiritual Quixote p. 19.

[64] Tristram Shandy p. 73.

[65] Joseph Andrews, Parson Adams, the Shandy brothers, Yorick, Launcelot Greaves, Captain Crowe, Matthew Bramble, Lismahago, and Humphry himself. This is without taking into consideration the various "Sanchoesque" characters.

[66] Fielding, Don Quixote in England (London, 1734), p. 63 and Launcelot Greaves p. 52.

[67] In Don Quixote Sancho is most affected by the Don's madness - but see also Sampson Carrasco, DQ II, xv, 502-3, and the Duke and Duchess, DQ II, xxxii, 602 and II, lxx, 810. Discussed by R. El Saffar in Beyond Fiction: The Recovery of the Feminine in the Novels of Cervantes (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1984), p. 83.

[68] Tristram Shandy p. 61.

[69] Staves, "Quixote in England", p. 202.

[70] Mullan, Sentiment p. 168. See also pp. 158-73.

71 DePorte, Nightmares p. 112.

72 ibid., p. 116.

73 Mullan, Sentiment p. 165.

74 Preface to Joseph Andrews p. 10 and Tristram Shandy p. 81. See also Paulson, England pp. 76-9, 151.

75 See The Tender Husband in Steele, Plays p. 250; Angelica p. 11; Polly Honeycombe p. 41 and The Rivals in Sheridan, Dramatic Works I, 123. Madness in The Female Quixote is discussed above, chapter two, section ii. For later examples see Elizabeth Hamilton's Memoirs of Modern Philosophers (Bath, 1800), II, 290, 359, 361; Edgeworth, "Angelina", II, 22; and Eaton Stannard Barrett, The Heroine: or, Adventures of a Fair Romance Reader (London, 1813), I, 17 and III, 10. Further references included in the text, abbreviated as Hr.

76 See Boucé, Novels of Tobias Smollett p. 98; Niehus, "Quixote Figures", pp. 240-1; Reed, Exemplary History pp. 126, 129, and 143-5; and Wagner, introduction, Launcelot Greaves pp. 18-19.

77 Although the later "man of feeling" and the heroes of the novel of sensibility are similarly "feminised", see below chapter three, sections ii and iii.

78 Joseph Andrews p. 20.

79 ibid., p. 46.

80 See DQ I, xvi, 108 and I, xliii, 345 (Maritornes), II, xliv, 666-9 (Altisidora) and II, xlviii, 684-7 (Dona Rodriguez).

81 Joseph Andrews pp. 39-42 and 87-8 respectively.

82 Tristram Shandy p. 54.

83 e.g. Doody's introduction to The Female Quixote, see FQ (1989), p. xxxi.

84 See FQ II, 236-7; 327.

85 Tristram Shandy p. 539.

86 ibid., p. 53.

87 Launcelot Greaves p. 27.

88 Tristram Shandy p. 521.

89 ibid., p. 376.

90 ibid., p. 489.

91 Laurence Sterne, Letters of Laurence Sterne ed. L.P. Curtis, (Oxford, 1935), p. 256.

92 See Saffar, Beyond Fiction pp. 86 and 91-103.

93 Tobias Smollett, The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle (1751), ed. J.L. Clifford, (London, New York, Toronto, 1964), pp. 166, 193, 204, 213, 280, 288, and 318.

94 ibid., p. 597.

95 ibid., p. 596 and p. 599 respectively.

96 Cam III, 89; 367 and III, 322; 461. See also III, 367; 479. Also see Elinor Joddrel's application of the term to Juliet in order to goad Harleigh, see The Wanderer: Or, Female Difficulties (London, 1814) I, 5-7: I, 22: I, 97 and I, 189 - corresponding to The Wanderer eds. M.A. Doody, R.L. Mack and P. Sabor, (Oxford, New York, 1991), pp. 12-3, 19, 50-1 and 88. Elinor's frequent evocations of Cervantes prepares the reader for her emergence as a female quixote figure.

Section ii: Notes

1 See e.g. Spencer, Woman Novelist pp. 75-8 especially. Also Todd, Angellica pp. 125-8, 139.

2 See Duncan, Modern Romance pp. 1-2 and 4-6.

3 Hurd, Chivalry p. 4.

4 See Hurd, Chivalry pp. 5-47; Reeve, PR I, 13-51; Blair, Lectures II, 305-8 and James Beattie, Dissertations Moral and Critical (London, 1783), pp. 518-62. The "development of a historical approach to literary criticism" is discussed in D. Duff, Romance and Revolution: Shelley and the Politics of a Genre (Cambridge, 1994), p. 11, also pp. 9-12.

5 Anna Laetitia Barbauld (née Aikin), J. and A.L. Aikin, Miscellaneous Pieces, in Prose (London, 1773), pp. 39-40 and 42 respectively.

6 Beattie, Dissertations p. 564.

7 See Ballaster, "Romancing the Novel", pp. 190-1.

8 See e.g. PR I, 48, 51-2 and 97-101.

9 For Euphrasia, Sophronia and romance see PR I, 7, 32-3 and 67-70. For Hortensius on classicism see PR I, 2, 13, 18-19, 51 and II, 67-9. His main "conversion" takes place on II, 81-2.

10 William Whitehead, The World no. 19, (10.5.1753), I, 113: repr. in Williams, Novel and Romance pp. 206-9.

11 John Gregory, A Comparative View of the State and Faculties of Man with those of the Animal World (London, 1765), pp. 134-9. (Extract in PR II, 86-8). Barbauld, Miscellaneous Pieces pp. 213-4 and Vicesimus Knox, "On Novel Reading", Essay XIV, Essays Moral and Literary: A New Edition (London, 1782), I, 68.

12 This "ethical ... [and] aesthetic problem" is discussed by J.C. Beasley in "Romance and the 'New' Novels of Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett", SEL XVI (1976), 445-6.

13 Mullan, Sentiment p. 97.

14 ibid., p. 101.

15 See Todd: "novel of sentiment or generalised moral reflection predominantly written in the 1740s and 1750s and the novel of sensibility concentrating on sensitive response and the fluctuating moods of the susceptible body, more commonly written in the 1760s and 1770s". As she points out this is a guideline as there is considerable overlap, Angellica pp. 139-40; see also her Sensibility pp. 6-9.

16 Whitehead, The World no. 19, I, 112 and 113 respectively.

17 ibid., I, 113.

18 Barker-Benfield, Culture p. 295. See also Foster, Pre-Romantic Novel p. 4 and C. McIntosh, Common and Courtly Language: The Stylistics of Social Class in 18th-Century English Literature (Philadelphia, 1986), pp. 69-101.

19 Barbauld, Miscellaneous Pieces pp. 199-200.

20 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Julie: ou La Nouvelle Héloïse transl. W. Kenrick as Eloisa: Or, a Series of Original Letters, Collected and Published by J.J. Rousseau (London, 1761), I, 124, see also I, 8, 58 and 97. Kenrick alters the heroine's name from Julie to Eloisa, I have reversed this practice.

21 ibid., I, 211: see also II, 98-9.

22 See Todd's witty account in Angellica pp. 182-6.

23 Barker-Benfield, Culture p. 319. Also K.M. Rogers, "Dreams and Nightmares: Male Characters in the Feminine Novel of the

Eighteenth Century", in Women and Literature ed. J. Todd, n.s., II, (New York, London, 1982), p. 13.

[24] Sir Philip Sidney, The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The New Arcadia) (1590), ed. V. Skretkowicz, (Oxford, 1987), p. 309.

[25] Scudéry, Clelia, for the discussion of the "new gallantry" and the Map of Tender see I, i, 41/i-43/ii. For instances of voyeurism see I, iii, 129/i-ii; II, i, 185/i and II, ii, 252/ii.

[26] ibid., III, i, 254/i.

[27] Mullan, Sentiment p. 61. See also Barker-Benfield, Culture p. 295; Todd, Sensibility pp. 78-9, 110.

[28] For accounts of this "feminisation" see Todd, Angellica p. 182 and Sensibility pp. 88-9, 99-101.

[29] Laurence Sterne, A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy by Mr. Yorick (1768), ed. G.D. Stout, Jr., (Berkeley, Los Angeles, 1967), p. 103.

[30] Adam Smith, The Theory of Moral Sentiments (London, 1759), p. 84.

[31] See Mullan, Sentiment pp. 2-4, 8-13 and 18-56. Also Todd, Sensibility pp. 26-7.

[32] Smith, Theory p. 44.

[33] Mullan, Sentiment p. 13. See also Todd, Sensibility p. 94.

[34] Smith, Theory pp. 3 and 36 respectively. Smith's theory of the sympathetic imagination is contrasted with Edmund Burke's in S. Bruhm's Gothic Bodies: The Politics of Pain in Romantic Fiction (Philadelphia, 1994), pp. 15-18.

[35] As Mullan points out the explicit division into "spectator" and "agent" appears in all editions of The Theory of Moral Sentiments after 1761, see Sentiment pp. 47-8.

[36] See Gallagher, Nobody's Story p. 172, also pp. 166-74.

[37] Smith, Theory pp. 161-2. Kames likewise believes a reader can be "transported as by magic into the very place and time of the important action" but Kames' reader remains a "spectator" or "eye-witness", see Elements of Criticism (Edinburgh, 1762), III, 175; I, 111 and I, 112 respectively.

[38] William Duff, An Essay on Original Genius: and its Various Modes of Exertion in Philosophy and the Fine Arts, Particularly in Poetry (London, 1767), p. 6.

[39] See Duff, Original Genius p. 171 and Young, Conjectures pp. 27 and 36. Also M. Woodmansee, The Author, Art and the Market: Rereading the History of Aesthetics (New York, 1994), pp. 36-7.

[40] See Young, Conjectures pp. 13 and 26; and Hurd, Chivalry pp. 49-50.

[41] See Hurd, Chivalry p. 93; Gregory, Comparative View pp. 134-5. See also Joseph Warton, An Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope (London, 1756, 1782), II, 17.

[42] See Duff, Original Genius p. 99.

[43] See e.g. Young, Conjectures pp. 65 and 81-5. Also Warton's Pope I, iv-x and II, 477-8.

[44] Duff, Original Genius p. 160.

[45] Young, Conjectures p. 13. If this is a tribute to Sir Charles Grandison, then Young is proposing a level (and kind) of readerly involvement that Richardson may well have been uncomfortable with.

[46] ibid., p. 6.

[47] Sterne, Sentimental Journey pp. 224-5.

[48] Young, Conjectures pp. 93-4.

[49] Samuel Johnson, "Preface to Shakespeare, 1765" in Johnson on Shakespeare ed. A. Sherbo, vols., VII and VIII of The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson, (New Haven, London, 1968), VII, 76.

[50] ibid., VII, 77. But see Damrosch's discussion in Fictions of Reality in the Age of Hume and Johnson (Madison, Wisconsin, London, 1989), p. 63.

[51] Duff, Original Genius p. 19, see also pp. 7-8, 102. Also Young, Conjectures pp. 37-9 and Alexander Gerard, An Essay on Genius (London, 1774), p. 36.

[52] Duff, Original Genius p. 173.

[53] ibid., pp. 174-5.

[54] See Beattie, Dissertations p. 194, 195, 573 and 564 respectively.

Section iii: Notes

[1] See Charlotte Smith, Celestina 2nd ed., (London, 1791), I, 206. Further references are included in the text, abbreviated as Cst.

[2] e.g. Dr Lyster's speech on "PRIDE and PREJUDICE" in Burney's Cecilia, or the concluding reference to "A PROPER EDUCATION" in Elizabeth Inchbald's A Simple Story. See Cecilia: Or, Memoirs of an Heiress (London, 1782), V, 379-80. Further references included in the text abbreviated as Cec and followed by reference to Cecilia eds. P. Sabor and M.A. Doody, (Oxford, New York, 1988). The latter edition is indicated in the notes as Cec (1988). Also A Simple Story ed. J.M.S. Tompkins, (London, New York, Toronto, 1967), p. 338.

[3] Despite the "improving" intentions ascribed to Burney - e.g. P.M. Spacks' assertion that to Burney "the most important question about novels concerned their moral influence", Imagining a Self: Autobiography and Novel in Eighteenth-Century England (Cambridge, Mass., London, 1976), p. 158 - the preface to Evelina and the cancelled preface to Cecilia show the author's concern for her own "originality" and "genius". See preface, Eve I, xiv-xv; 9, and Cec (1988), pp. 944-5.

[4] Spencer bases a reading of Camilla on the "dilemma" that "For Fanny Burney, firmly conservative in her views, the radical ideas of the 1790s posed a difficult problem", Woman Novelist p. 163, see also Ross, Excellence pp. 110-1. Smith is usually placed on the radical side of the "debate", Todd, Angellica p. 226: however her critique of social injustice as expressed through the experience of her protagonists is no more extreme than Burney's. The "realism"/"romance" opposition has been revised recently, especially in accounts of the "gothic" in Burney's fiction, see M.A. Doody, Frances Burney: The Life in the Works (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 147-8, 273 and, introduction, The Wanderer pp. viii, xiv-v, or Ross in Excellence pp. 11, 135-6, 147-9.

[5] Contemporary reviewers placed Smith "in the tradition of Fanny Burney", see P. Elliot, "Charlotte Smith's Feminism: A Study of Emmeline and Desmond", Living by the Pen ed. Spender, p. 91. For the influence of Evelina and Cecilia on Smith's first novel see below and also E. Figes, Sex and Subterfuge: Women Novelists to 1850 (London, Basingstoke, 1982), pp. 62-5. Characters in Emmeline are shown reading Cecilia, see Emmeline, the Orphan of the Castle 3rd ed., (London, 1789), II, 181. Further references are included in the text abbreviated as Eml, followed by reference to Emmeline ed. A.H. Ehrenpreis, (London, New York, Toronto, 1971). The latter is indicated in the notes as Eml (1971). Burney's Camilla contains echoes of Smith's fiction, the eponymous heroine's return to Cleves, Cam V, 394-404; 849-53, being reminiscent of Orlando in Rayland Hall, The

Old Manor House (London, 1793) IV, 25-35. Further references are included in the text abbreviated as OMH, followed by reference to The Old Manor House ed. A.H. Ehrenpreis, (London, New York, Toronto, 1969). The latter is indicated in the notes as OMH (1969).

6 As Doody points out, Burney, unlike Richardson, was not herself responsible for the removal of passages of the novel from their context, Burney: Life p. 246.

7 See M.G. Brown, "Fanny Burney's 'Feminism': Gender or Genre?" in Fetter'd or Free?: British Women Novelists 1670-1815 eds. M.A. Schofield and C. Macheski, (1986; repr. Athens, Ohio, London, 1987), p. 32, see pp. 29-37, her comments also apply to Smith's novels.

8 Frances Burney, Evelina: Or, A Young Lady's Entrance into the World (London, 1778). Further references are included in the text, abbreviated as Eve and followed by the corresponding page number in Evelina ed. E.A. Bloom, (London, New York, Toronto, 1968). The latter is indicated in the notes by Eve (1968).

9 Smollett, Humphry Clinker pp. 93 and 92 respectively.

10 "Name" has preoccupied recent Evelina criticism, e.g. A.J. Pawl's, "'And What Other Name May I Claim?': Names and their Owners in Frances Burney's Evelina", ECF III (1991), 283-99.

11 See Jane Austen, Northanger Abbey: and Persuasion (London, 1818), II, 326. Further references are included in the text abbreviated as NA and followed by the corresponding page number in vol. V of The Novels of Jane Austen ed. R.W. Chapman, rev. M. Lascelles. 3rd ed., (1933; repr. London, New York, Toronto, 1969).

12 Some critics "cannot believe that Burney could have criticized a good father", see K.M. Rogers, Frances Burney: The World of 'Female Difficulties' (Hemel Hempstead, 1990), p. 98, also pp. 67, 69 and 73.

13 For a discussion of the connection between imagination and desire in Burney's fiction see Rogers, World pp. 113-15.

14 Clarissa, unlike Cecilia, has no opportunity to put her "ideal for living" into practice: but see Anna's description of Clarissa's earlier existence, Cl VII, 385-91; 1468-72, and the heroine's letter to Lovelace regarding their future married life, Cl IV, 163-6; 653-5.

15 This confusion between "dream" and "reality" is often experienced by Burney's and Smith's protagonists, see e.g. Cec

IV, 87; 575-6: Cam V, 253; 793: V, 403; 852 and V, 475; 881: OMH IV, 344; 525 and Cst I, 220.

16 Doody, while noting that Mrs Delvile's sister does supply Cecilia with her own fortune, Burney: Life p. 142, over-emphasises what the heroine loses by marriage, introduction, Cec (1988), p. xxxiii. The heroine's mistakes with her own fortune, her involvement with blackmail, money-lenders and the "capital error" (Cec V, 280; 873) of failing to save, temper her charitable intentions when she is fortuitously provided with a second chance.

17 See Doody's introduction, Cec (1988), p. xxxiii.

18 As Doody points out, "Delusions are in force in Camilla, and hold sway over the minds of most of the characters", Burney: Life p. 223. See e.g. Eugenia Cam II, 335; 293: Camilla (with regard to Sir Sedley) III, 456; 514: Edgar IV, 126; 571: Melmond V, 66; 720: Mr Tyrold V, 100; 733. There are also "deluding appearances" V, 512; 896, which mean Camilla seems in the wrong when innocent, and which greatly aggravate whatever "crimes" she actually commits.

19 See e.g. prefaces to Desmond (London, 1792), I, iv-v and The Banished Man (London, 1794), I, v-ix.

20 For Smith's life see The Poems of Charlotte Smith ed. S. Curran, (New York, Oxford, 1993), p. xix-xxiii, also Ehrenpreis, introduction, OMH (1969), pp. viii-ix and E. Copeland, Women Writing about Money: Women's Fiction in England, 1790-1820 (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 47-51, 202-4.

21 Cec IV, 296; 696. The term "castle-building" is of eighteenth-century coinage (OED gives the first usage of "castle-builder" to Steele, 1711, and "castle-building" to Cheyne, 1740). It becomes a conventional way of describing the mental processes of a "reading Miss", see e.g. "Arietta's" letter in ?Hewson Clarke, Literary Leisure; Or, the Recreations of Solomon Saunter, Esq. (London, 1802), II, 129.

22 Sterne, Sentimental Journey pp. 224-5. See e.g. OMH III, 161; 308 and The Young Philosopher (London, 1798), III, 46-7. Further references to the latter novel are included in the text abbreviated as YP.

23 See OMH II, 300; 236: III, 152-61; 305-8 and IV, 39; 402.

24 See J.F. Bartolomeo, "Subversion of Romance in The Old Manor House", SEL XXXIII (1993), 652.

25 See Austen, NA I, 61-5; 37-8. However before the publication of Northanger Abbey, in the preface to The Wanderer

(1814), Burney had supplied her own vindication of the novel-writer's art; I, xv-xxvi.

[26] See Ehrenpreis, introduction, OMH (1969), pp. ix-x.

[27] Discussed by Ehrenpreis, see OMH (1969), pp. xiii-xiv and xxiii-xxiv. Smith experimented with the epistolary form in Desmond, her other novels show "innovations" in narrative development - the "late" arrival of the hero in Emmeline, the "false start" of The Young Philosopher are examples.

[28] For the argument that Smith "privileged novel reading as an avenue of enlightenment" see Elliot, "Smith's Feminism", pp. 92-3.

[29] As Todd remarks, "By the 1790s female sentimental and romantic fiction was in disrepute ... few writers with any claims to seriousness wished to be caught writing novels and a peculiar situation arose in which novelist after novelist declared with Burney and Edgeworth that she was not writing what she so obviously was", Angellica p. 227.

[30] For criticism of this identification, see Letters of Anna Seward: Written between the Years 1784 and 1807 (Edinburgh, 1811), II, 215.

[31] Coincidences are associated with the "connectedness" of the novel, e.g. characters do not appear randomly but are revealed to be linked to the narrative, hence Maccartney in Evelina, Mr Westwyn in Camilla, Le Limosin in Emmeline, and the Count of Bellegarde in Celestina.

[32] In Evelina and Celestina the "owning" of the heroine is facilitated by the "proof" of family resemblance. The similarity between Miss Cardonnel, Medora and Laura Glenmorris is frequently referred to in The Young Philosopher.

[33] The appearance of the "fair unknown" in the novels of Smith and Burney (for example Adelina and Mrs Berlinton), is another instance where their fiction includes features which Lennox had parodied, see FQ II, 256-60; 340-3. Burney shows an awareness of the tradition she is employing in the remarks made by Mrs Arlbery regarding Camilla's "fair Incognita", Cam III, 145; 390: III, 155; 394 and III, 214; 417-8.

[34] See the debates over Hervey's letter, FQ I, 10-20; 11-18 and Sir George's, FQ I, 264-71; 172-6.

[35] See Cl II, 118-20; 270-1: II, 128; 275 and VII, 174-5; 1334.

36 A point made by C. Johnson in Equivocal Beings: Politics, Gender, and Sentimentality in the 1790s: Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe, Burney, Austen (Chicago, London, 1995), p. 152.

37 Unlike his predecessor, Delamere relents and allows Emmeline to leave him.

38 Bartolomeo's discussion of Smith's "parodic self-consciousness about the conventions of romance as they operate in the novel", "Subversion", p. 647 and pp. 655-6, underestimates the extent to which this "parody" reflects upon the content of Smith's own fiction.

39 Burney uses "sentimental" in a similar way, see Eve I, 134; 80 and Cec III, 85; 368.

40 M.A. Schofield ignores aspects of Smith's texts which prevent direct identification between author and character, in order to argue Smith's "entire corpus ... can be read as romanticized biography", see "'The Witchery of Fiction': Charlotte Smith, Novelist" in Living by the Pen ed. Spender, p. 177. For Schofield, "Laura Glenmorris becomes Smith's spokesperson", Masking p. 172, and numerous other figures, (Ethelinde and Miss Clarenthia Ludford in Ethelinde, Geraldine in Desmond, Mrs Charlotte Denzil in The Banished Man), are also interpreted as intentional self-portraits, see Masking pp. 147, 151, 162-4, and "Witchery" pp. 182-4.

41 Staves sees Smith as illustrating how attitudes towards quixotism had been transformed from satirical to sympathetic by the century's end, "Quixote in Eighteenth-Century", pp. 210-13. However in The Old Manor House, quixotic reference complicates the status of Orlando Somerive as a romantic hero, p. 211.

42 See S. Staves, "Evelina; or, Female Difficulties" in MP LXXIII (1975-6), 372.

43 While some male protagonists, such as Delamere become ill as a result of over-indulgence of the passions, the poor health of Delvile or Willoughby (Celestina) derives from emotional (and hence "nervous") strain.

44 Particularly by his father, OMH I, 249; 102: II, 87-91; 152-3: III, 49-54; 264-6: Mr Stockton, II, 78; 148: his brother Philip, II, 206; 199: II, 213; 201: II, 227-33; 207-9, and Warwick, III, 201-7; 325-7. See Schofield, Masking p. 160. Bartolomeo's reading does not admit the possibility that these "epithets" critique the attitude of the speakers as much as their subjects, "Subversion", pp. 648-9.

45 When Evelina attributes Orville's courtly behaviour to "gallantry, [which] I believe, is common to all men" (Eve I,

119; 72) she is mistaken as Orville is within the ranks of the eighteenth-century "knight-errant".

[46] For Burney see the discussion in the first section of this chapter, for Smith see OMH II, 78; 148 and II, 157; 179.

[47] See Eve III, 192; 369: Cam III, 330; 464 and The Wanderer I, 23; 20: I, 56; 34: I, 185; 86.

[48] See Delvile's remarks in Cec I, 190; 112: I, 251; 147: II, 207; 289 and Edgar, Cam II, 346-7; 297-8. The behaviour of these two never fulfils the role of "knight-errant" as Burney's first hero had done, see Ross, Excellence p. 132. Brown's remark, "Each heroine has her chivalrous knight to protect her ... Cecilia has Mortimer Delville [sic], Camilla has Edgar Mandlebert, and Juliet has Harleigh", "Gender or Genre", p. 35, is questionable, particularly in the case of Harleigh, "the last and least attractive of a series of Burney heroes", as Doody calls him, introduction, The Wanderer p. xxiii. Elinor may refer to Harleigh's "knight-errantry" with regard to Juliet (see I, 5; 12: I, 42; 28: I, 101; 52) but his relationship with the heroine embues such remarks with heavy irony.

[49] A point made by Doody, Burney: Life p. 243, see also Todd, Angellica pp. 280-1.

[50] Poetry often leads to male quixotism in Smith's novels, e.g. Orlando Somerive and Montague Thorold.

[51] The aptness of the costumes chosen by Burney's protagonists for the masquerade is noted by Castle in Masquerade and Civilization pp. 262-3.

[52] Doody, Burney: Life p. 130.

[53] It is this process which Cohan defines as the basic paradigm of the English novel in Violation and Repair, see particularly pp. 5-6.

[54] Bartolomeo does not perceive a shift towards sympathy in Smith's portrayal of Mrs Rayland, "Subversion" pp. 648, 655, but he makes an interesting connection between the role of character and the novelist as "authors" of Orlando's fate, "Subversion" p. 655.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANN RADCLIFFE

i. "An Imagination Resolved on Alarm":[1] The Significance of the Gothic Heroine's Trial

The 1790s is the decade in which "romance revival" becomes "Romanticism". If expressed in the most general terms, this represents a shift from the study of an "alternative" aesthetic, outlined in the second section of the last chapter, to its deployment as the basis for literary creation.[2] While poetry has always been regarded as the dominant literary medium of the Romantic movement,[3] it is a novelist who best illustrates how the art of the 1790s draws upon the aesthetic theory of the second half of the eighteenth century, the novelist to whom Sir Walter Scott referred as "the first poetess of romantic fiction", Ann Radcliffe.[4]

This is not to overlook the debt of writers in the early Romantic period to the literature of previous decades. In terms of poetry, there were the blank verse treatments of imagination and nature by Akenside, Thomson or Cowper, the songs of Burns, and the compelling mixture of "rediscovery" and creation in the work of Macpherson and Chatterton - while other eighteenth-century poets such as Young, Gray, Collins and Beattie had touched upon themes which Coleridge and, in particular, Wordsworth were to make "their own" in the 1790s.

Many of these poets also had a marked influence on Radcliffe, one to which she draws attention in her writings by quotation and allusion. In part, this emphasis can be seen as an attempt to place her work in a literary tradition of poetry rather than fiction. Such a desire might relate to the diminished credibility of the novel after its high point in the 1750s, but it also indicates how Radcliffe saw in poetry the precedent for the atmospherics and "gothic" effects of her

fiction. It is not surprising that her best known aesthetic statement is entitled "On the Supernatural in Poetry". Here, as elsewhere, Radcliffe turns to the poetical, specifically to Shakespeare and Milton - the authorities for literature of the creative imagination, used to justify invention, romance and the "sublimity" of the dark, obscure and "marvellous".[5]

Still, Radcliffe was not unaffected by previous writers of prose fiction. Indeed, literary history has placed her work firmly within one particular sub-genre of contemporary prose, the "gothic novel", which had been in existence for over twenty years before her first publication. Traditionally this form of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century fiction is described as originating with Walpole's The Castle of Otranto (1764), with Reeve's Old English Baron (1777), Sophia Lee's The Recess (1785) and Beckford's Vathek (1786) being the other notable examples prior to Radcliffe. The immediate aftermath of Radcliffe's success represents the heyday of the genre, its period of greatest popularity and production,[6] with important later texts including Lewis's The Monk (1796), Mary Shelley's Frankenstein (1818), and Maturin's Melmoth the Wanderer (1820).

However, the "gothic novel" does have its limitations as a literary category. It links authors together on the basis of their use of certain formal conventions and their inclusion of the preternatural. Inevitably, then, it is these aspects of the novels which are foregrounded in critical discussions while the great differences between the writers is underplayed.[7] The briefest consideration of the titles I have mentioned above as the "gothic canon" shows up their disparateness; the texts reflect the fact that a collection of authors with more varied backgrounds, ideologies, and techniques would be hard to find in any literary "school".

An associated problem is that when authors have been

placed in such a grouping it obstructs comparison with other contemporary writers, particularly if literary history has conventionally regarded these as a part of another sub-genre.[8] In the case of Radcliffe, the strain involved in discussing her alongside Walpole, Mary Shelley and Maturin becomes even more obvious when contrasted with the ease in which she connects with the two authors discussed in the preceding section of this thesis, Frances Burney and Charlotte Smith. Labelling eighteenth-century fiction "realistic", "comedy of manners", "Jacobin" and "gothic" has done much to mask the interrelationships between such novelists and it is only recently, with the work of critics such as Doody, Ross and Butler that the fascinating patterns of mutual influence between them have been given the attention they deserve.[9]

The gothic tag also disguises Radcliffe's originality. With Walpole accepted as the father of the gothic novel, later writers tend to be discussed in terms of their modification of previously established conventions, so the sense of what was new about their fiction is diminished. But to her contemporaries the innovatory qualities of Radcliffe's texts would have been apparent from their very title pages. As Duncan points out, the "eighteenth-century Gothic novel is the first modern British fiction to identify itself as a distinct kind under the name of 'romance'".[10] The concern with generic definition during the century had been expressed through obsessive reworkings of the fraught relationship between the terms "novel" and "romance", by authors such as Walpole and Reeve as much as their so-called "realistic" predecessors at the mid-century. In the light of this longstanding debate the fact that, after her short apprentice piece <u>The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne</u> (1789), every one of Radcliffe's five novels clearly announces itself as a romance,[11] before proceeding without preface, excuse, or explanation into the tale, takes on an enormous significance. It is a declaration of faith in the

"outcast" genre perfectly in keeping with the new aesthetic confidence of the 1790s.

Although Radcliffe does not share the political radicalism which gives the last decade of the century its revolutionary quality, she has much in common with the "first generation" of Romantic authors.[12] While this is in part the product of a shared literary heritage it is also evident with regard to elements of Romanticism that were seen as a departure, or at least fundamental re-evaluation, of what had gone before. Principal amongst these is the privileging of the creative imagination. Attitudes may have been changing for some time but this is no preparation for the centrality the imagination was to assume within the Romantic movement.

The literature of the 1790s reveals a vastly increased emphasis on the imagination as the mental process which enables an individual to engage actively with and transform perceptions created by environment and experience. There are several ways in which Radcliffe explores this in her novels, a representative example being her treatment of one of the "trademark" features of the gothic novel, the ruined building. The decaying castle or abbey provides Radcliffe with endless possibilities for the mechanics of the plot - through the conventional paraphernalia of trap-doors, secret passages and underground labyrinths - but she also depicts such settings as the inspiration for imaginative reverie. The building itself is of less importance than what it represents to the mind of the beholder, who is able to take the fact of its existence and speculate on its history - in visions of past glory or conjectures on its descent into neglect and ruin. Such is the effect which the Abbey of St Clair has upon the mind of La Motte in The Romance of the Forest (1791), as he

> entered what appeared to have been the chapel of the abbey, where the hymn of devotion had once been raised, and the tear of penitence had once been shed; sounds, which could now only be recalled by imagination ... He surveyed the vastness of the place, and as he contemplated its ruins, fancy bore him back to past ages (RF I, 38; 15-16).[13]

Radcliffe's previous novel, A Sicilian Romance (1790), is "framed" by the response of a traveller to the decayed remains of the castle of Mazzini: the castle stands as a reminder of the "past" within the "present" imposing upon the viewer's consciousness an awareness of transience and mortality. Such fascination with ruin and fragmentation is, as Thomas MacFarland has demonstrated, a preoccupation of the period.[14]

Radcliffe's depiction of the natural world is of a piece with her treatment of the monumental in architecture. Nature in her novels is not merely the picturesque backdrop to the action it is something the characters experience as forcibly as the events of the plot. There are occasions when this places Radcliffean protagonists in a rather passive role as appreciators of the external world around them. Although, even here, the author's fascination with the process by which nature influences the mind creates effects reminiscent of Romantic poetry, for example during the storm scene in The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne where Radcliffe describes how "the solemn pauses between the stormy gusts filled the mind with enthusiastic awe" (CAD 185-6; 76).[15] But, due to the workings of the imagination, the individual can aspire to a higher level of involvement, and Radcliffe's later novels contain many scenes where the emphasis is upon interaction. Early in The Mysteries of Udolpho the following account is given of the wanderings of Emily, Valancourt and St Aubert:

> A dewy coolness was diffused upon the air, which, with the bright verdure of turf, that grew under the trees, the mingled fragrance of flowers and of balm, thyme, and lavender, that enriched it, and the grandeur of the pines,

> beech, and chestnuts, that overshadowed them, rendered this a most delicious retreat. Sometimes, the thick foliage excluded all view of the country; at others, it admitted some partial catches of the distant scenery, which gave hints to the imagination to picture landscapes more interesting, more impressive, than any that had been presented to the eye (MU I, 132-3; 50).[16]

The belief that the mind could exert a creative, transformative effect upon the impressions of the external provided by the senses is connected with Radcliffe's account of the sublime. It is after all the mysterious, obscure and unexplained, the "gaps" in the experience of the sense and reason, that allows the mind access to the sublime, and so, in Radcliffe's words:

> To a warm imagination, the dubious forms, that float, half veiled in darkness, afford a higher delight, than the most distinct scenery, that the sun can shew ... the fancy thus wanders over landscapes partly of its own creation (MU IV, 230; 598-99).

One of the most notorious aspects of Radcliffe's own "landscapes" is that they are very much her "own creation", as she did not herself travel through the countries she described.[17] Criticism of the use of invention by a creative writer is of course misplaced but, in the light of Radcliffe's privileging of nature over art, it is interesting that her scenic descriptions are as much a product of the study of literature and paintings as of observation.

This ambivalence is carried into the novels by discussions of the heroine's experience of imaginative literature. Radcliffe asserts the primacy of nature by comparison with the effects of art and in doing so problematises the reception of her own texts. All the heroines of Radcliffe's best known fiction (that is the four novels she published in the 1790s) are shown to be readers. Their choice of reading material is that of the well-educated woman of "taste"; Radcliffe takes the trouble to explain how Adeline and Emily have learnt English so

that she can allow them knowledge of "the best authors" of England.[18] In the light of the eighteenth-century debate over what women could "safely" read, these heroines present exemplary models for Radcliffe's female readers, but this is tinged with irony as such readers have already made the choice of novel reading over texts of higher cultural status.

Radcliffe's heroines are drawn to works of "genius" rather than "instruction": "Adeline found that no species of writing had power so effectually to withdraw her mind from the contemplation of its own misery as the higher kinds of poetry" (RF III, 94; 261). In particular, the "visions" of Shakespeare and Milton "lull her to forgetfulness of grief" (RF III, 95; 261). While English poets receive the highest approbation, Radcliffe's heroines are equally likely to be shown reading a volume of European romance or pastoral, Ariosto and Tasso being particular favourites.[19] All such authors are valued for the potential their works contain to involve the emotions and imagination of the reader. As in the passages above, this is often presented as a means of escape from the suffering which is the typical lot of the gothic heroine.

Throughout the eighteenth century this combination of inventive art and an imaginative heroine had been depicted as the basis of quixotic delusion. This connection is not made in Radcliffe's novels, however, because of the author's emphasis on the transience of the influence that poetry and romance have upon the mind. On each occasion that Radcliffe presents her heroines reading they are deliberately attempting to distract attention from their circumstances, and it takes very little for reality to intrude again. Adeline discovers this when she turns to her books during her imprisonment at the Abbey, "this Lethean medicine to a wounded mind was but a temporary blessing; the entrance of La Motte dissolved the illusions of the page" (RF II, 247; 208). Once La Motte has left, "she endeav-

oured to read, but his appearance had broken the enchantment" (RF II, 248; 208). The speed with which the "visions" of creative writers are shown to fade is not attributed to any failings on their part, for, as Emily St Aubert discovers, "there were hours ... when the genius, the taste, the enthusiasm of the sublimest writers were felt no longer" (MU II, 228; 248), rather it is a limitation in the power of art itself. In an important passage later in The Mysteries of Udolpho, Emily attempts to account for this:

> 'Where did the charm exist? - Was it in my mind, or in the imagination of the poet? It lived in each,' said she, pausing. 'But the fire of the poet is vain, if the mind of his reader is not tempered like his own, however it may be inferior to his in power.' (MU III, 117; 383)

Again there is the sense of mental effort being required, a conscious intention on the part of the reader to experience the text imaginatively which is not easily sustainable. This response of readers within the text does of course have implications for the implied readers outside. Possibly Radcliffe's strategy here is self-protective: by presenting exemplary heroines who are proof against literary quixotism she could be trying to guide her own readers towards a tempered response, warding off the Catherine Morlands.

Such caution vanishes when Radcliffe is depicting the way in which the heroine is influenced by the natural world. This does not have to be sought out, for there are innumerable occasions similar to that in A Sicilian Romance where the "scene insensibly tranquillized ... [the heroine's] spirits" (SR I, 132; 58).[20] Often the comparison between art and nature is made explicit, as in the following instance where Adeline

> read a little, but, finding it impossible any longer to abstract her attention from the scene around ... closed the book, and yielded to the sweet complacent melancholy which the hour inspired (RF I, 207; 83).

Ellena, the heroine of The Italian (1797), experiences a similar moment when her attempt to "banish every painful remembrance from her mind" by reading Tasso is overcome as "fading light recalled her to ... reality" (Ital I, 242; 95). She turns instead to a contemplation of her surroundings which inspires the same sense of reverie that Adeline records. Nature, unlike reading, is not presented as an escape, a means to distract the mind from the "real". Instead it enables the heroine to come to terms with, and endure, her circumstances. Natural beauty is a solace that is not transient. The occasions when the sublime in nature raises the mind to a state of religious awe reaffirms the heroine's faith - a faith that is a guarantee of a deeper reality beyond the present moment of adversity.

Another important difference is that nature allows the heroine a degree of imaginative freedom which goes beyond what is possible in her encounters with the "visions" of authors. This relates to the other aspect of the imaginative life of the Radcliffean heroine, her own creativity. All Radcliffe's young protagonists are described as possessing some form of "native genius" (MU I, 8; 3). Their inventiveness and skill is expressed through different media: music, in the case of Julia, Clara and Theodore; embroidery, such as the work of Ellena, touched with "original genius" (Ital I, 51; 24); and - most commonly - poetry.[21] To an even greater degree than the heroes and heroines of Smith's novels, Radcliffe's characters are drawn to poetic composition, hence the "interspersing" of "their" verse amidst the author's prose.

The "genius" of Radcliffe's protagonists is presented as attractive and admirable, acting in conjunction with their youth and idealism to qualify them as heroes or heroines. The approbation which Radcliffe affords to her imaginative characters is often overlooked by those who stress the

"education by experience" element of her fiction. This can obscure instances where Radcliffe departs from the approach taken by other contemporary novelists. One way of illustrating this is by consideration of her second published work, A Sicilian Romance. Like many novels of the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Radcliffe's text focuses on a pair of sisters, further examples being Lee's The Recess, Jane West's A Gossip's Story (1796), and Austen's Sense and Sensibility (1811). As is usually the case with such novels, the author presents a contrast between one "imaginative" and one "sensible" sister, but the development and outcome of Radcliffe's story is markedly dissimilar to the rest.[22]

The purpose of this structure is normally to show the imaginative figure endangering herself by imprudent behaviour, while her sister displays the necessary degree of self-control. In The Recess it is Ellinor "whose lively imagination readily imbibed the romantic and extravagant",[23] and whose emotional response to the events she experiences drives her into delirium and illness before she finally succumbs to incurable insanity and death. Matilda, on the other hand, is a survivor who comes through extremes of suffering and loss to reach a point of religious consolation and calm. The similarities between Lee's contrasting sisters and Austen's are obvious, however, one interesting difference is that, in the later text, it is the "imaginative" sister Marianne who is self-involved and disregards the feelings of her sibling, whereas in Lee's novel Matilda seems to endure through a selfish neglect of Ellinor's circumstances.[24]

Initially, Radcliffe's work seems to be following this conventional pattern. Much emphasis is placed on Julia's "extreme sensibility" and "ardent" imagination (SR I, 7; 4) set in contrast to Emilia, "whose feelings were less lively, and whose imagination was less powerful" (SR I, 33; 15). When Julia

falls passionately in love with Hippolitus the terms in which this is described seem to make disaster inevitable:

> It was now only that she appeared to live. Absorbed in the single idea of being beloved, her imagination soared into the regions of romantic bliss, and bore her high above the possibility of evil (SR I, 51; 23).

However, Julia is not mistaken in putting her faith in Hippolitus. While Essex's impulsive behaviour and mistaken ideals of honour result in Ellinor's tragedy, and Willoughby's betrayal leads to Marianne's disillusionment, Julia is never "taught a lesson" by her love affair - Hippolitus proves to be one of Radcliffe's typically exemplary, if occasionally ineffectual, heroes. Undoubtedly Julia suffers persecution as a result of the relationship but it is a rare thing for an eighteenth-century heroine to have her choice of partner accepted by her elders. It is the tyrannical conduct of the Marquis and the Duke de Luovo which is criticised, not Julia's behaviour.

Even more significant is the absence of Emilia during the course of the narrative. Uncourted and overlooked, Emilia plays almost no part in the story and ends in the ignominious position of a spinster "wholly attached to her family" (SR II, 216; 199). It could be argued that Radcliffe did not have the confidence to develop a double plot fully in this early work, but still the author's lack of interest in the "sensible" sister is as striking as her refusal to undermine the "imaginative" one.

There are curbs placed upon those of Radcliffe's characters who have "received from nature many of the qualities of genius" (RF II, 201; 190). Commonly these are depicted as emanating from the individual's desire to exercise self-regulation, or as part of modestly self-deprecatory comments

regarding their creative talents. The Romance of the Forest includes Adeline's poem "To the Visions of Fancy":

> Dear, wild illusions of creative mind!
> Whose varying hues arise to Fancy's art,
> And by her magic force are swift combin'd
> In forms that please, and scenes that touch the heart: ...
>
> ... O! still - ye shadowy forms! attend my lonely hours,
> Still chase my real cares with your illusive powers!
> (RF I, 86-7; 35)

The contrasts here are similar to those that were noted earlier regarding the Radcliffean heroines' response to their reading. Particularly characteristic are the references to the world of the imagination as magical and enchanted, associated with this is the suggestion that art can only provide "illusions" to temporarily mask reality, an escape from the heroines' "real cares".

Such provisos are even articulated by Radcliffe's most "visionary" heroine, Emily St Aubert. Emily's imaginative life contributes greatly to the "poetic" qualities of The Mysteries of Udolpho. As Radcliffe's longest novel it has a more leisurely development than the others and this capaciousness allows the author to incorporate its characteristic romance-style wanderings, extensive natural descriptions, and the visions, reveries and poetry of its heroine. The moments when Emily "sees" the march of Hannibal over the Alps or the events of the Iliad in "the eye of fancy" (MU II, 14-15; 166, II, 117; 206) have no counterparts elsewhere in Radcliffe's work. They are instances of the "past" existing within and influencing the present - as are the ruined edifices mentioned previously - but with less tangible manifestations to focus upon, a more advanced stage of imaginative engagement is implied.

But Emily's poetic inspiration is frequently checked, often at the intervention of others. In a significant exchange

during the novel's early stages, Emily admits her imaginative visions to her father. The confidence comes as a result of his comment,

> I own, I am not yet wholly insensible of that high enthusiasm, which wakes the poet's dream. I can linger, with solemn steps, under the deep shades, send forward a transforming eye into the distant obscurity, and listen with thrilling delight to the mystic murmuring of the woods. (MU I, 40-41; 15)

Emily responds with emotion to these sentiments, startled as she is to hear him describe, "what I have felt so often, and which I thought nobody had ever felt but myself!" (MU I, 41; 15). However as soon as Emily attempts to articulate the ways she draws inspiration from such night scenes, St Aubert alters the tone of the conversation to facetious banter about "fairies" and "spells", "'The glow-worm lends his light, and they ... charm him with music, and the dance. Do you see nothing tripping yonder?'" (MU I, 42; 15-16), imagery which Emily picks up as a way of excusing the poem she recites. It is not surprising that Emily starts to worry about the "irregular" metre of her verse considering the rather chilling reaction she receives from her father, "Whatever St. Aubert might think of the stanzas, he would not deny his daughter the pleasure of believing that he approved them" (MU I, 46; 17).[25] Interestingly much later in the novel when Emily is at Udolpho she assumes St Aubert's role in order to rebuke Annette,

> we shall certainly see it [the corridor] illuminated with a thousand lamps, and the fairies tripping in gay circles to the sound of delicious music (MU II, 182; 231).

During the middle section of the novel Emily has a habit of repeating her father's speeches as "gospel",[26] but this particular instance also points to Annette's function as a "buffer" for the heroine, absorbing criticisms that could be equally made of Emily, a subject to which I will be returning later.

The way Emily reacts to St Aubert by doubting her ability and joining in with his jocular belittlement is entirely typical. Emily does not even require a dissenting voice in order to feel the need to temper her visionary experiences. She is quite capable of inventing one:

> The fantastic splendour of this spectacle, together with the grandeur of the surrounding palaces, appeared like the vision of a poet suddenly embodied ... She [Emily] indulged herself in imagining what might be the manners and delights of a sea-nymph, till she almost wished to throw off the habit of mortality, and plunge into the green wave ...
> She was recalled from her reverie to a mere mortal supper, and could not forbear smiling at the fancies she had been indulging, and at her conviction of the serious displeasure, which Madame Montoni would have expressed, could she have been made acquainted with them (MU II, 44-45; 178).

The point of such passages is that they include both the vision and the reservations, although the latter does not cancel out the former especially in this case where Emily later returns to her imaginative reverie in a long verse piece on the subject of the sea-nymph. There is also the question of whether the reader has to accept the authority of the critical voice as readily as the heroine. Madame Montoni's displeasure is unlikely to strike any reader as a valid reason for Emily to change her behaviour, and even St Aubert does not have to be considered in the oracular role created for him by his daughter.[27]

This relates to an observation which has already been made regarding the novels of Richardson, Lennox, Smith and Burney. Heroes and heroines of eighteenth-century fiction are repeatedly condemned as being "romantic", "quixotic", even "mad", but the reader does not have to accept the pejorative use of these terms. In most cases the criticism rebounds on the speaker, who strikes the reader as a cynic or tyrant incapable of appreciating the protagonist's imaginative or idealistic qual-

ities. As in Burney's work, the male characters in Radcliffe's novels tend to bear the brunt of such critiques. Both authors depict noticeably "feminised" heroes, but with Radcliffe this is exacerbated by the assumption of masculine power and agency by the figure of the villain, leaving the heroes nearly indistinguishable from the heroines - they too sob, faint, dream, and experience lengthy periods of imprisonment.[28]

Specific charges of quixotism are also directed almost exclusively at the heroes, whose desire to rescue the damsel in distress is vulnerable to such interpretation. Vivaldi's role as Ellena's "beloved deliverer and protector" (Ital II, 89; 160), for example, smacks of "knight-errantry" to almost every individual he encounters. While these references draw attention to the potential quixotism of such figures it is not necessarily critical. In The Romance of the Forest, after Theodore has been imprisoned and Adeline recaptured, La Motte remarks, "this young hero, who, it seems, has been brave enough to lift his arm against his Colonel ... will soon be sensible of the value of his quixotism." (RF II, 268; 216-17). Readers are aware of the culpability of La Motte and the Marquis and, if they accept Theodore as a quixote, have to admit that the novel supports the hero's behaviour, even down to an official commendation of his "gallant conduct" (RF III, 323; 353). Vivaldi's quixotism is more overt, especially in his relationship with the Sanchoesque Paulo.[29] Again when his father mocks his "chivalric" sentiments (Ital I, 69; 30) or the Abate of San Stefano tells him he is "a knight of chivalry, who would go about the earth fighting with every body by way of proving your right to do good" (Ital I, 317; 122), it is the values of the older men which are being questioned not those of the hero.

A similar pattern emerges with the use of the word "romantic". Probably owing to the frequently negative contexts in which it appears, it is a description that the Radcliffean

protagonist shies away from. When Vivaldi's friend Bonarmo uses it to refer to Vivaldi's conduct towards Ellena the hero "would neither suffer him for a moment to speak thus of Ellena, or to call such delicacy romantic" (Ital I, 26; 14). The word is often in the mouths of pragmatic older characters: Madame La Luc, Madame Montoni (nee Cheron), Montoni and Vivaldi's father all employ it as a term of opprobrium.[30]

However, there are important instances when the "exemplary" members of the elder generation provide more positive interpretations, defences similar to those within Smith's novels. In Radcliffe's fiction these relate to the contrast established between idyllic pastoral retirement and what Mons. Verneuil terms the "vicious pleasures of society" (RF III, 122; 272). To both La Luc and St Aubert the purest morality and the tenderest feeling are "what the world would call ... romantic".[31] The most extensive expression of this occurs during St Aubert's reflections on the early courtship of Emily and Valancourt:

> St. Aubert smiled, and sighed at the romantic picture of felicity his fancy drew; and sighed again to think, that nature and simplicity were so little known to the world, as that their pleasures were thought romantic.
> 'The world ... ridicules a passion which it seldom feels; its scenes, and its interests, distract the mind, deprave the taste, corrupt the heart, and love cannot exist in a heart that has lost the meek dignity of innocence' (MU I, 131-2; 49).

Although many of the complications which arise from the references to the "quixotic" and "romantic" in Radcliffe's fiction are familiar from the work of previous eighteenth-century novelists, there is one difference that dramatically alters their implications: that is the explicit presentation of Radcliffe's texts as romances. If anything this reverses the entire situation. Whereas before, these elements suggested a self-conscious awareness that the novel had not cast out

romance to the extent it "ought" to have done, their appearance in a fiction which purports to "be" romance is deeply incongruous, highlighting the ambivalence inherent in attempting to create "current" examples of a genre defined by its historical distance from the present.

The "new species of romance", in Walpole's phrase, had this paradox at its heart, and it is why the composition of a pure or naive form of romance in the eighteenth century was an impossibility. It could only ever be a reflection of what contemporary writers perceived romance to be. This subject has been treated in Ian Duncan's study Modern Romance and the Transformation of the Novel, where it is encapsulated by the description of "romance as modern cultures's construction of a symbolic form prior to itself",[32] because:

> For us, romance must always be romance revival, meaning not a synchronicity of archetypes across history but an active cultural work of the discovery and invention of ancestral forms, in other words the construction of the archetype as a rhetorical figure. The novelist needs 'to re-create the myth if he is to make full use of it', in a process that is allusive rather than vatic, not so much visionary as revisionary.[33]

The "constructed" nature of the eighteenth-century concept of romance is part of the reason why there is no agreement about an originating moment for "authentic" romance, no exemplary author, text, or historical period. As my earlier discussion of the generic relationship between Clelia, The Female Quixote, Sir Charles Grandison, and Female Quixotism illustrated, the fluid movement between "realism" and "romance" across time was a continuing process, one generation's aspiration to probability being quixotically romantic to the next.

Placed within this context, the generic confusion which often seems to surface in Radcliffe's fiction is explicable, even inevitable. These novels display the self-reflexive and

self-conscious attitude with regard to their own generic status which is perhaps the single most characteristic element of the texts under discussion in this thesis. Sometimes such moments are particularly strange, for instance the repeated occasions when Radcliffe's characters - geographically, culturally and temporally distanced from the "here and now" as they are - start applying recognisably eighteenth-century criteria of probability to their adventures: as when La Motte refers to his experiences as more "like a romance of imagination ... than an occurrence of real life" (RF I, 16; 7) or as "like a vision, or one of those improbable fictions that sometimes are exhibited in a romance" (RF I, 19; 8), self-referential comments similar to those already discussed in Smith's novels.[34]

Eighteenth-century authors could rely on a level of sophistication in their reader's understanding of genre which enabled them to maintain an awareness of concepts like "quixotism" even when the text they are reading has the presentational context of a romance.[35] Concerns about romance had not vanished by the late eighteenth century despite its renewed attraction for the creative writer and it was probably considered unwise to present "gothic tales" in an unmediated form. Sophia Lee's The Recess may be historically located in the sixteenth century but the author still believes it necessary to excuse the romance elements of the Elizabethan court, usually by attributing them to the foibles of the monarch herself.[36] Moments of anachronism were a small price to pay for the protection the dual perspective afforded the novelist; rather than allow readers to "lose themselves" in exotic and adventurous stories, the author retained a way of pulling them back to a more distanced and knowing response.

Such textual complexity explains why Radcliffe is called a novelist not a romancer. In the light of definitions of the novel from Clara Reeve's "picture of real life and manners" (PR

i, 111) to Ian Watt's "formal realism",[37] it may seem that the soubriquet "gothic romance" is more fitting for Radcliffe's work than "gothic novel", but this does not take into account the effect of "novelization".

Bakhtin's terminology was applied to Richardson's fiction earlier to illustrate how the "romance" elements within his fiction function as an "incorporated genre", encompassed by the novel but still retaining enough generic independence to act in a dialogic relationship with other elements of the text - particularly those on which the novel's claim to "realism" was founded. Initially such analysis would not seem appropriate with Radcliffe's fictions, which announce themselves as romance and replicate its exotic settings and adventures - but still they do it in a way which is "novelized". Duncan reminds us that "modern" romance cannot be "real" romance. Radcliffe comes closest to generic mimicry in The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne where characters ascribe to codes of feudalism and chivalry without self-consciousness, but maybe for this reason it is the least interesting piece she produced - the most intriguing moments in Radcliffe's writing are those which expose the dialogic tension between, on the one hand, "imagination", "romance", "past" and, on the other, "reason", "real", "present".

The simultaneous incorporation and interrogation of romance are particularly evident in Radcliffe's manipulation of time. In essence this functions to set "old romance" in the same relation to Radcliffean characters at their specific historical moment, as romance in general is to the eighteenth-century reader. During my discussion of Smith's novels I highlighted moments when her characters describe themselves as "feeling like" figures in a romance, with all the self-reflexive complexity this implies. Radcliffe's characters do exactly the same thing, the difference being that they are

speaking from the perspective of a "romance" text set two hundred years earlier. This is the case with Blanche in The Mysteries of Udolpho:

> she almost fancied herself approaching a castle, such as is often celebrated in early story, where the knights look out from the battlements on some champion ... [come] to rescue the fair lady of his love.

Although this to Blanche is the stuff of "reliques of romantic fiction" (MU III, 346; 468), this very "castle", Chateau-le-Blanc, is to be transformed to an "enchanted palace" (MU IV, 423; 671) in the eyes of Annette and Dorothée for the double marriage at the end, just as Ellena and Vivaldi find themselves in "a scene of fairy-land" (Ital III, 435; 412) at the conclusion of The Italian. As Duncan suggests Radcliffe's characters do not emerge from "romance" to "reality", they are simply "deliver[ed] from one stage of romance to another".[38]

Sometimes keeping "romance" as a genre historically prior to the moment of the text serves a specific purpose for Radcliffe, allowing her protection from aspects of romance that had been looked upon as suspect in the eighteenth century. Two such were the marvellous and the licentious. With regard to the former, the most significant passage is that which records Ludovico's reading of the Provençal tale (MU IV, 107-19; 552-57). The Provençal tale is the only extended instance of the "marvellous", in Todorov's sense of the unexplained supernatural,[39] to occur in Radcliffe's writings before her final, posthumously published novel Gaston de Blondeville (1826).[40] Radcliffe prepares for its appearance by condemning these improbable tales as the delight of "the careless imagination" (MU IV, 106; 552) and the reading material of servants, before not only including it, but even using it to divert attention from the improbabilities of her own piece of the miraculous, the disappearance of Ludovico.[41] Conversely the associations of

romance with "luxury" and corrupted sexuality are made plain in her depiction of the Marquis de Montalt's saloon (RF II, 117-19; 156-7). It should be noted that there is a further connotation of the word "romantic" in Radcliffe's work which is linked to this. When, for example, the Marquis de Mazzini is described as loving his second wife with "a romantic fondness" (SR I, 23; 10, II, 186; 186) the suggestion is that he has been blinded by sexual desire.

The ambivalence regarding romance which these instances imply has only strengthened the case of those critics who perceive Radcliffe as essentially a "rationalist". The most frequently expressed opinion, as prevalent in contemporary appraisals as modern day criticism, is that in the final reckoning Radcliffe advocated the restraint of the visionary and the creative. By explaining the mysteries of her narratives, she imposed upon her own inventions a standard of probability and realism which was alien to them, and in depicting the heroine's journey through the text as an educational process designed to teach the necessity of self-control, she reveals an essentially didactic agenda.[42] The presentation of the heroine as an imaginative being has few positive connotations if this merely results in the familiar pattern of delusion, humiliation and disillusionment.

The aspects of the heroine's imaginative life discussed earlier in this chapter were those that are depicted as being of little danger. The "enthusiastic" response to nature can only open the mind to a sublimity which is ultimately divine, the engagement with literary texts is a temporary solace that never threatens too powerful an influence, and the heroine's creative poetic expressiveness is a pleasure that does her no harm beyond a few fleeting moments of embarrassment. There are however further instances which do represent a greater risk. One problem area is where the imagination responds favourably

to the aesthetic qualities of certain experiences while, it is suggested, closer, more dispassionate, analysis would reveal warning signs. Although no Radcliffean heroine would be misled by the gorgeous luxury of Montalt's saloon, despite the fact it is "designed to fascinate the imagination, and to seduce the heart" (RF II, 133-4;163), they are less proof against the enticements of Catholicism.

Characters who are presented in a positive light in Radcliffe's novels always (anachronistically) profess an enlightened Protestant faith. It is the low born and corrupt who are associated with Catholicism, indeed it is often used to explain their irrationality or hypocrisy. The Catholic faith is the embodiment of prejudice, superstition and ignorance to Radcliffe, and she makes this explicit on occasions such as Julia's response to the abbey of St Augustine. However this "vast monument of barbarous superstition" (SR II, 29; 117) is as capable of fascinating the imagination as any other "large magnificent mass of Gothic architecture" (SR II, 27; 116), maybe even more so as its associations with mystery, ritual and darkness are creative of the obscurity which Radcliffe, following Burke, saw as enabling the sublime. While grandeur and history may constitute the aesthetic attraction of Catholicism, a more specific temptation often threatens to seduce the heroine: the calm retreat of the convent.

Most of Radcliffe's heroines have some experience of convent life. This is often negative. Both Adeline and Blanche grow up in nunneries and experience an enormous sense of freedom on their "release", as does Ellena upon her escape from imprisonment in the San Stefano.[43] But there are many occasions on which the heroine enters a convent voluntarily as a sanctuary and, in the case of the Convent of St Clair in The Mysteries of Udolpho and The Italian's Santa della Piéta, finds a harmonious female community that contrasts strongly with her

crisis ridden existence outside. Already deeply religious and predisposed to retirement, the Radcliffean heroine often considers renunciation of the world to join the nuns and, in one remarkable scene, Radcliffe describes the spiritual ecstasy experienced by Julia's friend Cornelia on such an occasion:

> the solemnity of the ceremony, the sacred glooms which surrounded me, and the chilling silence that prevailed when I uttered the irrevocable vow - all conspired to impress my imagination, and to raise my views to heaven. When I knelt at the altar, the sacred flame of pure devotion glowed in my heart, and elevated my soul to sublimity (SR II, 39-40; 121).

Of all Radcliffe's female protagonists it is Julia who comes closest to taking the veil, in spite of Cornelia's cautionary tale and early death. Significantly, it is the news that Hippolitus is alive which "awakens her". Similarly, when Emily St Aubert's "pensive enthusiasm ... had spread a beautiful illusion over the sanctified retirement of a nun" (MU I, 237; 89), thoughts of Valancourt "perhaps, alone determined her to return to the world" (MU I, 238; 89). In the last chapter I discussed ways in which eighteenth-century heroines attempt to "turn back" from the turmoil of love and desire. The setting in Catholic Europe offers Radcliffean heroines an alternative lifestyle, and this, rather than specifically religious reasons, is the attraction of the nunnery, while hopes of happiness with their lover draw them back to "the world".

Critics have drawn attention to the paradoxical function of Catholicism within novels such as Radcliffe's. Ann McWhir argues that "while we are invited to judge [Catholicism] we are also expected to suspend disbelief: our rational judgement and our aesthetic response are opposed to each other".[44] Elizabeth Napier cites Radcliffe's presentation of the Catholic religion as illustration of the wider point that "Gothic novelists ... often betray an attitude towards experience that emphasizes a

disjunctive relationship between aesthetic and moral values".[45] Much modern criticism has focussed on the "disjunctions" and internal "oppositions" of Radcliffe's novels,[46] and there are elements in the texts to support such interpretations.

In these readings the most significant division is between the methods of the text and the authorially sanctioned "message" it is supposedly to communicate. Radcliffe's fiction relies upon mystery and suspense, and is designed to capture and hold the interest of the reader, keeping curiosity alive by teasing deferrals and delays. However, within the narrative is placed a heroine who is criticised for responding in the way that the reader does. No wonder Napier comments that the "Gothic heroine's job ... seems to call into question the very novel that engendered her".[47] The conclusion often drawn is that Radcliffe was either blind to the potential complexity of her own texts, or rather cynically prepared to use devices to win readers that she would then proceed to disown in the narrative itself.[48]

The key issue is the representation of the supernatural. Susceptibility to belief in the "marvellous" is, like Catholicism, labelled "superstition". Again it is a common property of the lower class characters. The reader is frequently reminded that, in "the minds of the vulgar, any species of the wonderful is received with avidity", (SR I, 22; 10) and is called upon to appreciate the humour of figures like Annette who "dearly loved the marvellous" (MU II, 192; 235). The issue becomes increasingly complicated when the heroine or hero is involved. These are educated figures of sense and judgement, and so for them to display the same fears and foibles as the "vulgar" is a serious matter. Radcliffe gives minute circumstantial detail to explain the susceptibility of her protagonists, and "excuse" their fall into superstitious belief, for instance in The Sicilian Romance:

> The mind of Ferdinand was highly superior to the general influence of superstition; but, in the present instance such strong correlative circumstances appeared as compelled even incredulity to yield (SR I, 225; 97).

Or the well-known passage from The Mysteries of Udolpho:

> The solitary life, which Emily had led of late, and the melancholy subjects, on which she had suffered her thoughts to dwell, had rendered her at times sensible to the 'thick-coming fancies' of a mind greatly enervated. It was lamentable, that her excellent understanding should have yielded, even for a moment, to the reveries of superstition, or rather to those starts of imagination, which deceive the senses into what can be called nothing less than momentary madness (MU I, 273; 102).

Frequently the heroines or heroes are afforded protection by servant characters whose own display of an extreme or ridiculous degree of fearful fancy diverts the attention. While Ferdinand's "yielding" to superstition during his imprisonment is carefully considered, the terror of Peter, a servant, is dismissed as "absurd" (SR I, 230; 100). Earlier I mentioned how Annette comes to assume this role in relation to Emily; it is noticeable that Annette only becomes a character in her own right after Emily has arrived at Udolpho, the scene of her most extreme trial. The case of Emily and Annette is more subtle, however, because the servant girl often expresses views that the heroine shares but is restrained from articulating herself, while Radcliffe frequently underlines the incongruity of Emily's "reasoned" rebukes.

As the above account of Emily's fall makes clear, it is imagination which is responsible for her undoing. Indeed, at such moments "imagination" becomes almost a synonym for "delusion". Mysterious circumstances, strange tales and visual phenomena would not pose a risk to the heroine without the ability of the imagination to magnify this into "a terror which reason could not subdue" (SR I, 61; 27). This is particularly

dangerous as Radcliffe's fiction abounds with villainous characters who exploit such vulnerability to further their own ends, thus the Marquis Mazzini plays upon the "credulity" of his entire household to ensure the secrecy of his first wife's incarceration; the smugglers in The Mysteries of Udolpho protect themselves under the legend of Chateau-le-Blanc's haunted room and, at the end of The Italian; Schedoni places the burden of blame firmly on Vivaldi's shoulders by outlining the ways his plot has been furthered by the hero's imagination:

> what ardent imagination ever was contented to trust to plain reasoning, or to the evidence of the senses? It may not willingly confine itself to the dull truths of this earth, but, eager to expand its faculties ... soars after new wonders into a world of its own! (Ital III, 394; 397-98)

So it would seem that for all the attractions of the imagination, in the final reckoning these are outweighed by its dangers, and the heroes and heroines are left to count the cost of their indulgence in visionary and fanciful experience.

The readers of the text are just as deeply implicated. Even if they have taken advantage of the narrator's perspective to maintain a distance from the protagonist's "delusion" they have vicariously participated in the "thrills" the text provides and been driven by the same curiosity regarding its mysteries. So, in the examples mentioned above, the unveiling of the villain's use of credulity is as relevant to the audience as it is to the figure in the narrative. Radcliffe's scenes of explanation, where the supernatural possibilities are not only denied but mocked, have been the most controversial element of her novels from the contemporary reception onwards. The argument is that they deliberately mislead the reader, who has responded with the curiosity and imagination the text seemed to demand, only to be later presented with a "moral" that brands such an engagement delusory and ridiculous,

restoring the rule of reason through "rational" accounts. The opinion expressed in an article in The Critical Review often attributed to Coleridge is one that many have shared: "the reader, when he is got to the end of the work, looks about in vain for the spell which had bound him so strongly to it".[49] The author of a largely laudatory appraisal of Radcliffe's work written in 1826 (occasioned by the publication of Gaston de Blondeville) perceived Radcliffe's "chief fault" to be "a want of sympathy with her readers, whose expectations of the supernatural she disappoints".[50]

In The Excellence of Falsehood, Ross presents an interesting analysis of the gender divisions which emerged over this aspect of later eighteenth-century fiction, arguing that while women had earlier been criticised for a lack of realism and knowledge of the "world" in their novels, now, when it was becoming acceptable to include the marvellous in fiction, they were taken to task for being too "realistic".[51] Walpole's dismissive response to Reeve's "rewrite" of Otranto, and Scott's influential "protest against fettering the realm of shadows" in the work of Reeve and Radcliffe, are familiar instances of this.[52] An opposition was established between masculine daring and female caution. Only in novels by authors like Lewis and Maturin was the imaginative potential of the supernatural realised, while women worked out ways to control it. It is indeed true that no major eighteenth-century woman gothic novelist renders the explicitly supernatural realm of ghosts and demons; the mysterious prophetic warnings in Reeve's Old English Baron may come true, but their impact is carefully limited. Lee avoids the issue by the bizarre circumstances of her heroines' lives which, as Doody points out, makes them the "illusions" or "phantoms" of the text - particularly in the scene where Ellinor in her madness appears like a supernatural figure to the troubled conscience of Elizabeth.[53] Radcliffe concludes with her carefully crafted "rationalisations".

Ross's point is further supported by the example of Beckford. In addition to his better known oriental tales Beckford was the author (using female pseudonyms) of two parodies of the gothic novel, Modern Novel Writing (1796) and Azemia (1797). While Azemia is generally run of the mill, the second half of the first volume is, rather unexpectedly, given over to a self-contained and highly accomplished ghost story. As was to be the case with many nineteenth-century novels that touch upon the other-worldly, the tale is developed through a complex structure of narrative frames and "stories within stories",[54] examples include Frankenstein, Melmoth the Wanderer, and Wuthering Heights (1847). It is the last of these which has the closest resemblance to Beckford's tale, as Beckford uses the "familiar setting" of a Lincolnshire manor house and creates an atmosphere of fear and suspicion through rural gossip concerning the behaviour of its owner, Squire Grimshaw, before the dramatic appearance of Grimshaw's escaped second wife starts the narrative proper.

The supernatural visitations Eleanor Grimshaw has experienced during her ordeal are "real", although a level of ambivalence is retained by the possibility that her sufferings have pushed her into madness. In keeping with the parodic nature of the bulk of Azemia, at the end Beckford provides mock-examples of the criticism he expected to receive for his novel. Both The Critical Review and The Analytical Review refer to the ghost story with disapproval, the second of these remarking that while it "reminded us, faintly, of Mrs. Ratcliffe [sic]", we

> cannot help wishing ... that she ["J.A.M. Jenks" i.e. Beckford] had accounted for the supernatural appearances in the natural and probable manner of her justly-celebrated prototype.

Here Beckford reveals his scorn both for the practice of the explained supernatural and for the critical response which

applauded such an eminently sensible strategy, those who believed with the author of his mock Critical Review that "the business of the Novelist should be to recommend fortitude and prudent resolution".[56]

By this point it seems impossible to escape the image of Radcliffe as the upholder of the principles of rational Enlightenment, a "proper lady" author who allowed the combination of female timidity and didactic intentions to exert a stranglehold on the creative in her fictions. We have come a long way from the account of Radcliffe as a representative author of early Romanticism with which this discussion began. However, even in the passage of Beckford's mock criticism quoted above, there are hints of a different interpretation. When Beckford writes of the "natural" and "probable" way in which Radcliffe dispelled her mysteries he is accurately summarising a critical commonplace of the day; Coleridge, for example, described them as being "ingeniously explained by familiar causes".[57] But, thinking back to the scenes mentioned earlier where the villain's manipulation of the supernatural is revealed, it becomes apparent that the "return to reality" is not as straightforward as it seems - the incarceration of Marchioness Louisa of Mazzini, wild tales of smugglers, and the past life of the Count di Marinella and Nicola di Zampari are not most people's idea of everyday events.

As my discussion of Clara Reeve's definition of the novel in the last chapter suggested, eighteenth-century writers were capable of great leniency in what they were prepared to see as "probable" and "natural" in order to support the status of the novel as a "familiar tale". In Radcliffe's case, once the "fiction" of the supernatural had been declared it was easy to accept what remained as "probable" without subjecting it to too close an examination. But as the Radcliffean heroine discovers when she attempts to assert a reality distinct from her

involvement in a narrative which "seemed more like the visions of a distempered imagination, than the circumstances of truth" (MU II, 448; 329), there are no perspectives open to her entirely free of fiction, romance and imagination. Often modern critics seem to be taking a line not far removed from their eighteenth-century predecessors; as Terry Castle points out in her fine study of The Mysteries of Udolpho, those who see a simple dichotomy between "two worlds" in this novel have to close their eyes to the fact that, when studied, "the supposedly ordinary parts of Udolpho may begin to look increasingly peculiar".[58]

Similar doubts can be raised regarding the interpretation of the novels as an educative programme for the heroine. What should not be overlooked is that the Radcliffean heroine is a "formed" individual before her story begins, her character and values are already fixed. In this she is comparable to the heroines of Richardson and Burney rather than those of Lennox or Austen.[59] Although Burney and Radcliffe tend more towards the Bildungsroman approach in portraying the youth of some of their heroines than is the case with Richardson, they all present texts in which established qualities of personality are put to test through ordeals inflicted by other figures within the narrative. So, although the experience of the trial can be intensified by aspects of the heroine's character, it does not happen as a result of her mistakes.[60] In the novels of Burney or Radcliffe there are few characters with a moral authority greater than the heroine and therefore in a position to criticise her, while those that do exist are ambivalent.

There is a straightforward divide amongst the elder generation depicted in Radcliffe's novels; either they are corrupted, cynical and status obsessed, or they are "exemplary" models of feeling and virtue. The problem with characters of the latter group is that they tend to be ineffectual; Madame de

Menon, for example, remains an "interested observer" of Julia's plight in Mazzini castle, feeling that she cannot rejoice at the heroine's escape as it is in her eyes an "elopement" (SR I, 169; 74). Similarly, the role of St Aubert in The Mysteries of Udolpho can hardly stand unquestioned; critics who accept him as the novel's moral authority have to overlook numerous moments in the text which undermine this.[61] St Aubert advises Emily against overindulgence in emotion, but cannot control his own pensive melancholy, counsels calmness and fortitude but is blameable for the shooting of the hero, leaves Emily impoverished but instructs her never to sell her only property asset.

St Aubert, like Burney's Mr Villars, is placed in the unfortunate position of being the character who has to increase the difficulty of the heroine's lot in order for the novel's plot to exist. Villars hides Evelina's identity, St Aubert orders the destruction of documents linking Emily to the Marchioness de Villeroi. St Aubert is the reason why Emily goes to live with Madame Cheron, a nonsensical decision as it is obvious that propriety would be better served by letting Emily live alone than with her aunt, and it is over this issue that the text comes closest to direct condemnation. Hence the following passage which occurs at the height of Emily's trial,

> she thought of her late father and of all he would have suffered, could he have foreseen the strange and dreadful events of her future life; and how anxiously he would have avoided that fatal confidence, which committed his daughter to the care of ... Madame Montoni (MU III, 183; 407).

Emily does not blame her father but, as the discussion of Mr Villars' and Mr Tyrold's "Sermons" in the last chapter suggested, the heroine's unquestioning obedience does not necessarily mean the novel absolutely supports the conduct-book sentiments of such men - especially in Emily's case as the actions of her father endanger her much more than his words help her.

If accepting St Aubert as the author's spokesman is fraught with difficulty, it is more credible than positioning Schedoni in the same role but this has to be done to admit his rebuke to Vivaldi as the "moral" of The Italian.[62] Undoubtedly the hero feels himself to have been at fault, "Vivaldi blushed at this reproof, now conscious of its justness" (Ital III, 395; 398) but this does not "prove" his culpability. The Italian depicts a world where the selfish, hypocritical and corrupt is so much the norm that any positive virtues appear laughably quixotic, bringing together Schedoni and Vivaldi vividly exposes this contrast. Schedoni has deadened his susceptibility to feeling and beauty to such an extent that he has become almost inhuman while Vivaldi has gone to the other extreme of allowing the (positive) qualities of imagination to become expressed through the (negative) outlet of superstition - the ideal position is that occupied by Ellena, the heroine.

Once the premises of "the rational explanation" and "the didactic programme" have been questioned it is possible to admit another interpretation of Radcliffe's work - one which resists readings based on the "disjunction" of her text. The basis of this approach is a reassessment of the links between imagination and delusion described earlier. Radcliffe's novels criticise their youthful protagonists for a tendency to provide sensational or explicitly supernatural answers to the mysteries they experience or witness; rotting corpses behind black veils, apparitions in the form of monks and so on. But this is a more specific warning than is often perceived to be the case; it is not a rejection of imagination, of the realm of experience which transcends reason, or even of the supernatural itself when it is considered as a manifestation of the spiritual.

Radcliffe's characters rely heavily on "irrational" responses. They are notoriously susceptible to the compulsions of curiosity; being frequently "Impelled by an irresistible

curiosity" (SR I, 92; 41), or "led on, as by an invisible hand" (Ital I, 47; 22),[63] and this is only one element of the instincts and "presentiments" which guide their behaviour. It is important to note that these intuitive moments often prove to be well-founded. Adeline for example has no real reason not to describe her "disturbed dreams" to the La Mottes at the time when they occur but "a strong and involuntarily impulse prevented her" (RF II, 2; 111), an impulse which proves to be fortuitous once La Motte has entered into league with the Marquis (especially considering the Marquis' hidden connections with Adeline's family history). Another common instance of this phenomenon is the mysterious sympathy felt between two characters who will later prove to be related: when Ellena first meets Olivia, afterwards revealed to be her mother, she feels that "The regard of this nun was not only delightful, but seemed necessary to her heart" (Ital II, 224; 88).

The workings of coincidence, chance and intuition in Radcliffe's novels are associated with faith in providential arrangements.[64] Her characters are indeed urged to reason and act for themselves as individuals, but this does not mean they dissociate themselves from emotion, feeling and belief - the more mysterious aspects of human experience which give access to the divine. Probably the finest illustration of this point is the "finding" of Julia in A Sicilian Romance. The second volume of the novel opens at the beginning of Madame de Menon's reluctant journey from Mazzini castle to Calini, with a description of a walk she takes on arrival at her first village stopover. Madame de Menon is "invited ... to walk" (SR II, 1; 104) by the beauty surrounding her, she has no purpose or direction but is "insensibly led on", allowing her reason and thought to be subdued until the following culmination:

> A group of wild and grotesque rocks rose in a semicircular form, and their fantastic shapes exhibited Nature in her most sublime and striking attitudes. Here her vast

> magnificence elevated the mind of the beholder with high enthusiasm. Fancy caught the thrilling sensation, and at her touch the towering steeps became shaded with unreal glooms ... The scene inspired Madame with reverential awe, and her thoughts involuntarily rose, 'from Nature up to Nature's God.' (SR II, 2; 104)

It is at this transcendent moment, when nature and imagination combine to raise the mind beyond the limitations of the quotidian, that Madame de Menon sights a peasant girl who is shortly revealed to be Julia. In one way this is the older woman's "reward" for exercising the sensitivity and spirituality which these novels valorise, but it also has a strange logic. Although Madame de Menon has "happened across" a character who many have been frantically searching for a long stretch of the novel, it does make sense that the mental and emotional sympathy which binds figures like these two women would cause them to take the same path.

Such events, however, test the parameters of criteria such as realism or probability. It is, in fact, misleading to assert that Radcliffe reasons away all the mysteries of the texts as there are numerous occasions when the irrational and unexplained are allowed to stand without such qualifications. Even the celebrated "rejection" of the otherworldly and preternatural is hardly unambiguous; neither Madame de Menon or St Aubert are prepared to dismiss the possible existence of "disembodied spirits" (MU I, 181; 67) on the basis that "nothing is impossible to God" (SR I, 83; 36).[65] One frequent manifestation of the paranormal is the prophetic dream; as Todd comments, "Radcliffe, famous for explaining the non-natural, does not explain the possible revelations of dreams".[66]

It has often been noted that gothic novels create a mood analogous to dream or nightmare.[67] Within Radcliffe's fiction the contrast between dream and waking is used by the characters in the same way as they speak of romance and reality, and here

too they find that the blurring between the two states makes it impossible to uncover a level of experience which is "normal" and "true". Not for Radcliffe's characters the confident certainty of James Beattie's account of the dreaming mind:

> In dreams, we mistake our thoughts for real things. While the dream lasts, it appears a reality ... but the moment we awake, we are conscious, that the whole was imaginary, and that our waking perceptions, and they only, are real, and such as may be depended on ...
> ... no waking man in his senses ever mistook a reality for a dream.[68]

The sense of being lost in a waking dream is as recurrent a feature of Radcliffe's fiction as it is of Keats's poetry. Also similar are the moments when her figures, like Madeline of "The Eve of St Agnes", "still be[hold],/Now wide awake, the vision of ... [their] sleep".[69] As Doody has argued, the gothic protagonist has no "reality" to wake up to;[70] when Vivaldi dreams of uncovering the face of the monk who has haunted him he awakens to find the "phantom of his dream" standing by him - there is no delusion and Nicola does prove to be more "an evil spirit" than a "human character" (Ital III, 168; 318).

A more complex illustration is that of Adeline in The Romance of the Forest, Adeline has a dream which is doubly prophetic, immediately it "comes true", in that she finds the apartment which she has seen in her sleep, while later it will be revealed that the man she has dreamt of was her father. For the presence of a father's suffering to be communicated in this way is no more problematic for Radcliffe than the mysterious recognition between Ellena and Olivia, and to this extent there is indeed a "supernatural power, operating for the retribution of the guilty" (RF II, 79; 141). Adeline however risks losing sight of the significance of the "message" by allowing the darkness and loneliness to terrify her into superstitious dread

of apparitions. Although this is hardly a surprising response considering her circumstances, during such sequences Radcliffe is concerned to develop a contrast between a positive and negative role for "the mystic and turbulent promptings of imagination" (RF II, 61; 134), and always at these moments revelation and delusion are closely interconnected.

This dualism is the central issue of The Mysteries of Udolpho. Emily St Aubert is exposed to the most varied and sustained series of mysterious phenomena which any Radcliffean heroine has to face, and while the narrative continually checks her tendency to apply sensationally supernatural interpretations to her experience, it eventually becomes clear that one particular mystery, and Emily's reaction to it, has been the key to the plot of the entire novel.

Radcliffe has carefully laid clues to the integrity of the narrative structure, and these appear in the form of the "Music in the Woods". The text's refrain first appears in its developed form during the conversation between St Aubert, Emily and La Voisin in Languedoc the night before St Aubert's death (MU I, 182-90; 68-72) - the significance of the "plaintive air" Emily heard in the fishing-house (MU I, 23; 9) does not emerge till much later. The circumstances of this scene and the recurrence of the music after Emily's bereavement, when she experiences it as the continuation of a dream vision (MU I, 222-3; 83-4), act to fix it in her mind as a reference point sacred to the memory of her father.

The reader however is not called upon to give particular attention to the music until its unsettling return when Emily is in Udolpho. Here the heroine is at a great geographical distance from St Clair and Chateau-le-Blanc, and the characters she is surrounded by are entirely different. There is nothing to connect the two locations except the bizarre circumstance of

the music. It is understandable then that Emily comes to perceive the music as the "guardian spirit of her father" (MU III, 40; 355), before later linking it with her other source of protection, Valancourt, owing to the associations of certain songs with Gascony and the original fishing-house mystery (MU III, 125-29; 386-87). Emily is "wrong" on both counts, however. Before she leaves Udolpho the "rational explanation" emerges in the form of Du Pont, who is the link between Gascony and Udolpho.[71] There have, in fact, been two musicians, who have absolutely no connection with each other, Du Pont at Udolpho and, as Emily will discover on her return to the original location, Laurentini (Agnes) in Languedoc.

But while reason says these events are separate, imagination ties them together. At the first instance the music is heard St Aubert speaks of the Marchioness de Villeroi, a name which Emily has never heard and which fills her with "surprise and curiosity" (MU I, 194; 73). This should be born in mind during the crucial re-emergence of the music at Udolpho. Here Emily fights the "superstitious dread" the music - with all its associations - brings, while the text admits that "human reason cannot establish her laws on subjects, lost in the obscurity of imagination" (MU II, 449; 330). Even when Emily resists the "wild conjecture" (MU II, 450; 330) that the music is an emanation of her father's spirit "with the inconsistency so natural, when imagination guides the thoughts" she arrives at another equally "wild" conclusion (MU II, 451; 330-31):

> She remembered the singular event, connected with the castle, which had given it into the possession of its present owner; and, when she considered the mysterious manner, in which its late possessor had disappeared, and that she had never since been heard of, her mind was impressed with an high degree of solemn awe; so that, though there appeared no clue to connect that event with the late music, she was inclined fancifully to think they had some relation to each other (MU II, 451; 331).

While this particular musician is, in fact, Du Pont the imaginative connection has pointed to a hidden truth, that the music Emily is being reminded of is that played by Laurentini in the grounds of the convent of St Clair - Laurentini of course being the "late possessor" of Udolpho to whom Emily is referring. Throughout the novel, then, the musical refrain has allowed imaginative access to the central mystery, that Laurentini of Udolpho is the murderer of the Marchioness de Villeroi of Chateau-le-Blanc who is the aunt of Emily St Aubert of La Vallée.

These three locations are the text's focal points and the movement between them is fluid and inescapable. St Aubert leaves Gascony and his wanderings bring him to Chateau-le-Blanc, Emily leaves Udolpho by sea and is washed up on the shore at exactly the same place. The strangeness of this inevitability is further emphasised by the ability of Du Pont and Valancourt to "miraculously" appear as well.[72] The only exception to this is that Valancourt never materialises in Udolpho, the one occasion when Emily, and the reader, expect him to. This then represents a novel-length working through of the romance logic earlier observed of Madame de Menon's experience.

The uncovering of "truth" through imagination and emotions rather than reason is similarly applicable to Emily's love relationship. Here again there is a comparison to Burney's technique of including both "sensible" advice against the hero, which the heroine ostensibly agrees with, and a "romance" field of readerly expectations around the inevitability of the couple's eventual union. While Evelina and Camilla are cautioned to avoid setting their heart on "unattainable" men, Emily is presented with the greater problem of Valancourt's apparent unworthiness. It is the Count de Villefort who sets himself up as Emily's protector in this instance, arguing for

the transfer of her affections from Valancourt to Du Pont while Emily, like Scudéry's Clelia or Richardson's Harriet, insists that "my heart can never know a second affection" (MU IV, 139; 564). However, while the Count confidently asserts to Du Pont that when "her imagination is rescued from its present delusion, she will readily accept the homage of a mind like yours" (MU IV, 170-1; 576), the text is actually moving towards a culmination that will vindicate the intuitive insights of the lover over the dictates of appearances and prudence, "rewarding" the hero and heroine with a fairy-tale marriage and the promise of idyllic happiness to come.

As Radcliffe's novels are located within the "long ago and far away" the "happily ever after" conclusion is not fraught with the same difficulties that can arise with Burney's and Smith's endings. But still there is a sense of unease at these moments. In part this is related to an observation made earlier about texts such as Sir Charles Grandison or Cecilia, the impression that the length and extremity of the heroine's trial can make the end seem to reflect exhaustion rather than celebration; but the limited psychological range of the Radcliffean heroine and the use of romance aesthetics protects her from the most jarring effects of this. The problem is more that the concluding "morals" depict an optimistic view of human experience and divine protection that contrasts sharply with the dark mysteries of the preceding narrative.

Radcliffe at these moments drives home a message of reward and punishment reminiscent of Richardson at his most schematic,[73] a reminder that the anxieties characteristic of the earlier eighteenth-century novelist have not yet departed. Indeed Radcliffe's representation of the heroine's trial as "virtue in distress" means she inherits many of the earlier author's dilemmas, in particular the vulnerability to readings which exploit the voyeuristic or sensationalistic potential of

the text. Radcliffe was aware of Mrs Barbauld's concern about the tendency of the contemporary author to "sit[] down, pretty much like an inquisitor, to compute how much suffering ... [to] inflict".[74] Indeed, Radcliffe's anxiety about being seen to pander to readers who desire, in the words of one critic, "to have ... their very blood congealed with chilling horrours" was the basis of her famous distinction between the sublimity of terror and the low sensationalism of horror.[75]

Radcliffe's fears proved to be well placed, of course. However much parodies like Shamela exposed contradictions in Richardson's fiction, he never had to witness wholesale subversion on the scale that Radcliffe did upon the publication of The Monk.[76] As Jacqueline Howard notes, Radcliffe faced a "juggling act of no mean proportions"[77] in reconciling the contemporary perceptions of the responsibilities of the novelist with the artistic creativity of "genius" and this did not make for seamlessly unified texts. Undoubtedly contradictions and "disjunction" ensue but the existence of these should not detract from her achievement as an imaginative author whose work presents a crucial stage of the rehabilitation of romance within the British novel and makes a significant contribution to early nineteenth-century Romanticism.

ii. "Why, Extraordinary Things Happen Here so Often, Ma'amselle, That There is Nothing in Them.":[1] Parodic Possibilities

A simple way to assess the impact of any eighteenth-century novel is to consider the number of imitations and parodies it inspired, as the characteristic practice of the period is for the response to a fiction to be expressed through the composition of "answering" texts. The reasons for this can be traced back to the means by which the novel had been constructed as a genre. The emphasis on modernity and novelty had cut it off from previously existing prose writings, so there was no "prehistory" to be referred to, no established critical standards to be cited. It was possible for an author of Fielding's confidence and education to conjure up a suitably classical sounding generic classification for his "little Volumes", but declaring that "a comic Romance is a comic Epic-Poem in Prose"[2] is more a novelist's joke on the inventors of categories than a formula which could have been taken up by future authors. The desire to be placed within a tradition does not disappear with Fielding however; authors of this "new species" were often attracted to the relative stability of established genres, as shown by later eighteenth-century novelists such as Charlotte Smith or Ann Radcliffe who related their fiction to poetry or romance.

Through this technique contemporary novelists might try to step outside the self-enclosed realm of the genre but they could not entirely dissociate themselves from it. One of the most fascinating elements of the development of the novel in the eighteenth century is the extent to which it became self-referential. The perception of the mid century as an "originating moment" isolating the novel from the past, meant that works of prose fiction appearing after this time tended to be primarily considered in relation to each other. Such

comparative assessments constituted an attempt to establish critical premises suitable for judging the novel, a particular focus being the development of a canon of authors and texts to which emergent novelists could be referred.

The most striking aspect of this, is the speed with which it took place. By the publication of Evelina in 1778, Burney could confidently point to a "history" of major novel writers; in the mid 1780s authors such as Reeve and Beattie produced retrospectives outlining milestones and significant achievements, and then, during the early years of the nineteenth century, the "canon" took physical shape in the form of the fifty volume British Novelists series edited by Barbauld (1810) and Sir Walter Scott's ten volume Ballantyne Novelists' Library (1821-4). At this point a framework had been set up for criticism and discussion of the novel in terms of its own "tradition", and as Ian Duncan illustrates,[3] its acceptance as the central genre of the national literature was not far away.

The process of securing the position of the novel involved authors of non-fiction - reviewers, essayists and the compilers of collections - as well as novelists. Many significant figures, such as Reeve and Scott assumed a number of these roles during their careers, while novels themselves contained prefaces, postscripts, and discussions of the genre. The crucial element however, which explains the fast-paced formation of the critical structure surrounding the novel, is the nature of contemporary fiction - specifically the way individual texts were conceived in relation to others. Through parody, burlesque, imitation, and influence, the eighteenth-century novel developed intricate patterns of cross reference. There is probably no other period where fiction more clearly illustrates Bakhtin's belief in the dynamism of the genre, progressing by incorporation, interrogation and revision.[4] In numerous instances this results in the situation whereby one

novel possesses such a close association with another that criticism, both contemporary and modern, has always considered them in conjunction.

This is a practice initiated by two of the "fathers of the novel", Richardson and Fielding, whose writings within the genre are inextricably intertwined. While this is at its most obvious in their early fiction, specifically in the case of Pamela, Shamela, and Joseph Andrews, they continued to respond to each other in later works; Fielding's representation of the heroine in Amelia being coloured by Clarissa, Richardson's "good man" Sir Charles Grandison conceived as a corrective to the eponymous hero of Tom Jones. In the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century period with which this chapter is concerned such cross references are inescapable, and can be observed existing both between specific texts, for example The Mysteries of Udolpho and either The Monk or Northanger Abbey, (the former instance rendered increasingly complex by Radcliffe's "reply" in The Italian), or in more widespread patterns of influence and reaction; between Burney, Smith, and Radcliffe, or Radcliffe, Wollstonecraft, and Austen.[5]

The position of Radcliffe within so many of these novelistic cross fertilisations is no accident. Not since Richardson had a single author achieved such a marked impact on contemporary novel writing. The response to Radcliffe has obvious parallels with the reception of Richardson's fiction. Most noticeable is the complex mix of, on the one hand, praise, homage and imitation and, on the other, patronising mockery and parody. Certain shared elements in the texts of the two authors seem to be responsible for the more critical attitudes which were expressed. Richardson and Radcliffe created primarily serious (as opposed to comic) novels, incorporating morals and disclaiming intentions simply to entertain. The pretensions of such authors seem to be irresistibly attractive

to the eighteenth-century parodist.

More significant, however, is the presence of particular "quirks" or innovations in the novels, on which the parodist could focus. In Richardson's case the epistolary device, and "writing to the moment", were sent up by later writers, while Radcliffe's treatment of the supernatural - both the curiosity and fear of the heroine and the "rational explanation" - was the feature emphasised in humorous rewritings of her texts. Unfortunately for them, both Richardson and Radcliffe were to come up against parodists whose literary reputations, for a long time at least, exceeded their own. Thus the paradoxical situation is created whereby the original texts are only perceived through the subversive filter of the parody. Either the former is not read at all and is constructed entirely from the account given in the latter, as the reader of Don Quixote and The Female Quixote can "know" chivalric and heroic romance; or readings become coloured by awareness of the comic alternative. Few can read Pamela without hearing the voice of Fielding's "sham" counterpart, while many critics have drawn attention to the way Jane Austen has overshadowed the twentieth-century critical reception of Radcliffe.[6]

Unlike Richardson though, Radcliffe was not only subject to criticism based on what she published but also as a representative of a literary "school". Her own employment of conventions inherited from other authors of the "new species of romance" is thus of less importance than the flood of imitators who appeared in the wake of her success. Those who attempted to trade on Radcliffe's popularity to satisfy the circulating libraries had performed their own reductio ad absurdum upon Radcliffe's work before the writers of intentional parody emerged. Anti-gothic writers were, however, unlikely to target the writings of obscure copyists, and so, to an extent, visible figureheads like Radcliffe bore the critical reaction

engendered by their followers. In this context Bette Roberts has argued that the focus of Austen's scorn in Northanger Abbey was the excesses of the "horrid" novels listed by Isabella Thorpe (NA I, 69-70; 40) rather than Radcliffe herself.[7]

Gothic and parody were inextricably linked in the eighteenth century. This is connected to the wider issue of the contemporary novel's often uneasy awareness of its own comic possibilities. The novel had brought itself into existence by ridiculing the romance, before proceeding to incorporate many of the earlier genre's structures and themes, and these retained the potential to appear laughable to the next generation of readers. While it can seem that writers in the eighteenth century underestimated the complexity of Cervantes' approach to generic interrelationships, they were aware that supposedly serious fiction could hold within it the key to quixotic subversion. A consequence of this is one prevalent strategy of authorial self-protection, that which endeavoured to avoid future mockery by preempting it. This is especially the case with gothic authors, Walpole being a paradigmatic example.

Critics have drawn attention to the ambivalence of Walpole's attitude to the "little piece" he created,[8] the fiction which has ever since been considered as the origin of the gothic novel. The preface to the second edition of The Castle of Otranto combines discussion of authorial intentions and generic definitions with rather defensive remarks concerning the blend of serious and humorous in the text. As Paul Lewis notes, much more of the tale is open to comic interpretation than the behaviour of the domestics.[9] Walpole's awareness of this is indicated by his fluctuation between making grand claims for the work and allowing it to be considered as a jeu d'esprit. If the reader found his story amusing it was important to convey the impression that the author was in on the joke. This knowing authorial stance is also assumed by

Beckford and Lewis, two authors who were as capable of the composition of parody as "straight" fiction.[10] For Napier the slippage between the serious and comic is further proof of the gothic's internal contradictions and generic instability.[11]

It is perhaps more surprising to observe these shifts within the fiction of Radcliffe herself. Nevertheless they are present. The choice of a line from The Mysteries of Udolpho, rather than from one of the numerous Radcliffean parodies, as the title of this section is intended to draw attention to such comic potentialities. It is taken from one of the most confused and threatening scenes in The Mysteries of Udolpho; the conflict between Montoni and his wife is at its height and Emily has been drawn in to help her aunt. A confrontation has just taken place which has left Madame Montoni in convulsions and Emily wounded; Annette is convinced that "the Signor has been beating my lady", and it is the heroine's attempt to reassure Annette that "nothing extraordinary has happened" which provokes the servant girl's comment: "Why, extraordinary things happen here so often ma'amselle, that there is nothing in them" (MU II, 386; 306).

On one level, this is an illustration of Annette's role as comic relief during times of high drama, for which Radcliffe had the sanction of Walpole's "Shakespearian" model.[12] It does not seem too far-fetched, however, to interpret such a moment as an instance where the author is offering the reader a perspective detached from the momentum of the plot, a chance to appreciate how "extraordinary" the events of the narrative are before the roller-coaster ride begins again. This impression is reinforced by the implications of Annette's observation that there is "nothing in" the bizarre occurrences at Udolpho. Radcliffe had published enough prior to this novel for her audience to be aware of her trademark "explanations". The joke is that Annette is right, as the nightmarish suggestions of

murder during Emily's stay in Udolpho (both with regard to Madame Montoni and Laurentini) are indeed to come to nothing.

It is especially important to consider the function of such apparently incongruous remarks as they complicate the relationship between The Mysteries of Udolpho and Northanger Abbey. The status of the parody is altered if the originating text shows itself capable of self-referential humour. For example it means a more complex response to Henry Tilney's comic account of gothic conventions is required:

> No, no, you will proceed into this small vaulted room, and through this into several others, without perceiving any thing very remarkable in either. In one perhaps there may be a dagger, in another a few drops of blood, and in a third the remains of some instrument of torture; but there being nothing in all this out of the common way, and your lamp being nearly exhausted, you will return towards your own apartment (NA II, 81-2; 160).

The joke which author, speaker, and reader share here is based upon the way in which the gothic heroine responds to the requirements of her genre by accepting extremes of experience as essentially everyday events. In order to achieve the comedy Austen has to represent the "model" text as naive and absurd, but this neither means that Radcliffe's novels are incapable of self-reflexive sophistication nor that Austen was unaware of such a possibility.[13]

It is no coincidence that Annette's remark occurs during the section of Radcliffe's novel which deals with Emily's experience in Udolpho. The relationship between author, character and reader here is more complex than it is at any other point in Radcliffe's work, the only comparable instance being the field of reference which surrounds her representation of Vivaldi's quixotism in The Italian. The Udolpho chapters are the most celebrated passages of Radcliffe's writing, often considered as the quintessential expression of the author's

technique, and - as is inevitable in the eighteenth century - parodied as such. The attraction of the parodist to the castle of Udolpho may be created, at least partially, by patterns of ironic detachment which already exist in the originating text.

As discussed in the previous section, Radcliffe maintains a degree of distance from the heroine of this novel through criticism and humour and, while this happens infrequently in the early stages of the story - over Valancourt's book of poems for example (MU I, 155; 58) - it becomes a characteristic of the text once Emily has arrived in Udolpho and is placed in a pairing with her comic "foil" Annette. As this occurs, there is a simultaneous shift in the structure of the narrative which moves the heroine from the centre of the action to the periphery. It is customary for the eighteenth-century heroine to be the focus of the plot, emphasis being placed either on the trials she is made to undergo or the consequences of her mistakes and delusions. She may be in the dark about the motivations and intentions of her persecutors, but she still remains the obsessional focus of their attention. Clarissa is the paradigmatic illustration of this. While she spends almost the entire novel excluded from full understanding of her situation and isolated in imprisonment, every event which takes place has implications for the heroine. To a greater or lesser extent this is true of all the novels by Richardson, Lennox, Burney and Smith that have been considered earlier.

Radcliffe's fiction is largely similar. Julia, Adeline and Ellena are all central to the villainous schemes which constitute the plots of their respective novels; it is their suffering, flight, imprisonment or escape that dominates the narrative, usually manoeuvering the hero into a secondary role. Through the opening section of The Mysteries of Udolpho it seems as if the same is going to apply to Emily. For St Aubert, Valancourt and Madame Cheron (later Montoni) she is a

primary concern, and during the trip to Venice, Count Morano appears to assume the role of the unwanted and persistent suitor obsessed with winning the heroine. Emily does not see why her position should have been altered by the removal to Udolpho. As far as she is concerned, she has been spirited away on the morning of a threatened wedding for obvious reasons:

> The more she considered what might be the motive of the journey, the more she became convinced, that it was for the purpose of concluding her nuptials with Count Morano, with that secrecy which her resolute resistance had made necessary to the honour, if not to the safety, of Montoni (MU II, 165; 225).

If Emily were Harriet Byron or Clarissa this would no doubt be true, and Radcliffe may have been playing upon her reader's memory of locations such as the Awberry's house or Antony Harlowe's moated abode. However, the casualness with which Montoni has earlier dismissed Emily's marriage to Valancourt provides a hint of the way Emily is going to prove mistaken. Here the danger of the forced wedding suddenly disappears, defying the expectations of both heroine and reader (the latter being accustomed to seeing the Radcliffean heroine's "guardian" contrive at an unwanted match, both in La Motte's involvement with Montalt and the Marquis de Mazzini's with the Duke de Luovo). Montoni has simply changed his mind and no one is more surprised than Count Morano.

Throughout the Udolpho sequence, Count Morano repeatedly materialises in vexed attempts to reinstate himself as a significant character which are almost comically ineffectual. His role becomes increasingly strange, emerging as he does from the mysterious "outside" which is off limits for the heroine, in order to confront her before vanishing again, as eventually he will do from the narrative itself.[14] Morano shares Emily's belief that she must be the focus of the plot and so concludes that the withdrawal of Montoni's approval regarding the wedding

relates to his own desire for the heroine. As Morano puts it: "How could I suffer myself to doubt, even for an instant, that he [Montoni] could see you, and not love?" (MU II, 276; 266). The reader familiar with the conventions of the eighteenth-century novel would perhaps be prepared for the enactment of Morano's prediction but again to no avail, Montoni never shows the slightest romantic or sexual interest in the heroine even when this is combined with more mercenary considerations after Emily has inherited the estate of Madame Montoni.

The unexpected scenario arises whereby the heroine appears more interested in the villain than he with her. Emily is constantly watching Montoni and trying to reach a point of understanding, lamenting "O could I know ... what passes in that mind; could I know the thoughts, that are known there, I should no longer be condemned to this torturing suspense!" (MU II, 216; 243). While these sentiments are characteristic of the Richardsonian heroine, there is a difference in Emily's case in that it is more than likely Montoni's thoughts have nothing to do with her. In fact Emily is strangely overlooked and neglected while she is at Udolpho. The real interests of the men gathered at the castle are political and criminal, and of these the heroine remains unaware. The disconcerting implications which derive from such circumstances are made plain in an exchange between Annette and Ludovico. Annette is another figure who expects the tumult of Udolpho to be connected with Emily; but she, too, is disillusioned:

> 'he [Montoni] sits up counselling so, of a night, with the other Signors - there they are, till long past midnight, discoursing together! Aye, but says Ludovico, you don't know what they are counselling about. No, said I, but I can guess - it is about my young lady. Upon that, Ludovico burst out a-laughing, quite loud; so he put me in a huff, for I did not like that either I, or you, ma'amselle, should be laughed at; and I turned away quick, but he stopped me. 'Don't be affronted, Annette,' said he, 'but I cannot help laughing;' and with that he laughed again. 'What!' says he, 'do you think the Signors sit up,

> night after night, only to counsel about thy young lady! No, no, there is something more in the wind than that. And these repairs about the castle, and these preparations about the ramparts - they are not making about young ladies.' (MU II, 363-4; 298)

The extent to which texts such as Clarissa, Cecilia or Radcliffe's earlier fiction have been dominated by the "affairs of young ladies" is in answer to the demands of fiction rather than the "true to life". But readers become accustomed to the suspension of disbelief required by novelistic conventions and this is why such a passage can have a special impact. In effect it forces upon the reader awareness of the kind of expectations and assumptions being brought to these texts. It is innately ridiculous to assume that Montoni and his cohorts are basing their intrigue around the heroine but this is exactly the type of leap of faith which the eighteenth-century novel has trained its reader to make, the villain's obsession with the heroine being a prerequisite of the novel's tradition.

When this is removed it places the heroine in an ambiguous position, hence the peculiar qualities of the Udolpho sequence. Emily becomes a marginalised figure. Her speculations about a forced marriage with Morano come to nothing, just as later her terror regarding Montoni's motives in sending her from Udolpho is undercut when nothing happens and she is simply brought back when the situation in Udolpho is more controlled. While Emily is staying in the castle, the villain shows a tendency to forget she exists. Repeatedly days pass when "she was unmolested by any notice from Montoni" (MU II, 445; 329), and the bizarre circumstance arises where the heroine cannot even get her supposed persecutor to see her when she has made an appointment to do so.[15] Not only Montoni overlooks the heroine, there are occasions when Madam Montoni or Annette and the other servants neglect her. If anything their moments of remembrance only serve to underline the heroine's peculiar position, illustrated by this exchange between Emily and Carlo,

> 'Dear young lady,' said he, 'I have been so flurried, I never once thought of you till just now. I have brought you some fruit and wine, and I am sure you must stand in need of them by this time.'
>
> 'Thank you, Carlo,' said Emily, 'this is very good of you. Did the Signor remind you of me?'
>
> 'No, Signora,' replied Carlo, 'his Excellenza has business enough on his hands.' (MU II, 441-2; 327)

But probably most significant of all is the "forgetfulness" of the hero. While Emily is in Udolpho, Valancourt is being seduced away from the path of virtue in Paris. During his exposure to the corruptions of "the world", the image of Emily acts to awaken the hero's conscience, "his only escape from which was to forget the object of it, and he endeavoured, therefore, to think of Emily as seldom as he could" (MU II, 354; 295). Valancourt's reaction is worlds away from the torment St Preux endures when he believes that he will forfeit Julia's love by his own experience of Parisian debauchery.[16]

In her marginalisation Emily perhaps approximates more closely to the "real" situation of the eighteenth-century woman, excluded from power and influence in decision making processes. However, Emily is not "real" but a character in a fiction and these circumstances greatly problematise her status as the heroine of the text. If anything, the neglect Emily experiences is more extreme than that of supposedly more "true to life" counterparts such as Evelina, or even Catherine Morland (for whom being over-looked at a ball is, ironically, intended to illustrate her difference from heroines like Emily). After all at least they have an Orville or an Henry Tilney to pay attention to them despite their "obscurity".

So when Montoni, in his sporadic attempts to intimidate Emily into signing over her inheritance, mocks her for behaving "like a heroine" (MU III, 111-2; 381, III, 149; 395) the word has started to acquire the kind of ironic implications usually associated with texts such as Northanger Abbey or Barrett's The

Heroine. There are subtle differences between these occasions and those in The Romance of the Forest or The Italian where both male and female protagonists are accused of "heroics"[17] (similar to the charges of "quixotism" or "romanticism"). In the latter instances, the characters are secure in the position as the hero or heroine of the text and are treated accordingly.

The difficulty, however, lies in assessing whether self-conscious or ironic moments in the Radcliffean text are authorially sanctioned. As has been noted in previous chapters, the occasions when eighteenth-century fiction exhibits self-reflexivity are characteristically disconcerting, pointing to the author's unease with aspects of novel writing or a desire to establish a self-protective detachment from the text. Radcliffe certainly represents an advance upon earlier writers such as Charlotte Smith in this respect. Smith's novels employ "gothic" devices in the creation of mood, her atmospheric descriptions of nature in Emmeline and Celestina are often cited as an influence on Radcliffe (as Radcliffe's novels were later to affect Smith's in works like The Old Manor House). But Smith's authorial career spanned the "boom-years" of the gothic novel, which were marked by critical disapprobation and weariness with tales of terror. So Smith's characteristic practice of mocking "romances and novels" within her texts was, in her later fiction, extended to encompass the gothic. In The Young Philosopher published in 1798, a maidservant observes,

> I assure you, people of consequence do believe in spirits, and if you would but read some sweet books I met with just before I came from town, which I got from the circulating library, I'm sure you would never be such an infidel. You can't think how frightful the stories are - all about tapestry waving in the wind, a bloody dagger, and voices calling at midnight, howlings in the air, and dark passages, and coffins full of bones, and poor young ladies got among these alarming objects; quite shocking, I'll assure you. (YP II, 42)

While this is a neat enough summary of "absurd" gothic conventions it is incongruous in context. The extract is taken from volume two of the novel, which is the wild tale of Mrs Glenmorris. At this point Mrs Glenmorris is held in her family estate, a gothic fortress called Sandthwaite Castle, although she is soon to escape to her husband's "castled tower" in Scotland as he is "feudal chief and the head of his clan" (YP II, 81). After the castle is broken into by pirates who abduct Glenmorris, she is taken in by the Ladie of Kilbrodie, owner of Kilbrodie abbey, whose intention is either to murder Mrs Glenmorris and her new born child or to force her into marriage with the Laird of Kilbrodie. The "gloomy horrors" (YP II, 113) which Mrs Glenmorris endures are no more naturalistic than the "frightful ... stories" Smith parodies earlier, even if the author avoids the explicitly supernatural. The disjunctions between narrative content and parodic intentions here are more glaring than any to be found in Radcliffe's writing.

What the eighteenth-century novel needed was an author who could control and exploit self-reflexive textual devices. Sterne of course had already dismantled the genre in Tristram Shandy, but his tour de force represented an extreme that had little relevance to the mainstream of contemporary fiction, even if the text itself overcame the Richardsonian and Johnsonian predictions about its inevitable slide into obscurity.[18] However, it is possibly the case that the same year Smith published The Young Philosopher, Jane Austen began to write the novel which was to contain her celebrated rebuke against,

> that ungenerous and impolitic custom so common with novel writers, of degrading by their contemptuous censure the very performances, to the number of which they are themselves adding (NA I, 61; 37).[19]

After the uncertainties and contradictions in the work of Burney, Smith, Radcliffe and - by the time Northanger Abbey was

actually published - Edgeworth, it is the assurance of Austen's authorial voice which is compelling; to Johnson it "bespeaks a profound confidence which no previous novelist of either sex possessed".[20] Interestingly, much of this confidence derives from Austen's novelistic "apprenticeship" as an author of parody and burlesque. Through the experimentation of her juvenilia, Austen attains an unparalleled appreciation of the structure, conventions and assumptions which comprise the eighteenth-century heroine-centred text.

The crux of Northanger Abbey is Austen's refusal to allow her readers a comfortable fulfilment for their expectations of the text. The title itself is famously misleading, as the words "castle" or "abbey" signified the tale of terror as explicitly as "mystery" or "gothic". Austen's narrative undercuts this, but later incorporates such assumptions into the comedy by recording Catherine's ecstatic response to the belated revelation of the name of the Tilney abode. Fittingly for an Austen heroine, Catherine will come to appreciate the superiority of a "well-connected Parsonage" (NA II, 222-3; 212) to an "Abbey". But if the suggestions of the title are soon belied by the text, the implications of the first line prove to be more tenacious. The novel opens with the narrator's remark,

> No one who had ever seen Catherine Morland in her infancy, would have supposed her born to be an heroine (NA I, 1; 13).

An experienced contemporary reader would have felt secure in drawing certain conclusions from such a comment, particularly when taken in conjunction with the title. The possibility that the narrative will be comic rewriting rather than a "straight" example of the gothic is established, while there is a distinct hint that the reader is about to experience a quixote's tale. Most important in this respect are the last four words. The audience for fiction at this time knew all about characters who

decide to "be" knight-errants or heroines. The influence of Don Quixote had been pervasive for a century and the figure of the female quixote was a familiar one, particularly from Lennox's text and Barrett's popular The Heroine (which was published before Northanger Abbey despite being written after it) wherein the central character, Cherry Wilkinson, soon to transform herself into Cherubina de Willoughby, discusses how her "ambition is to be a Heroine" (Hr I, 3).

It is necessary then to consider the field of expectations which would have surrounded a quixotic narrative. In summary such stories involved protagonists whose (usually literary) obsessions lead them to turn their backs on the "truth" of their circumstances in order to live out a fantasy, appearing to be victims of delusion to those around them. After a series of mistakes and humiliations they are disillusioned and come to accept the difference between "romance" and "reality". For the female quixote this usually entails facing up to the mature responsibilities of marriage and home life. Austen deliberately brings these possibilities into play, and proceeds to demonstrate how even this, more textually sophisticated, structure is still not enough to convey the complexity of the relationship between life and art. As a consequence, the belief in the affective potential of fiction and its role as a vehicle for moral messages, which had underpinned the work of the eighteenth-century novelist, is called into question.

While Northanger Abbey might appear to follow the structural pattern outlined above, the crucial difference is that Catherine does not know she is "in training for a heroine" (NA I, 8; 15).[21] Traditionally, quixotic characters have chosen to apply the material of their reading to their lives. Lennox's Arabella, Barrett's Cherubina, or Tenney's Dorcasina all have faith in the legitimacy of the "rules" they have derived from their "romances and novels". This is not true of

Catherine; instead the connecting comparisons are made by the narrator. When Catherine reads about Emily's experiences in Udolpho she is unaware that this is an instance of "the heroine of one novel ... [being] patronized by the heroine of another" (NA I, 61; 37), such a perspective is, however, available to the reader of Northanger Abbey, and is reinforced by the emphasis it receives through the narrator's interventions.

The narrative demonstrates that Catherine has no intention of interpreting the events of her experience in the light of fiction. Catherine is "accused" of "unthinkingly throwing away a fair opportunity of considering him [Henry Tilney] lost to her for ever, by being married already" (NA I, 107; 53) when she sees him with Eleanor for the first time, as Catherine conspicuously fails to assume "a deathlike paleness, and fall[] in a fit on Mrs. Allen's bosom" (NA I, 108; 53). Later, when Captain Tilney makes his appearance, the narrator remarks:

> He cannot be the instigator of the three villains in horsemen's great coats, by whom she will hereafter be forced into a travelling-chaise and four, which will drive off with incredible speed. Catherine, meanwhile, undisturbed by presentiments of such an evil, or of any evil at all, except that of having but a short set to dance down, enjoyed her usual happiness with Henry Tilney (NA II, 8; 131).

If anything such passages emphasise how little Catherine has been affected by the content of her reading. Contrary to the traditional eighteenth-century fears of the susceptibility of the female mind to the suggestions of fiction, Catherine manages to retain her sense of what is "simple and probable" (NA I, 107; 53) despite the diet of novels she consumes. What Catherine enjoys is the "luxury of a raised, restless, and frightened imagination over the pages of Udolpho" (NA I, 102; 51), but she is perfectly capable of putting the book down and returning her attention to the social world around her.

It is the level of sustained commentary Austen employs which makes the difference. Previously self-referential pointers and quixotic interpretations have taken place on the textual plain of characterisation, with occasional uneasy interventions from the author, Austen, however, sets in place a dual structure, so that Catherine can progress through her story unconscious of the "heroinization" which she is undergoing in the narratorial glossary around her. This structure is partially established in the initial chapters, but the totally unexpected, and unprecedented, inclusion of Austen's defence of the novel drives home the significance of the narrator's role. This is not a text which disguises its artificiality; Austen is constantly drawing attention to her devices and contrivance, never letting it be forgotten who is controlling "my heroine".

As a result, Austen is able to bring about the most technically daring aspect of the novel, the incorporation of what is effectively an enclosed quixotic narrative within the framework of the wider plot. The Northanger Abbey section of this novel has received a degree of critical attention as disproportionate as that afforded the Udolpho sequence of Radcliffe's tale, and it is here that Catherine travels through the traditional stages of delusion, humiliation, and disillusionment. The joke is that in her case it is not immersion in romance which triggers off the process but the hero. This contrasts with the model established by Lennox where the hero's role is simply to lament the heroine's "folly" and accept her after the inevitable return to "sanity".

Throughout Northanger Abbey, Henry Tilney plays as active a part in the heroine's imaginative life as "horrid" fiction, hence the moment when Catherine is described as meditating "by turns, on broken promises and broken arches, phaetons and false hangings, Tilneys and trap-doors" (NA I, 196; 87),[22] juxtapositions which later occur with specific reference to Henry:

> Her passion for ancient edifices was next in degree to her passion for Henry Tilney - and castles and abbies [sic] made usually the charm of those reveries which his image did not fill (NA II, 32; 141).

In the earlier sections of the novel these two centres of Catherine's imaginative experience alternate. Her "gothic" interests are associated with the Thorpes, both Isabella who initiates Catherine into the realm of the "horrid" and John, through his arrangement of expeditions like the ill-fated attempt to see Blaise castle. As the Thorpes gradually come to present themselves as rivals to the Tilneys for Catherine's society and loyalty, an opposition seems to be emerging between two distinct options. The heroine has the choice of the "delusive" or the "rational" - either the shallow triviality of the Thorpes or the more sensible world of the Tilneys whose conversation is of history, politics, and the picturesque.

But Austen avoids presenting this as the straightforward "fiction" versus "non-fiction" divide which emerges in many quixote narratives. Isabella Thorpe's corruption may, like Burney's Mrs Berlinton, derive in part from the sentimental doctrines of contemporary fiction, but it is the attitude of John Thorpe in ridiculing novels (outside the "masculine" tradition of Tom Jones or The Monk) which receives the severest treatment within a text that has previously included commendation for works such as "Cecilia, or Camilla, or Belinda" (NA I, 63; 38). The key complication is provided through Henry Tilney's relish for fiction. Henry's enthusiasm comes as a surprise to the heroine who is expecting negative comment with the same kind of resignation that Austen perceives as typical of the contemporary novelist anticipating critical reviews.[23] Henry shares the heroine's delight in immersing the imagination in fictional texts. He too gets sufficiently "caught up" to make relinquishing a book before curiosity is satisfied a hardship, and experiences a degree of involvement which he

describes as having his "hair standing on end the whole time" (NA I, 250; 106). Henry's employment of this cliché reveals him to have a "safe" detachment from the text, by such a remark he is signalling his freedom from obsession and delusion.

At this stage Catherine is equally capable of such distancing. Paradoxically, it is Henry's influence which will convert her into a quixotic misreader, through the imposition of his imagination upon hers. During the journey to Northanger Abbey, Henry presents the heroine with what is effectively a guideline for quixotic interpretation. As it is Henry speaking, this piece of gothic parody has a vast impact on Catherine.[24] Immediately after her arrival at Northanger, Austen's heroine, who for the previous chapters of the novel has been characterised by her difference from the "archetype" of the gothic heroine, suddenly starts considering the events of her experience through the filter of various Radcliffean texts. The Mysteries of Udolpho "explains" General Tilney, The Romance of the Forest offers a precedent for the discovery of vital manuscripts, and A Sicilian Romance prepares for the "narrative" of Mrs Tilney. Significantly, Catherine retains an awareness of Henry's role in her "delusion",

> it was in a great measure his own doing, for had not the cabinet appeared so exactly to agree with his description of her adventures, she should never have felt the smallest curiosity about it (NA II, 118; 173).

Catherine's progress through the stages of her quixotism take place rapidly, almost as soon as her fears have formed Henry intervenes to disillusion her. Considering his partial responsibility for the heroine's misreadings, Henry's position here appears more ambiguous than that of Charles Glanville or Robert Stuart, but still he is in a position of authority, allowed to withdraw the sanction he has previously given for the playfully imaginative when it seems to be veering out of control.

Catherine therefore undergoes the traditional quixotic transition from the "visions of romance" (NA II, 187; 199) to the "anxieties of common life" (NA II, 193; 201), but the significant point here is that, although the inset quixotic narrative has come to its (entirely conventional) end, Austen's novel is far from over. By incorporating this sequence into her fiction, Austen is able to question the premises of eighteenth-century quixotic parody as well as contemporary gothic tales. Henry's solution is too straightforward; characters in a novel cannot experience a "simple" switch from "romance" to "common life" because they are as much bound by novelistic conventions as by any attempt on the author's part to adhere to a mimetic representation of life beyond the text. So having allowed Henry a great deal of control and "authority" (both in terms of the awe with which Catherine responds to him and in his ability to "author" the nature of her supposed delusion), Austen proceeds to reassert the framework of her own commentary upon the text. The reader is made to realise that however much Henry has appeared to "speak" for Austen, he can only function on the textual level of story and character, his perception is limited by the fact that, unlike the author, he cannot recognise his own fictionality and the inappropriateness of criteria drawn from "life".

So Northanger Abbey enters a final stage where the text acknowledges its novelistic qualities. Throughout the novel Austen has derived comedy from tongue-in-cheek accounts of the moralising elements of contemporary fiction, especially the manipulation of apparently minor incidents to drive home a "message" for the reader,[25] and her subversion culminates in the representation of Mrs Morland in the closing sequence. Catherine's mother may be full of the proverbial wisdom and common sense solutions of "real life" but this avails her nothing in relation to her daughter, whose experience is that of the heroine of a fiction. Running parallel to this is the

redefinition of Henry Tilney's role. No longer able to exert a sophisticated detachment from fiction, Henry is drawn into the enactment of novelistic conventions regarding the hero's behaviour. In accordance with the sentiments of the final paragraph of Northanger Abbey, Henry has to exert the necessary "filial disobedience" in the face of "parental tyranny" that will allow the requisite fairy tale ending (NA II, 331; 252).

The unmasking of General Tilney as a tyrant has the most significant revisionary implications for the inset quixotic narrative; through this, the status of Catherine's "delusion" is rendered as unstable as Henry Tilney's "rationality". Possibly the most important line in Austen's text therefore is that which reports how

> Catherine, at any rate, heard enough to feel, that in suspecting General Tilney of either murdering or shutting up his wife, she had scarcely sinned against his character, or magnified his cruelty (NA II, 318; 247).

Once the heroine's novel-led perceptions have been partially vindicated, Austen exuberantly demonstrates the ways in which her reader is as dependent on predetermined expectations as her heroine has been. The author's technique here depends on an exaggerated fulfilment of the conventions governing narrative closure. Austen acknowledges she cannot keep readers in suspense who have the advantage of "the tell-tale compression of the pages before them", and so dismisses obstacles and presents the readers with the expected picture of "perfect felicity" (NA II, 326; 250). As Roberts points out, the final twist to the tale is provided by the sidelong glance at Radcliffe's fiction in the "explanation" of Eleanor's lover and his relation to Catherine's famous laundry list (NA II, 327-9; 251). Here Austen proves she can outdo any sister novelist in leaving no loose end unaccounted for.[26]

Northanger Abbey has had a mixed critical reception in the twentieth century with many writers questioning the unity of the text and arguing that the novel is a transitional piece which enacts the shift from the burlesque techniques of Austen's juvenilia to the mature comedy of her later fiction.[27] However, in recent years, critics have produced sensitive accounts of Austen's use of parody in Northanger Abbey that have often been favourable.[28] Indeed, the subtleties of her techniques have been generally suited to twentieth-century critical methodologies, which goes a long way to explain the security of Austen's literary reputation. Other contemporary writers have not been so fortunate, one striking example being Eaton Stannard Barrett. As Jacqueline Howard has noted,

> Barrett's burlesque of the Gothic, The Heroine, which enjoyed immense popularity when it was published in 1813, is little read today, while Austen's more quietly received 1818 publication has become canonical.[29]

This observation takes on a particular significance when it is considered in relation to the feminist interest in the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century novel that has dominated research of the subject in the 1980s and '90s. The feminist endeavour to "rescue" contemporary women authors from the "obscurity" to which they have been consigned by a male dominated literary establishment,[30] has not been equipped to deal with either the influence and popularity of authors such as Burney or Radcliffe, or conversely, highly successful writers like Barrett (and as Duncan suggests, Scott[31]) being overshadowed by Austen in the twentieth-century critical appraisal of the novel. Though hardly a bestseller in her lifetime, it is Austen who becomes "canonical" while Barrett slides into obscurity. Interestingly, it is the latter author's supposedly "reactionary" attitude to women which has been the main reason for the speedy dismissal he tends to receive in recent critical accounts.

Barrett may not be the author to turn to for illustrations of textual complexity but, in terms of literary posterity, he does seem to have paid too heavy a penalty for not being Jane Austen - critics like Jan Fergus going so far as to express their "surprise" that Austen enjoyed reading The Heroine.[32] Critics such as Howard who are capable of taking infinite pains in sensitive analysis of Austen or Radcliffe have no compunction in damning Barrett.[33] He is "labelled" and condemned in a manner which modern criticism avoids when referring to female novelists. Thus Barrett becomes simply the "Anti-Whig, Anti-Jacobin, anti-Sentimentalist, antifeminist writer" (a comment by Gary Kelly's that Howard quotes approvingly),[34] the author of a "high-Tory antiromance",[35] and, as such, a representative of a patriarchal system that opposed expressions of female imagination. To Paul Lewis therefore, what "seems most insidious and provocative about The Heroine today is Barrett's celebration of repression".[36]

Ironically, it is as a result of the opportunities which men had to become involved in political life in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that Barrett can be so safely typed as a reactionary conservative. He dedicated his novel to Canning and is associated with the circle of satirists around William Gifford and John Hookham Frere,[37] and this is "proof" enough. The conservatism of female writers such as Burney or Radcliffe is much easier to overlook since they do not leave such evidence. Barrett's political allegiance seems to have coloured the recent reception of his novel more than any other factor. Howard, for example, treats "Monk" Lewis seriously because he, "like" the woman author, is an "outsider" owing to the controversial nature of his texts. While Lewis' radicalism allows the barely concealed misogyny of his representation of Antonia, Agnes and Matilda to be overlooked, Barrett's composition of a poem depicting an idealised image of womanhood is used as a damning piece of evidence for the prosecution.[38]

Barrett has been especially unfortunate in that, of the techniques and approaches available to the contemporary novelist, he tends to choose those to which twentieth-century criticism has not been greatly sympathetic. In general the play of irony and wit has been privileged above the burlesque, farce, and comic representations of violence or physicality. The latter are pervasive elements of eighteenth-century fiction, the early works of Fielding, Smollett or Burney being well-known instances. However, they are often "edited out" in modern critical appraisals (recent accounts of Evelina being illustrative) and, in the case of Smollett particularly, have had a detrimental effect on the author's literary reputation. Such elements filter into the British novel from the picaresque tales of previous prose fiction, but they are also part of the eighteenth-century inheritance from Cervantes' Don Quixote.[39] It is Barrett's place within this quixotic tradition which casts the greatest doubt on the conclusions drawn in recent interpretations. Many of the aspects of The Heroine which have been interpreted as illustrations of Barrett's repressive conservatism can be shown to be consequences of the literary models the author was using rather his own ideological bias.

Modern critics often draw attention to Barrett's place within a line of novels that display the influence of Don Quixote,[40] but rarely consider the implications of this for the narrative. Few eighteenth-century novels were as explicit about their relationship to Cervantes as Barrett's. The heroine's "spirit" meets Don Quixote in the prefatory material and finds him to be a "kindred soul[]" (Hr I, viii), while part of her "cure" is effected by a reading of the text (this has ironies of its own considering the response it engendered in Launcelot Greaves). Within the tale numerous allusions are made, often involving scenes from Don Quixote previously reworked by Lennox. Thus the "traditional" book-burning sequence occurs (although unlike Arabella's, Cherubina's texts

are consigned to the flames) and the discussion of differences between the "common law of England" and the "common law of romance" (Hr I, 55-7; II, 53).

Many of Cherubina's adventures are closely modelled on the Don's. She too mistakes buildings for "castles" (Hr I, 103) and, in a night scene reminiscent of Joseph Andrews, sheep for dangerous enemies (while they are "armies" for the Don, or ghostly apparitions for Parson Adams, Cherubina keeps within her own "genre" by expecting "banditti" (Hr III, 32-40)). Cherubina also becomes the butt of elaborate jokes by characters who choose to indulge her delusion. Initially it is Lady Gwyn who takes on the role assumed by the Duke and Duchess in Cervantes' text, perceiving the heroine as "a crazed creature, that I brought into my house to divert my guests" (Hr III, 10-11) but, while it is during this stage of Don Quixote that the eponymous hero believes his ambition to "be" a knight errant is fulfilled, Cherubina has to be duped twice over (on the next occasion by Betterton and Montmorenci) before she feels assured of her "heroineship". Hence her reaction to being held in "Gogmagog ... in the Black Forest of Grodolphon" (Hr iii, 202),

> I gazed with delight at this admirable apartment. It was a perfect treasure: nothing could be more complete: all was in the best style of horror; and now, for the first time, I felt the full consciousness of being as real a heroine as ever existed (Hr III, 200).

Those who read Cherubina's gullibility as evidence of Barrett's anti-feminism, seeing the creation of a "stupid" heroine in terms of ridicule,[41] are underplaying the extent to which Barrett is following an established pattern in his representation. This has significance for the end of the novel.

It is Cherubina's discovery of the fakery surrounding her imprisonment, and the process of disillusionment which this

triggers, that is most often pointed to as exemplifying Barrett's repressive and didactic intentions, with particular attention being paid to Stuart's role.[42] To Johnson, for example, "Cherubina ends up in a madhouse, where she is cured by a commonsensical mentor-suitor who impresses upon her the absolute distinction between romance and reality".[43] This denouement is not invented by Barrett, however, but rather inherited. Don Quixote, Lennox's Arabella, and Tenney's Dorcasina are all similarly "cured" of their delusions at the end of the text. In each case the resolution lends itself to the creation of ambiguities rather than the communication of moral messages and, as shown above, this is highlighted by Austen's reworking of the paradigm in Northanger Abbey. In fact Cherubina experiences the relatively "happy" solution, for, despite suffering the "inevitable" period of illness, she does not die like Cervantes' hero, nor is she condemned to the lonely old age of Tenney's female quixote. Instead Cherubina shares Arabella's fate of marriage to the hero.

It is at the conclusion that the parallels between The Heroine and The Female Quixote become most noticeable. Previously similarities have been obscured by the fact that Lennox's text does not utilise the farcical comedy of the physical or bawdy in the same way as Don Quixote, Female Quixotism and The Heroine. This is particularly well illustrated by the differences in the "entrance into the world" ball scenes the respective heroines undergo. They may wear similar costumes but Arabella's victory strongly contrasts with Cherubina's humiliation.[44] However, Barrett has throughout drawn upon Lennox for the portrayal of the relationship between hero and heroine. The circumstances of Stuart's introduction are similar to those of Glanville's,[45] while the attraction which Cherubina feels for him - revealing her "natural" rather than "heroinized" side - again echoes The Female Quixote. Although through their quixotism both Arabella and Cherubina

prove their point that "A heroine is never to be got without agony and adventure" (Hr I, 149-50), they eventually submit to being "educated" by illness, members of the clergy, and their soon-to-be husbands.

Robert Stuart's summarising speech is usually interpreted as Barrett closing down the imaginative possibilities of his text, and fiction in general.[46] However, Stuart is not as unequivocal as he is often made out to be, it is usually overlooked that the "seduction" of novels is only described as a problem when "indulged in extreme". In general, as Stuart observes:

> Romances such as the Mysteries of Udolpho, the Italian, and the Bravo of Venice, which address themselves to the imagination alone, are often captivating, and seldom detrimental (Hr III, 289).

Like Lennox, Barrett has obviously read the relevant prose writings and it is unlikely that such an extensive knowledge and appreciation of fictional conventions would be accompanied by dismissing novels entirely. The notes identifying sources, appended to the third edition of his work,[47] show Barrett's broad field of reference (the range of novels cited extends far beyond the gothic). Kelly makes the astute comment that these notes suggest that Barrett "felt his readers had not appreciated the scope and variety of his burlesque".[48] But it also illustrates the subtlety with which Barrett had worked his allusions into the narrative, in strong contrast to a fiction such as Beckford's Modern Novel Writing where the "parody" consists of unattributed extracts taken from novels between Richardson's Pamela and Smith's Celestina, linked together by the kind of "mock-novelese" writing which Barrett only ventures in the inset narrative of "Il Castello di Grimgothica; or Memoirs of Lady Hysterica Bellamour".[49]

Nor does Barrett particularly target female novelists.[50] While his notes reveal extensive reference to woman authors, this may merely reflect Ian Watt's point that the "majority of eighteenth-century novels were actually written by women" rather than any prejudice on Barrett's part.[51] Noticeable amongst the "exalted models" that Cherubina believes she has the "honour to imitate" (Hr I, 144) are the heroines of Richardson. On different occasions Barrett's protagonist alludes to Pamela (Hr I, 29), Clarissa (Hr I, 108), and Harriet Byron (Hr II, 26). Amongst male writers more contemporary to Barrett, Burke's rhetorical flights in the Reflections upon the Revolution in France are parodied, usually by association with Montmorenci (Hr I, 136), while Scott and Byron come in for their share of attention in the characterisation of "Whylome Eftsoones". However, it is the position of Rousseau within The Heroine which is the strongest argument against the author's antagonism being reserved for the woman novelist. If any one text is singled out as particularly "dangerous" it is La Nouvelle Héloïse and this is more for political reasons than any intrinsically fictional quality.[52]

If Barrett's attitude to women novelists is not as critical as it has been presented, neither is his view of his heroine. Throughout the novel Cherubina has experienced the typical freedom of the quixote, and just as Radcliffe's "rational explanations" do not cancel out Emily's imaginative experience, Cherubina's "disillusionment" cannot overshadow the narrative's exuberant record of her adventures.[53] In this respect Cherubina has been wiser in her choice of models than either Arabella or Dorcasina, Jean Nienkamp has argued that, while

> Female Quixotism is structured episodically, like Don Quixote and the popular picaresque novels of the mid-eighteenth century, the similarity between individual episodes is limited by the fact that the protagonist in Female Quixotism is a woman: respectable women at this

> time did not have the kind of footloose mobility characteristic of the picaresque hero.[54]

But, as Moers established in her account of "traveling heroinism", a significant factor in the success of the gothic was that it allowed authors to "send maidens on distant and exciting journeys without offending the proprieties".[55] Cherubina, therefore, with the double sanction of quixotism and gothicism has almost unprecedented possibilities for adventure, demonstrated immediately by her spectacular destruction of the ruined cottage, "an original horror for you; and all of my own contrivance" (Hr I, 44). Once Cherubina has cast off the mundane tedium of life as squire's daughter,[56] she answers to no authority and careers from one dramatic incident to the next with a vitality that contrasts sharply with the timid, "teachableness" (NA II, 122; 174) of Catherine Morland.

By the siege of Monkton castle it is apparent that Cherubina has achieved the typical quixotic transformation of drawing everyone around her into her fantasy world. While the other characters may think that they are duping or humouring the heroine, they are nevertheless acting out parts created for them by her imagination. It is a moot point who is more "deluded", the heroine who believes she has succeeded in establishing her own gothic adventure, or the perceptions of those who ridicule her based on premises of "reality" which make no allowances for the fact that they are being applied to a fictional text. Kelly may argue that Cherubina is mistaken in the attempts she makes at "novelizing the world around her" but it should not be overlooked that the world around her is a novel.[57] To Cherubina those whom she encounters are simply the "dramatis personae" (Hr I, 86) of her story, hence her attempts to stage-manage the "plot" by casting characters in the roles of "villain" and "hero"[58] (the quixotic self-obsession involved here has been the basis of unfavourable readings of Cherubina's character, similar to those of Lennox's Arabella[59]).

Of course, Cherubina's "plot" does not work out as she planned. Stuart's involvement throughout has a tendency to make it go awry[60] and, by joining forces, Betterton and Montmorenci defy the roles Cherubina has scripted for them. Like many eighteenth-century figures before her, Lovelace and Arabella included, Cherubina's "characters" elude her control while her attempts to "author" the text eventually fail. But it is significant that the "counterplots" of figures such as Betterton and Montmorenci are no more successful than the heroine's. They may feel that they have a sophisticated perspective on the heroine's delusion, and can mock her because "life" is not like her fantasy, but they are to be eventually overcome by novelistic convention when the hero arrives to save the day and, by rescuing the heroine, pave the way for the correct romance denouement. Robert Stuart can no more evade his fictional context than Henry Tilney does, as Cherubina points out:

> 'You see,' said I to Stuart, 'after all your pains to prevent me from imitating romances, you have made me terminate my adventures like a true romance - in a wedding.' (Hr III, 302)

Fittingly this sequence alludes to the conclusion of The Italian, with Jerry Sullivan in the role of Paulo (Jerry, like Paulo, is the Sancho Panza figure of the text). As with the Radcliffean "model" the protagonists, now apparently free of the delusions which have obstructed their progress, come together for the traditional resolution with "virtue vindicated, vice punished, rights restored, and matrimony made easy" (Hr I, 114). The distance between gothic original and parodic rewriting, never as great as their presentational contexts would lead the reader to believe, has finally disappeared.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANN RADCLIFFE

Section i: Notes

1 Jane Austen, Northanger Abbey II, 189; 199-200.

2 For an account of the transition from "revival of romance" to "its rewriting" to "its recreation ... as a central genre of British poetry", see S. Curran, Poetic Form and British Romanticism (New York, Oxford, 1986), p. 129; also pp. 18-19, 24, 128-33, 213-14.

3 Recent feminist criticism has taken issue with this, see A.K. Mellor, Romanticism and Gender (New York, London, 1993), especially pp. 1-7.

4 Walter Scott, Biographies - 1 in The Miscellaneous Works of Sir Walter Scott, Bart (Edinburgh, 1870), III, 342.

5 See "On the Supernatural in Poetry", The New Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal XVI (1826), 145-52.

6 See C.A. Howells, Love, Mystery, and Misery: Feeling in Gothic Fiction (London, 1978), pp. 1, 3-4, 80-2; E. Napier, The Failure of Gothic: Problems of Disjunction in an Eighteenth-Century Literary Form (Oxford, 1987), pp. vii-viii; J. Howard, Reading Gothic Fiction: A Bakhtinian Approach (Oxford, 1994), pp. 228-9.

7 For the "conventions" of gothic fiction see E.K. Sedgwick, The Coherence of Gothic Conventions (1980; repr. New York, London, 1986), pp. 9-10, 35; E. MacAndrew, The Gothic Tradition in Fiction (New York, 1979), esp. pp. ix-x and 4-8; Napier, Failure p. x; see also Howard, Reading Gothic pp. 1-2, 13-14.

8 For recent studies of "unexpected" groupings of authors, see e.g. M. Poovey, The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer: Ideology as Style in the Works of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley, and Jane Austen (Chicago, London, 1984); D. Cottom, The Civilized Imagination: A Study of Ann Radcliffe, Jane Austen, and Sir Walter Scott (Cambridge, 1985), and Duncan, Modern Romance.

9 See Doody, "Female Dreams", pp. 551, 562; Burney: Life pp. 147-8, 273; Ross, Excellence pp. 135-6, 147-65 and M. Butler, introduction, Northanger Abbey (Harmondsworth, 1995), pp. xxii-xxiii.

10 Duncan, Modern Romance p. 20, see also Spencer, Woman Novelist p. 182.

11 The word "romance" appears in the title of her first two full-length novels and occurs on the title page as a mark of generic description in the remaining three.

[12] Radcliffe also influenced the "second generation", of Byron, Keats, Shelley and Scott. For the argument that Radcliffe's political conservatism rendered her inevitably opposed to Romanticism, see D. Durant, "Ann Radcliffe and the Conservative Gothic", SEL XXII (1982), 519-30.

[13] Ann Radcliffe, The Romance of the Forest (London, 1791). Further references are included in the text abbreviated as RF, followed by the corresponding page number in The Romance of the Forest ed. C. Chard, (Oxford, New York, 1986). The latter is referred to in the notes as RF (1986).

[14] It is a central theme of Romantic poetry from "The Ruined Cottage" to "Ozymandias". See T. McFarland, Romanticism and the Forms of Ruin: Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Modalities of Fragmentation (Princeton, New Jersey, 1981).

[15] Ann Radcliffe, The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne (1789), 2nd ed., (London, 1793). References are included in the text abbreviated as CAD, followed by the corresponding page number in The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne ed. A. Milbank, (Oxford, New York), 1995.

[16] Ann Radcliffe, The Mysteries of Udolpho: A Romance (London, 1794). Further references are included in the text abbreviated as MU, followed by the corresponding page number in The Mysteries of Udolpho ed. B. Dobrée, (London, New York, Toronto, 1966). The latter is referred to in the notes as MU (1966).

[17] See Chard, introduction, RF (1986), p. xx; Dobrée, introduction, MU (1966), p. x, and Spender, Mothers p. 242.

[18] See RF I, 206; 82-3 and MU I, 15; 6.

[19] See MU II, 324; 284 and The Italian: Or, the Confessional of the Black Penitents (London, 1797), I, 242. Further references are included in the text abbreviated as Ital, followed by the corresponding page number in The Italian ed. F. Garber, (London, New York, Toronto, 1968). The latter is indicated in the notes as Ital (1968).

[20] Ann Radcliffe, A Sicilian Romance (London, 1790). Further references are included in the text abbreviated as SR, followed by the corresponding page number in A Sicilian Romance ed. A. Milbank, (Oxford, New York, 1993).

[21] For discussion of the woman writer and the concept of "genius", see Howard, Reading Gothic pp. 5, 67-97, and G. Kelly, Women, Writing and Revolution, 1790-1827 (Oxford, 1993), p. 40.

[22] Often overlooked by those who value Radcliffe as a "source" for Austen, see e.g. E. Nollen, "Ann Radcliffe's A Sicilian

Romance: A New Source for Jane Austen's Sense and Sensibility", ELN XXII (1984), 30-7, and N.C. Smith, "Sense, Sensibility and Ann Radcliffe", SEL XIII (1973), 590n.

[23] Sophia Lee, The Recess; Or, A Tale of Other Times (London, 1785), I, 6.

[24] This emerges as a result of the dual narration - when Ellinor's account is read after Matilda's it becomes clear that the elder sister's devotion to her husband has led her to overlook Ellinor - particularly by leaving her behind when they flee the Elizabethan court.

[25] For a consideration of the deference of "Emily's impulsive sensibility" to St Aubert's "authoritative rationality" here see B.M. Benedict, "Pictures of Conformity: Sentiment and Structure in Ann Radcliffe's Style", PQ LXVIII (1989), 371-75.

[26] e.g. MU II, 136; 214 where Emily quotes from her father's famous "dangers of sensibility" speech (MU I, 214; 80).

[27] See Howard, Reading Gothic pp. 136-8.

[28] To Doody Radcliffe's broadening of the emotional range of the hero had a "liberating" effect on the nineteenth-century novel, "Female Dreams", pp. 566, 571-2. Also Spencer, Woman Novelist pp. 206-7.

[29] Paulo's first scene with Vivaldi is so reminiscent of the Cervantian model that it suggests direct allusion on Radcliffe's part, see Ital I, 175-200; 70-80.

[30] See e.g. RF III, 84; 257; MU I, 299; 112 and II, 90; 196; Ital I, 65; 29 and I, 69; 30.

[31] See RF III, 58; 247 and III, 121-2; 272.

[32] Duncan, Modern Romance pp. 10-11.

[33] ibid., p. 7.

[34] Such comments as La Motte's cited here, Ellena's, Ital III, 122-3; 302 and Emily's, MU II, 448; 329, III, 183-4; 407 and III, 283; 444, are frequently discussed, see Todd, Angellica p. 268, Ross, Excellence p. 159, Napier, Failure p. 66, Smith, "Sense, Sensibility", pp. 587-8, and, especially, Duncan, Modern Romance pp. 20-21, 39-43.

[35] In Radcliffe's case explicit references do tend to occur in the novels set closer to the present moment, in other words The Romance of the Forest and The Italian, placed in the late seventeenth and mid eighteenth centuries respectively.

[36] See The Recess I, advertisement, 118-9 and 209; the text does however reveal an attraction to the pageantry of monarchy, see I, 205-6 and III, 203. See also Spencer, Woman Novelist p. 195.

[37] Watt, Rise of the Novel p. 32 particularly.

[38] Duncan, Modern Romance p. 40.

[39] For application of Todorov's Introduction à la litterature fantastique to the gothic novel see Howard, Reading Gothic pp. 36-43 and M.L. Carter, Specter or Delusion? The Supernatural in Gothic Fiction (Ann Arbor, London, 1987), pp. 7-15.

[40] See Carter, Specter pp. 36-7 and 41-45 for analysis of occasions when Radcliffe "moves from the fantastic into the marvelous [sic]" (p. 41).

[41] See Howard, Reading Gothic p. 130.

[42] For Garber, Radcliffe is "too much of a rationalist to admit of the genuinely supernatural", introduction, Ital (1968) p. xi; while to R.D. Stock "the implicit rationalism of Radcliffe is not altogether satisfying", The Holy and the Daemonic from Sir Thomas Browne to William Blake (Princeton, New Jersey, 1982), p. 290. Also Figes, Subterfuge pp. 68-9 and 74. For discussion of restraint, improvement, and common sense in the novels, see G. Kelly, "'A Constant Vicissitude of Interesting Passions': Ann Radcliffe's Perplexed Narratives", Ariel X (1979), 49-52; and N.C. Smith, "Sense, Sensibility", p. 577-90.

[43] See RF I, 93-5; 38; MU III, 340-3; 466-7, III, 358; 472 and Ital II, 42; 143.

[44] A. McWhir, "The Gothic Transgression of Disbelief: Walpole, Radcliffe and Lewis" in Gothic Fictions: Prohibition/Transgression ed. K.W. Graham, (New York, 1989), p. 36.

[45] Napier, Failure p. 40.

[46] Particularly Napier's study, but also Duncan on "mimetic disjunction", Modern Romance pp. 48-9 and Benedict on "stylistic disjunctions" in The Mysteries of Udolpho, "Conformity", p. 371.

[47] Napier, Failure p. 42.

[48] ibid., pp. 100-1 and 109.

[49] Coleridge, Critical Review August 1794, Coleridge's Miscellaneous Criticism ed. T.M. Raysor, (London, 1936), p. 357.

50 Anon, "Mrs Radcliffe's Posthumous Romance", in The New Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal XVI (1826), 533 and 534 respectively. To this author Gaston de Blondeville represents, "the change from falsehood to truth - for the supernatural agency is real" and so the "reader is not mocked with a false show; he is not teased by a thousand improbabilities", (p. 534). The modern equivalent is Napier's "Radcliffe trifles with the reader by encouraging inauthentic responses to inauthentic situations in her distinctive contribution to Gothic fiction: the supernatural expliqué", Failure p. 101.

51 Ross, Excellence pp. 139-43. See also Clery Supernatural pp. 108-10.

52 Horace Walpole, The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence ed. W.S. Lewis, (London, New Haven), II (1937), pp. 107-8, 110; and XXVIII (1955), pp. 381-2. Scott, Biographies - 1 III, 329.

53 Doody, "Female Dreams" pp. 555, 558-9. See also Spencer, Woman Novelist p. 197 and M.L. Isaac, "Sophia Lee and the Gothic of Female Community", SN XXVIII (1996), 203.

54 At the point when Auberry hears the tale of the first Mrs Grimshaw from a servant woman the narrative is at the eighth remove from the heroine Azemia.

55 "Jacquetta Agneta Mariana Jenks" a.k.a. Beckford, Azemia: A Descriptive and Sentimental Novel (London, 1797), II, 248.

56 ibid., II, 246. See e.g. William Enfield's review of The Mysteries of Udolpho, The Monthly Review (November 1794) n.s., XV, 280: repr. in Williams' Novel and Romance, pp. 392-5.

57 Coleridge, Miscellaneous Criticism p. 356.

58 T. Castle, "The Spectralization of the Other in The Mysteries of Udolpho", in The New Eighteenth Century: Theory, Politics, English Literature eds. F. Nussbaum and L. Brown, (New York, London, 1987), p. 233. For a feminist interpretation of the "two worlds" theory see Ross, Excellence p. 151.

59 However Harriet Byron and Camilla Tyrold are nearer to the "education by experience" paradigm associated with Lennox and Austen than the other heroines of Richardson and Burney, while Fanny Price relates to the earlier "exemplary" heroines.

60 See Durant, "Conservative Gothic", pp. 525 and 528; also Duncan, Modern Romance p. 37.

61 e.g. Smith, "Sense, Sensibility", p. 582; Napier, Failure p. 100. Napier does not ignore the incongruities which result from this but reads them as part of the text's incoherence.

62 Garber sees "Schedoni's death-bed remonstrances" as the "admonitions of Mrs. Radcliffe", introduction, Ital (1968), p. ix. D. Punter argues that this seems to be "rather unfair[]" on Vivaldi, The Literature of Terror: A History of Gothic Fictions from 1765 to the Present Day (London, New York, 1980), p. 74. See also Smith, "Sense, Sensibility", pp. 584-5. Carter presents a more sophisticated account in Specter pp. 38-9.

63 This was one of the most remarked upon and parodied aspects of the Radcliffean text, see Scott, Biographies - 1 III, 368-9, Beckford, Azemia II, 89.

64 See Clery, Supernatural pp. 111-14.

65 See Carter's analysis of this in Specter pp. 28-31.

66 Todd, Angellica p. 265, also Ross, Excellence p. 150.

67 See Sedgwick, Coherence pp. 27-35; MacAndrew, Gothic Tradition pp. 3, 22; Doody, "Female Dreams", pp. 553-4, 570; and M. Butler, "The Woman at the Window: Ann Radcliffe in the Novels of Mary Wollstonecraft and Jane Austen", Gender and Literary Voice ed. J. Todd, Women and Literature (New York, London, 1980), I, n.s. pp. 129-32.

68 Beattie, Dissertations pp. 211-2.

69 Keats, The Poems of John Keats ed. J. Stillinger (London, 1978), p. 313.

70 Doody, "Female Dreams", p. 553.

71 It is not the case, as Carter suggests, that "Emily's mysterious music is not explained, but left to linger as part of the fantastic atmosphere", Specter p. 36.

72 In "Spectralization" Castle discusses the effect created by the fact "Whenever Emily St. Aubert thinks about her lover, Valancourt, he suddenly appears", pp. 237-8. It is a convention of the gothic novel noted by Barrett's Cherubina, "For the farther off a distrest [sic] heroine believes a hero, the nearer he is sure to be. Only let her have good grounds for supposing him at her Antipodes, and nine times out of ten she finds him at her elbow", Hr II, 118-19.

73 See e.g. CAD 280; 113; SR II, 216; 199, RF III, 347; 363 and MU IV, 428; 672.

74 Barbauld, Miscellaneous Pieces p. 191. For Radcliffe's concern regarding "the potentially excessive passions of contemporary literature", see Bruhm, Gothic Bodies pp. 31-2

75 Anon, review of Count Roderic's Castle; or, Gothic Times, a Tale (1794), in The Analytical Review XX (1794), 489. See Radcliffe, "On Supernatural", pp. 149-50.

76 For discussion of Lewis and Radcliffe see Garber, introduction, Ital (1968), p. xi-xii, Todd, Angellica p. 256, S.M. Conger, "Sensibility Restored: Radcliffe's Answer to Lewis's The Monk" in Prohibition/Transgression pp. 113-49 and Howard, Reading Gothic pp. 182-91, 208-11, 218-9 and 234-7.

77 Howard, Reading Gothic p. 141.

Section ii: Notes

1 Ann Radcliffe, The Mysteries of Udolpho II, 386; 306.

2 Fielding, preface, Joseph Andrews pp. 3 and 4 respectively.

3 Duncan, Modern Romance pp. 1-4.

4 In Bakhtin's words the novel "is a genre that is ever questing, ever examining itself and subjecting its established forms to review", Dialogic Imagination p. 39.

5 The first grouping has been considered previously, see chapter three, section iii; for discussion of the second see Butler, "Woman at the Window", pp. 128-48.

6 See Castle, "Spectralization", pp. 231 and 307 (note 3); Butler, "Woman at the Window", p. 135.

7 See B.B. Roberts, "The Horrid Novels: The Mysteries of Udolpho and Northanger Abbey" in Prohibitions/Transgressions pp. 89-111.

8 See P. Lewis, Comic Effects: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Humor in Literature (Albany, New York, 1989), pp. 116, 119. Also Napier, Failure p. 69.

9 Lewis, Comic Effects pp. 116-19.

10 Beckford's parodies are mentioned above. For Lewis' "The Effusions of Sensibility" (1791), see The Life and Correspondence of M.G. Lewis, ed. M. Baron-Wilson, (London, 1839), II, 241-70.

11 Napier, Failure pp. 66-9.

12 See Walpole, Otranto pp. 8-9.

13 For accounts which recognise this complexity see Howells, Love, Mystery p. 116; Todd, Angellica p. 253 and C.L. Johnson,

Jane Austen: Women, Politics, and the Novel (Chicago, London, 1988), p. 48. For the opposing view - that Austen's simply intended to ridicule her "target" - see L.C. May, Parodies of the Gothic Novel (New York, 1980), pp. 7, 14 and 39.

14 The final mention of Count Morano is during the account of Montoni's "defeat and signal humiliation", MU IV, 30; 522.

15 See MU III, 37-8; 354, III, 46; 357 and III, 55; 360-1.

16 Rousseau, La Nouvelle Héloïse transl. Eloisa II, 124-30.

17 Both Adeline and Theodore (RF II, 66; 136, II, 268; 216-7), Ellena and Vivaldi (Ital I, 213; 84, II, 163; 187).

18 For Richardson's remarks, in a letter written early in 1761, see SL pp. 341-2, for Johnson's see Boswell's Life of Johnson ed. G.B. Hill, rev. L.F. Powell, (Oxford, 1934), II, 449.

19 Northanger Abbey was not published until December 1817 (1818 on the title page), however it had been first sold to a publisher in 1803 and was probably written during 1798-99.

20 Johnson, Women, Politics p. 28.

21 See Messick, "Reading As If", pp. 48 and 51.

22 Discussed by E. Birkhead, The Tale of Terror: A Study of the Gothic Romance (London, 1921), p. 131; L.G. Mooneyham, Romance, Language and Education in Jane Austen's Novels (London, 1988), p. 11 and Johnson, Women, Politics p. 43.

23 Howard argues that challenging the attitude of (primarily male) reviewers of the contemporary novel was central to Austen's intentions in the composition of Northanger Abbey, Reading Gothic pp. 160-2.

24 Henry's "responsibility" has been frequently noted, see K.R. Burlin, "'The Pen of the Contriver': The Four Fictions of Northanger Abbey" in Jane Austen: Bicentenary Essays ed. J. Halperin, (Cambridge, 1975), pp. 100-1, T.G. Wallace, "Northanger Abbey and the Limits of Parody", SN XX (1988), 265 and 269; Johnson, Women, Politics p. 39.

25 See e.g. NA I, 112-13; 55, I, 162-4; 73-4, and II, 218-19; 210.

26 Roberts, "Horrid Novels", p. 89, see also Burlin, "Contriver", p. 107 and Johnson, Women, Politics p. 91.

27 See e.g. C.S. Emden, "The Composition of Northanger Abbey", RES n.s. XIX (1968), 279-87; K.L. Moler, Jane Austen's Art of

Allusion (1968; repr. Lincoln, London, 1977), pp. 17-22. For a contrasting account see F.J. Kearful, "Satire and the Form of the Novel: The Problem of Aesthetic Unity in Northanger Abbey", JELH XXXII (1965), 511-27; also Burlin, "Contriver", p. 90.

28 e.g. Wallace "Limits of Parody", pp. 262-73.

29 Howard, Reading Gothic p. 144.

30 e.g. Spender's Mothers of the Novel.

31 Duncan, Modern Romance pp. 17-8.

32 J. Fergus, Jane Austen and the Didactic Novel: "Northanger Abbey", "Sense and Sensibility" and "Pride and Prejudice" (London, 1983), p. 34. Austen's remark appears in a letter to Cassandra Austen of 2nd-3rd March 1814, "It is Even^{g}. We have drank tea & I have torn through the 3^{d} vol. of the Heroine, & do not think it falls off. - It is a delightful burlesque, particularly on the Radcliffe style", Jane Austen's Letters ed. D. Le Faye, 3rd ed., (Oxford, New York, 1995), p. 256.

33 To Howard, Barrett's "trivialization of the genre" is "close at times to travesty" involving "frivolous debasement" of the Radcliffean text, Reading Gothic pp. 148, 154 and 155.

34 G. Kelly, "Unbecoming a Heroine: Novel Reading, Romanticism and Barrett's The Heroine" in NCL XLV (1990), 227; and Howard, Reading Gothic p. 144.

35 Johnson, Women, Politics p. 133.

36 Lewis, Comic Effects p. 125.

37 See Kelly, "Unbecoming", pp. 227-8.

38 Barrett's Woman, A Poem was published in 1810.

39 See Reed, Exemplary History for an account of these "two traditions" behind the British novel.

40 See e.g. Kelly "Unbecoming", p. 231; Howard, Reading Gothic p. 148 and P.M. Spacks, "Muted Discord: Generational Conflict in Jane Austen", Jane Austen in a Social Context ed. D. Monaghan, (London, 1981), p. 172.

41 See e.g. Howard, Reading Gothic pp. 151 and 153; Lewis, Comic Effects pp. 123-4.

42 See Howard, Reading Gothic pp. 155-6 and 159; Lewis, Comic Effects p. 124; and M. Kirkham, Jane Austen: Feminism and Fiction (Sussex, 1983), p. 130.

[43] Johnson, Women, Politics p. 133.

[44] c.f. FQ II, 146-51; 269-73 with Hr II, 201-39.

[45] c.f. FQ I, 35-6; 27 with Hr I, 22-3.

[46] See Johnson, Women, Politics p. 40; Kelly, "Unbecoming", pp. 235, 240-1; and Howard, Reading Gothic pp. 156-7, 167.

[47] The 1815 3rd ed. has an altered title, The Heroine; or Adventures of Cherubina, and an appendix of "notes" giving sources for the novel's allusions. The range of Barrett's reference has been used as confirmation of his anti-novel stance, see e.g. May's view that Barrett, "let nothing escape him in the literature of his day that he felt to be dotage. He did not scruple to list the books which he derided", Parodies p. 74.

[48] Kelly, "Unbecoming", p. 233.

[49] For these "adaptations" of Pamela and Celestina see "Lady Harriet Marlow" a.k.a. Beckford, Modern Novel Writing, or the Elegant Enthusiast (London, 1796), I, 120-9 and I, 142-7.

[50] As is suggested in Kelly, "Unbecoming", pp. 226-7, and emphasised by Howard in Reading Gothic p. 151,

[51] Watt, Rise of the Novel p. 298.

[52] See Hr II, 52-3, 148 and, especially, III, 290-2. For discussion of the notoriety surrounding the text by the end of the century see N.J. Watson, Revolution and the Form of the British Novel, 1790-1825: Intercepted Letters, Interrupted Seductions (Oxford, 1994), pp. 1-68, 117-8.

[53] c.f. Howard's argument that the ending negates positive impressions of Cherubina's active and assertive behaviour, Reading Gothic pp. 155 and 159.

[54] Nienkamp, introduction, Fe p. xx.

[55] Moers, Literary Women p. 126; also Figes, Subterfuge pp. 57 and 72.

[56] Cherubina does not choose between "romance" and "reality" but between two kinds of fictions - one gothic, one more mimetic. She selects the role of a gothic heroine over either Fielding's Sophia Western or Defoe's Moll or Roxana, see her analysis of the "taste in distress" later, Hr I, 109-10.

[57] Kelly, "Unbecoming", p. 238.

58 Cherubina has exacting taste in villains, see Hr I, 24-5, 155-6, 179, II, 71 and III, 204. For her accounts of the qualities which make a hero see Hr I, 48-9 and 152, III, 153-4.

59 See Lewis, Comic Effects p. 124, in regard to Arabella see Paulson, Satire and the Novel p. 276.

60 See e.g Hr I, 198-202 and II, 9-16.

CHAPTER FIVE: JANE AUSTEN

i. "To Temper the Aetheriel Materials of a Heroine":[1] Jane West, Maria Edgeworth, and Jane Austen

While Eaton Stannard Barrett's novel is usually remembered for its parody of the gothic and the sentimental, Barrett's representation of his female protagonist gives the text a wider relevance to fiction of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Through the use of a comedy which could take to its "logical conclusion" the ambiguities and absurdities inherent in the way such figures had been conveyed, Barrett was able to highlight the dilemma which "the heroine" presented to contemporary authors. Increasingly the concept of "heroinism" was being perceived as a liability; having developed its own conventions and expectations, it could potentially lock the novel into a self-referential cycle that was unwelcome to writers who wished to impress upon readers the applicability of the lessons of fiction to their own lived experience. The question, therefore, was whether it was possible to conceive of a central female character within a narrative who was not "a heroine". This section examines the attempts at revision made by Jane West, Maria Edgeworth, and Jane Austen.

One of the most effective jokes in Barrett's text is his insistence that "the heroine", as she had been presented during decades of novel writing, is entirely distinct from other female characters within the narrative and, it is implied, from the "real" girls and women who read her story. Cherubina's "sister heroines" are far removed from "mere common mortals" (Hr I, 48). They are physically different: a heroine

> is a young lady, rather taller than usual, and often an orphan; at all events, possessed of the finest eyes in the world ... She blushes to the tips of her fingers, and when other girls would laugh, she faints (Hr I, 83).

Her behaviour is sanctioned by a contrasting set of "rules":

> the code of moral law that heroines acknowledge is often quite opposite from those maxims which govern other conditions of life ... what is called wantonness in a little minx with a flat face, is called only susceptibility in a heroine with an oval one. We weep at the letters of Heloise; but were they written by an alderman's fat wife, we should laugh at them. The heroine may permit an amorous arm round her waist, fly in the face of her parents, and make assignations in dark groves, yet still be described as the most prudent of human creatures; but the mere Miss has no business to attempt any mode of conduct beyond modesty, decorum, and filial obedience (Hr II, 52-3).

Cherubina can imagine nothing worse than to remain a "mere Miss" trapped by the trivialities of common life and, within the parameters of the fiction she inhabits, she achieves a degree of sympathy and success for her heroinism. Barrett however relies on such passages to instil in his readers an appreciation of the dangers inherent in attempts to translate the heroine's tale into a reality beyond the text.

The reference to La Nouvelle Héloïse is not unexpected in this context. Any evocation of Rousseau's notorious text could be relied upon to bring into play a powerful network of associations, here making the reader view the implications of The Heroine in the light of recent political history. Rousseau's fiction, which earlier had had such a formative influence on the depiction of sentiment and feeling in the British novel, was now inextricably connected with the events in Europe since 1789, and had become the emblematic illustration of the way insidious messages could be masked by the attractions of fiction:

> Take Rousseau for instance. What St. Preux is to Heloise, the book is to the reader. The lover so fascinates his mistress by his honourable sentiments, that she cannot

> resist his criminal advances. The book infatuates the reader, till, in his admiration of its morality, he loses all recollection of its licentiousness; for as virtue is more captivating, so vice is less disgusting when adorned with the Graces (Hr III, 290-1).

An awareness of the history of the French Revolution underlies Barrett's depiction of Cherubina's behaviour. Her rejection of the "feminine" sphere of domesticity and retirement for a "masculine" realm of action appears as an "unnatural" and revolutionary strategy, made explicit by Cherubina's self-satisfied assessment of her speech to the "troops":

> I judged that the same qualities which have made me so good a heroine, would, if I were a man, have made me just as illustrious a patriot (Hr III, 171).

The French Revolution and its aftermath are the crucial event of this period, influencing public, cultural, and private life. It lies behind the reassessment of novelistic representations of the heroine that occurs in the 1790s and the early years of the nineteenth century. Reservations about the emphasis fiction placed on sensibility and refinement may have existed before this time, but now these crystalised into a more vigorous opposition, such tendencies being categorised as "French" and therefore alien to "British" openness and integrity. Concomitantly the entire raison d'être of the fictional narrative, its "plot" and excitement, came to appear somewhat suspect when considered against the turmoil of Europe. Novels with their "sky-rocket heroine[s]" (Hr I, 212) and romance adventures now more than ever seemed dangerous material for the nation's youth.

Expression of these attitudes towards fiction occurs within the wider context of the 1790s debate on women's conduct, education, and "rights" - female readers still being perceived as most at risk from the seductive influence of the novel. The French Revolution initiated an extraordinary array of British

publications, inspiring "responses" from Burke, Paine, Godwin and others, that were often more concerned with the British situation or political and philosophical theory than specific events in France. As with the Revolution Debate, discussion of the role of women caused conservative views to be articulated in reply to the radical "threat", which brought into the open attitudes that had not necessarily been expressed before.

While the ideological gulf between Edmund Burke and Thomas Paine was evident from their irreconcilable opinions about man and society, the apparently equally polarised distance between Hannah More and Mary Wollstonecraft gave rise to strangely similar versions of "what was to be done" for women.[2] There was fundamental agreement amongst those who wrote about women at this time, whatever their political outlook. This concerned the necessity of improvements in education, specifically the education of girls, where real instruction was proposed as the replacement for the acquisition of "accomplishments" intended to increase marriageability.

The significance of this subject is apparent from the kind of works produced. Publications included theoretical and practical guides to systems of education, innovative attempts to create "improving" tales for children, and novels which take as central subjects both the acquisition of learning and the consequences of its absence. West published a novel entitled The Advantages of Education (1793), while Henry Stephen, in an 1809 review of Edgeworth's works, described how the

> sober and didactic texture of her tales is obviously well adapted to the purpose of moral instruction, and her avowed aim in them is to illustrate the principles laid down in her Treatise on Education.[3]

Austen's novels are permeated by the theme of education and depict parents failing to instruct their children, the gender

divisions of learning, and the means by which knowledge can be gained despite such drawbacks. It is a long way from the innate cultivation and "miraculous" self-education of the heroines of Smith or Radcliffe.[4]

Novels were, however, frequently represented as the problem rather than the cure during this period,[5] and here the coincidence of opinion between radical and conservative thinkers can seem most marked. Wollstonecraft and More wrote novels, following Richardson's principle that this was the best way to reach those who were most in need of instruction. However, they were both primarily authors of non-fiction and suspicious of the influence of imaginative prose. The greatest concern was the centrality of love and adventure in the novel, the aspects which demonstrated its failure to become separate from romance narrative. While not assuming that every reader was going to be as swayed as Cherubina by the seductions of romance and the importance it afforded its heroine, Wollstone-craft and More expressed concern that fiction could breed discontent amongst its audience. To both, the lessons of the novel were not ones which could benefit the reader in reality.

It is the novelistic requirement of adventure which renders it most inappropriate as an agent for "improvement". This belief informs Wollstonecraft's account of Emmeline:

> the false expectations these wild scenes excite, tend to debauch the mind, and throw an insipid kind of uniformity over the moderate and rational prospects of life, consequently adventures are sought for and created, when duties are neglected, and content despised.[6]

Her opinion accords well with More's appeal to those responsible for the education of girls:

> Teach her that human life is not a splendid romance, spangled over with brilliant adventures, and enriched with extraordinary occurrences, and diversified with wonderful

> incidents ... But apprize her that human life is a true history, many passages of which will be dull, obscure, and uninteresting.[7]

Such sentiments are reminiscent of Lennox's The Female Quixote, recalling both the Countess's insistence that "a Woman of Honour" does not have adventures (FQ II, 237; 327) or the Doctor's belief that it "is the Fault of the best Fictions, that they teach young Minds to expect strange Adventures and sudden Vicissitudes" (FQ II, 317; 379). The eighteenth-century novel had been no more successful in convincing detractors of its relation to real life experience than had Arabella's romances, hence the self-protective necessity of authorial claims such as the following by West (as "Prudentia Homespun" the "author" of The Advantages of Education):

> it is my intention to explode those notions which novel reading in general produces, by delineating human life in false colours, expectations are formed which can never be realized; the consequence of which is, that life is begun in error, and ended in disappointment.[8]

But if a contemporary novelist could attempt a narrative which reduced "incident" to a minimum it proved more difficult to circumvent the love plot. Here the creator of fiction seemed most at odds with those who wrote about female conduct. While novels focussed intently on love, courtship, and the choice of husband, those concerned with the lives of actual contemporary women placed most emphasis on the marital, domestic, and maternal aspects of a woman's life, apparently suggesting that nothing was as likely to disrupt this as high ideals of eternal love and chivalric male behaviour formed before marriage. Whether conservative or radical in outlook, the consensus of opinion was that romantic love inevitably subsided into respect and friendship after marriage. Female desire was granted no more place within marriage than before. The purpose of education was to produce a woman self-sufficient and responsible enough for the roles of wife and mother.

Indulgence in fiction could defeat the object by making "real life" dull and the transition of the suitor from lover to husband unbearable.[9]

Novelists of the period were not unaware of the criticisms levelled at their art, hence the ambivalence they often expressed regarding their genre. Edgeworth, for example, notoriously announced that Belinda (1801) was "offered to the public as a Moral Tale - the author not wishing to acknowledge a Novel" (Bel I, 5).[10] For West, Edgeworth, and Austen the contemporary debate played a part in their choice and treatment of themes. To all three the involvement of the reader in a story was intended to inspire an examination of morality and increase of self-awareness, although their strategies vary from West's blunt assertion that "moral improvement is the avowed end" (GS I, xiv)[11] to Austen's infinitely more subtle appreciation of the affective potential of fiction. In each case this led to the creation of narratives which claimed a greater allegiance to probability and naturalism than many other fictions of the time, while the overtly romance-orientated approaches of sentimentalism or gothicism (often intertwined in the 1790s) were eschewed. It is at this point that the problem of the heroine becomes inescapable. In the realm of the Smith or Radcliffe novel the centrality and exemplary nature of the heroine could avoid seeming incongruous but this was less so in a text designed to mirror more closely the reader's reality.

The most popular solution was a simple one: the employment of more than one central female character. This allowed the qualities of "conventional" heroinism to be associated with one character who was then contrasted with the "real" heroine: thus enabling the author to draw attention to the qualities she wanted the reader to perceive as worthy of emulation. A common way of structuring this comparison was through the depiction of two sisters, as occurs in West's A Gossip's Story (1796),

Austen's Sense and Sensibility (1811), and Edgeworth's Patronage (1814). Spacks points out that the portrayal of such contrasting pairs of siblings is as old as the fairytale,[12] but during this period the traditional scenario was seized upon as a possible answer to a modern dilemma.

Literary posterity has accorded to Jane West's A Gossip's Story a minor role as a, vastly inferior, "source" for Austen's Sense and Sensibility.[13] Although it is possible that the earlier epistolary version of Austen's novel - entitled "Elinor and Marianne" - was begun before the publication of West's second novel,[14] according to Cassandra Austen's record, "Sense & Sensibility [was] begun Nov. 1797",[15] the year after A Gossip's Story appeared. A Gossip's Story is not without some merits of its own. West's device of encasing her narrative within the framework of Prudentia Homespun's circle of gossip lovers is a largely effective way of suggesting that individual behaviour is vulnerable to misrepresentation and reputation may be lost without any real transgression, an illustration of the "neighbourhood of voluntary spies" (NA II, 186; 198) in action. However, the portrayal of the two sisters is undoubtedly schematic. West is careful to delineate the way that differences in upbringing have resulted in Louisa's development of "an informed, well-regulated mind" (GS I, 18), while Marianne Dudley is in the more precarious position of being "tremblingly alive to all the softer passions" (GS I, 19).

As was traditional in this period, over-indulgence in the "wrong" kinds of reading material is held as largely responsible for the formation of Marianne Dudley's character. Spoiled by her grandmother, possessed of wealth, beauty, and sensitivity, Marianne reinforces her sense of personal significance with the example of the heroine's text:

> Marianne had a variety of instances of high heroic virtue to produce, not drawn indeed from actual observations of

> life, but from her favourite studies. She had long been an attentive reader of memoirs and adventures, and had transplanted into her gentle bosom all the soft feelings and highly refined sensibilities of the respective heroines (GS I, 39).

This creates the familiar paradox that, what the character in the fiction sees as illustration of her own heroinism is, to the reader, evidence of the quixotic assumption of a role. In Marianne's case it is that of the "sentimental girl" - complete with tender friendships, extensive correspondence and an idealistic attitude to love. Austen avoids such an explicit relationship between reading about and "becoming" a heroine in her account of Marianne Dashwood. Nevertheless, Marianne's fervent engagement with the literary, being "almost driven ... wild" (SS I, 37; 18)[16] by Cowper and speaking of other "favourite authors" with "so rapturous a delight" (SS I, 109; 47), is enough to suggest a likely source of influences on a girl who "had the knack of finding her way in every house to the library" (SS III, 115; 304). Although Marianne prides herself on her originality and freedom from the triviality of society with its codes, conventions and hackneyed jargon, Austen makes clear that Marianne is not without her own quixote's rule-book. This inspires her farewell to Norland (SS I, 60-1; 27), her emotional response to the picturesque (SS I, 206-7; 87-8, I, 224-8; 96-8) and, above all, "what her fancy had ever drawn for the hero of a favourite story" (SS I, 99-100; 43).

It is in their attitudes to love that Marianne Dudley and Marianne Dashwood display the greatest similarity. Both are initially presented with possible suitors whom they cannot countenance because of the disparity between these men and the ideal "hero". West's character thus rejects the unexceptionable Pelham, while Austen's displays astonishment that she could ever be thought of as a match for the "age and infirmity" (SS I, 85; 37) of Brandon. Their resistance comes to appear justified as it is followed in both cases by the spectacular

arrival of lovers performing the romance role of rescuer and preserver. True to their generic expectations, once the "hero" has materialised both women believe the happiness of a romance ending is assured. The reader is never allowed to be quite so sanguine, because the commentary of the more prudent figures within the narrative raises doubts. West and Austen may also have assumed the reader's familiarity with other versions of this scenario in contemporary literature.

As has been illustrated in previous chapters, the scheming man who disguises corrupt intentions under the outward appearance of the romance hero is a staple of eighteenth-century plays and novels; Steele's Clerimont, Lennox's Sir George, or Burney's "Alphonso Bellamy" being representative examples. Prior to Clermont's appearance in A Gossip's Story, Marianne's father has already warned her that "the kind of address you talk of, is chiefly practised by the designing part of mankind, upon the woman whose person or fortune is the object of their desire" (GS I, 95-6). Such advice also features in the non-fictional works of the later eighteenth century. Indeed, while the tendency of contemporary fiction to adopt "conduct-book" sentiments is often pointed out, it should be noted that guides to behaviour at this time often seem preoccupied with situations much more likely to occur in the novel than in the lives of real women. In part this suggests the moralist's concern about the novel's influence on its readers, but it is also a reflection of how fictional plots can become archetypes which shape perceptions of "real life".

Twenty years before West's novel, Hannah More had expressed similar ideas in an essay entitled "On the Danger of Sentimental or Romantic Connexions" (1777), instructing her readers in the following manner:

> Many a young woman, who would be shocked at the imputation of an intrigue, is extremely flattered at the idea of a

> sentimental connexion, though perhaps with a dangerous and designing man, who, by putting on this mask of plausibility and virtue, disarms her of her prudence, lays her apprehensions asleep, and involves her in misery.[17]

This "plot" relates to the first of the two contrasting objectives attributed by West's Mr Dudley to designing men: that which endangers the "person" of the heroine through seduction. Resisting such a suitor is the task of Maria Williams in West's The Advantages of Education (in a narrative which is Clarissa writ small), it is also what Marianne Dashwood has risked in her involvement with Willoughby. After Willoughby's desertion and the revelation of his relationship with Eliza, the motives behind his initial courtship of Marianne are interpreted in the light of the realisation that he is "deep in hardened villany [sic]" (SS II, 109; 184). Marianne finds it particularly difficult to entertain the possibility that Willoughby's behaviour to her was entirely a sham:

> At present, if I could be satisfied on one point, if I could be allowed to think that he was not always acting a part, not always deceiving me; - but above all, if I could be assured that he never was so very wicked as my fears have sometimes fancied him, since the story of that unfortunate girl (SS III, 214; 344).

By this stage, Elinor has heard Willoughby's self-defence and is able to put Marianne's mind at rest. The reader, however, remains aware that, even if Willoughby intended only to amuse himself by causing Marianne to become attached to him, it is to luck rather than judgement that she owes her "escape" from a darker fate.

Neither Maria Williams or Marianne Dashwood could be implicated in the second variety of "sentimental history",[18] because they are without the wealth which attracts fortune hunters. More's essay also gives an account of this, speaking of girls who have come to entertain "the most elevated ideas of

disproportionate alliances, and disinterested love",[19] would-be-husbands able to "affect the most frigid indifference to those external and pecuniary advantages"[20] which are their real goal, and the inevitable disillusioning conclusion:

> BUT nothing, in general, can end less delightfully than these sublime attachments, even where no acts of seduction were ever practised, but they are suffered, like mere sublunary connexions, to terminate in the vulgar catastrophe of marriage.[21]

As the "uncontrolled mistress" (GS I, 19) of a large inheritance, Marianne Dudley seems the likely candidate to exemplify this plot, hence her father's warning. However there is no suggestion that Clermont is governed by monetary considerations in his courtship of the heroine. Indeed he is free of any ulterior motive, being as influenced by the sentimental, romantic ideal as Marianne. Even after marriage West points out that, "Mr. Clermont had infinitely more of the knight-errant in his character than generally falls to the lot of a husband" (GS II, 72). But the like-mindedness of her husband cannot rescue Marianne from marital disaster. If anything the fact that both are experiencing a transition from exalted idealism to the petty frustrations and misunderstandings of reality only exacerbates the situation. The result is Marianne's enactment of More's projected conclusion, as she

> feels herself degraded from the dignities and privileges of a goddess, to all the imperfections, vanities, and weaknesses of a slighted woman, and a neglected wife.[22]

West's representation of Marianne Dudley is a "textbook" illustration of the fears such writers as More had regarding "Sentimental or Romantic connexions". In particular it enacts More's belief that "a damsel of this cast" has her "head originally turned by pernicious reading, and her insanity confirmed by imprudent friendships",[23] factors which undermine the likelihood of girls dealing with the experiences of real life.

Novels such as A Gossip's Story and Sense and Sensibility demonstrate how much more strictly the mistaken heroine is treated when she shares centre stage with an exemplary counterpart. Through the long history of the deluded heroine in eighteenth-century fiction such characters have tended to combine the roles of young girl in need of guidance with that of "heroine". From Lennox's Arabella to Burney's Camilla and Austen's Catherine Morland, readers had become accustomed to the experience of these figures combining an awakening to "reality" with the denouement of "romance". The doubled heroine structure disrupts this. No longer can readers simply follow the adventures, mistakes, and recovery of the deluded heroine; instead they are made constantly aware of the commentary provided by the "proper" behaviour of her sister.

With the burden of displaying error, misguided sentiments, and romance placed firmly on the shoulders of one sibling, the author was also free to ascribe unprecedented degrees of flawlessness to the other. While the most notable eighteenth-century exemplary heroines - Clarissa, Cecilia, Emmeline, or Emily St Aubert - have their blind spots and misjudgements, Louisa Dudley and Elinor Dashwood never put a foot wrong. Even the aspects of their behaviour which give a modern reader pause for thought - Louisa's feelings for Pelham while he is her sister's suitor or the mercenary considerations behind her intended match with Sir William, Elinor's "befriending" of Lucy Steele to elicit information about her engagement with Edward, or her general willingness to conform to social conventions - are not apparently subject to the narrators' criticism.

The narrative framework of these novels relies upon parallel plot lines which illustrate the contrasting character types in action. Austen's handling of the dual narrative is particularly skilful. The progress of the sisters' love stories is different enough to prevent comparison seeming too

schematic, but not to the extent that the significance of their responses to the respective crisis points - Lucy Steele's revelations and Marianne's London encounter with Willoughby - are obscured. Few authors have possessed Austen's ability to convey the depths of feeling involved in sufferings that are silent and unnoticed. Elinor Dashwood prefigures Fanny Price, Jane Fairfax, and Anne Elliot in this respect, as the resonance of her emotion tempers the more inaccessible aspects of her exemplariness. Through such characters Austen established an ideal of female "heroism" based on restraint and endurance which contrasts with the showy ostentation of heroinism, and the latter stages of Sense and Sensibility record Marianne's progress from the latter to the former.[24] Some contemporary reviewers found it easy to accept such a comparison as the "message" of the text, Scott remarked that the

> interest and merit of the piece depend altogether upon the behaviour of the elder sister, while obliged at once to sustain her own disappointment with fortitude, and to support her sister, who abandons herself, with unsuppressed feelings, to the indulgence of grief.[25]

But the mixed critical reception afforded to the novel in the twentieth century points to the more problematic elements of the double heroine motif.

The difficulties arise when the narrative interest (and thus the reader's sympathy) become too greatly bound up with the erring sister, so that her "mixed" ending seems unsatisfying beside the "reward" of her sibling. It is this which unbalances A Gossip's Story. Louisa Dudley is almost completely bereft of "humanising" characteristics, as shown during the scenes surrounding the death of her father when she finally wins Pelham by an exalted display of piety, "when she rose from her knees to retire, her whole form seemed inspired with supernatural intelligence" (GS II, 190). While Louisa's nature as a paragon can alienate the reader, the disasters befalling

Marianne Dudley attract compassion. She, like Marianne Dashwood, commits no bad action herself, but is the victim of the corruption of others. Although deluded, her "heart was really excellent" (GS I, 106). The disastrous entrance into society which initiates her downfall bears interesting similarities to Lennox's depiction of Arabella in "the world". Both characters, implicitly supported by their authors, are disappointed by the triviality and meanness they see, but while Arabella, as quixote and heroine combined, is permitted to triumph, Marianne's reputation is undermined by the scandalmongers she has offended. This may be a more "realistic" outcome, but it does nothing to convince the reader of her error.

The unnecessary harshness with which Marianne Dudley's story is concluded, in order to provide a clear contrast with her sister's happiness, does not recur in Sense and Sensibility. The muted resolution of Austen's novel seems to undermine the possibility of a "happily ever after" ending for any character, however exemplary. In the unsettling of conventions surrounding narrative closure, Austen refuses to impose the traditional "virtue rewarded and vice punished" paradigm: Willoughby, Lucy Steele and the Ferrars family are not consigned to misery, while both heroines face a future of mixed blessings. Although this suits the seriousness of Elinor, Edward, and Brandon, Austen misjudges the tone with which she "dismisses" Marianne into marriage.[26] The attractions of Marianne's earlier unguarded vitality were too great. Even Brandon believes "there is something so amiable in the prejudices of a young mind, that one is sorry to see them give way to the reception of more general opinions" (SS I, 129-30; 56). Marianne's grief and loss are too intensely experienced for the reader to achieve the distancing apparently required at the close. In a way, Austen is a victim of her own success. By taking the traditional plot of the "reading Miss" led into error and reformed by experience, and revitalising it through lifelike

characterisation and credible events, the final transition - from disillusionment and illness to cure and marriage - seems even less satisfactory than it had done in the explicit quixote narratives of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Appearance in a novel makes the deluded heroine difficult to contain within a framework of educative or moral comment. Quixotes, dreamers and idealists have a powerful affinity with fiction and its audience - tending to dominate the drama of the plot and sharing the romantic expectations out of which the readers of novels had never been "educated". If there was one element of the influence of text upon readers which the eighteenth-century novelist appears to consistently underestimate it was the simple interest in the events of the narrative. This was often a deliberate strategy as incident and adventure were among the least respectable aspects of the art form: serious novels were not to be read "for the story". However, it goes a long way towards explaining the uneasy denouement of much contemporary fiction, with authorially sanctioned conclusions pulling in opposite directions from the reader's experience of the story.

Such tensions can be observed in Edgeworth's Belinda. This novel uses a different technique from the sibling narratives discussed above, but its structure is still familiar from earlier fictions. Edgeworth's text follows the pattern established by Richardson in Sir Charles Grandison. As discussed earlier, Richardson attempts to combine heroinism and realism in his depiction of Harriet by surrounding her with contrasting female character types. Harriet holds the middle ground. On one side is Clementina whose heightened romance narrative makes Harriet's story seem relatively naturalistic, while on the other is the wit and worldliness of Charlotte, to whom Sir Charles' two possible wives are "Heroines both" (SCG VII, 234; III, 418). Similar positions are maintained by

Clarence Hervey's "three goddesses" (Bel I, 305) in Belinda. The "romance" character is Virginia whose realm of pastoral and idealistic fantasy seems as "foreign" to the rest of the book as is the della Porrettas' Italy to Sir Charles Grandison. Charlotte's role is assumed by the cynical and experienced Lady Delacour, while placed between them is the eponymous heroine.

None of the other authors under consideration in this section were quite so suspicious of "the heroine" as Maria Edgeworth. So palpable is this within her novels that those who reviewed them seemed uneasy in referring to her characters in such terms. Henry Stephen, for example, talks of "heroes and heroines, if such they may be called".[27] Critics had the same descriptive problem as the authors themselves. The leading male and female figures in a narrative were the hero and heroine but being "a hero" or "a heroine" had undesirable connotations for many contemporary novelists. Edgeworth's solution to this is clear in Belinda. Belinda may be "our heroine" (Bel I, 325), that is the most important female figure in the narrative, but her behaviour is to be constantly juxtaposed with that of "the heroines": those creatures from previous fictions whose example is as dangerous as it is absurd. Thus when Belinda is exerting herself to rectify the situation caused by Lady Delacour's collapse and her husband's drunken reaction, Dr X comments,

> my dear miss Portman, you will put a stop to a number of charming stories by this prudence of yours - a romance called the Mysterious Boudoir, of nine volumes at least, might be written on this subject, if you would only condescend to act like almost all other heroines, that is to say, without common sense. (Bel I, 300).

Such distinctions are necessary in a novel which agrees with the kind of separation between "the heroine" and the "real woman" that Barrett had insisted on in The Heroine (in Barrett's prefatory address, the "spirit" of Cherubina is rejected by "the Radcliffian, Rochian, and other heroines", but

they "likewise shunned the Edgeworthian heroines, whom they thought too comic, moral, and natural" (Hr I, viii-ix)). This division is upheld by the exemplary Mr Percival in the debate over first attachments, particularly through his argument that "struggles between duty and passion may be the charm of romance, but must be the misery of real life". Mr Percival rejects the possibility that "an interesting heroine" has any relevance to the conduct and morality expected of women in their own lives (Bel II, 227).

Edgeworth is attempting a precarious balancing act with this aspect of her work. Using a character in a novel to instruct the reader about differences between the expectations of fiction and the reality of lived experience always has the potential to result in ironies, particularly if her own heroine, Belinda, is meant to be taken up by the reader as a model. However much Belinda's behaviour may be shown to contrast with that of the "usual" heroine, she is still implicated within fictional processes of plot and romance. She might put a stop to a nine volume romance called "The Mysterious Boudoir" but she has to take her place in Edgeworth's chapter of that title (Bel I, 281-306). In order to protect Belinda from the taint of fiction, Edgeworth employs another technique familiar from Richardson's novels: representing another character as the embodiment of the creative, imaginary, and delusive potential of art, so that "truth" can be located with the heroine. Lady Delacour stands in the same relation to Belinda in this respect as Lovelace does to Clarissa, connections quietly implied at moments when Lady Delacour uses Richardsonian language such as "a reformed rake" (Bel II, 32) to describe herself.

Lady Delacour has many of the qualities Richardson associated with Lovelace. She too is a consummate actor. The first lengthy description given of her tells of how at home,

"she seemed like a spoiled actress off the stage, over stimulated by applause, and exhausted by the exertions of supporting a fictitious character (Bel I, 11). As the story continues, it becomes clear that acting a role is exactly what Lady Delacour is doing, her pride dictating that misery and sickness be hidden behind a social facade. Lady Delacour is thus surrounded by imagery of masking and disguise.

Lady Delacour is the fictionalist of the novel, turning her own life into narrative ("The Life and Opinions of a Lady of a Quality, related by herself" (Bel I, 69)) and delighting in attributing the roles of "heroine", "hero", or "knight-errant" to others. While her attempts to stage-manage the plot and control those around her occasionally fail - she repeatedly misinterprets Belinda and, for a time, seems to have dangerously underestimated Virginia's response to the painting - her interventions and schemes come to a more fruitful conclusion than Lovelace's. After all, it is Lady Delacour's long cherished plan for Belinda to marry Clarence that "comes true", despite the Percivals' lectures on the possibility of second attachments and their championing of Vincent as "the hero". Interestingly, the "winding up" of the narrative and arrangement of the final tableau, the task taken on by Austen's narrator at the end of Northanger Abbey, is given to Lady Delacour:,

> 'And now, my good friends,' continued Lady Delacour, 'shall I finish the novel for you?'
> 'If your ladyship pleases; nobody can do it better.'
> (Bel III, 355)

But there is a price to pay for the acquisition of such insight into the workings of fiction. The playful, creative potential of the imagination is accompanied by a darker side, the realm of delusion and madness - and this again is an area of common ground between Lady Delacour and Lovelace.

Lady Delacour's progression through the novel is under the influence of a series of delusions. She has structured her life around the fear of an illness which proves to be non-existent and, although knowledge of Edgeworth's original sketch of the novel in which Lady Delacour's cancer is not only real but terminal has lead many critics to see her cure in the completed novel as contrivance,[28] it is fitting that the most imaginative character suffers a disease entirely of her own mind. Added to this delusion is the misreading of Belinda's behaviour which leads Lady Delacour to believe that the heroine is designing to "replace" her after her death. Her superstitious belief in visions unbalances her before her planned operation, an incident parallel to Juba's fear of the obeah-woman (both are traced back to the disruptive influence of Harriet Freke). At times Edgeworth depicts Lady Delacour as close to madness. During the powerful scene of conflict with the heroine, Belinda fears for her friend's reason:

> lady Delacour ... started up, flung back the veil which fell over her face as she rose, and darted upon Belinda a look which fixed her to the spot where she stood ... Belinda's blood ran cold - she had no longer any doubt that this was insanity. She shut the penknife which lay upon the table, and put it in her pocket (Bel 193).

Lady Delacour's instability enables her to recognise similar qualities in the other imagination-governed figure in the novel, hence her joking comment that "I am convinced that Virginia is only half mad" (Bel III, 352). These two characters are polar opposites in many ways: the representative of art, society and cynicism versus the embodiment of nature, seclusion and innocence. Between them, however, Lady Delacour and Virginia complete the quixotic character. Lady Delacour takes the active role as the fiction-maker, adventurer, and stage-manager, while Virginia is entirely passive. Virginia is the reader, lost in romance, fantasy and dreams, with absolutely no grasp of a more solid world outside her reveries.

This is not necessarily an alienation from the "real", as Virginia's reality is as bizarre as her illusions; from her Edenic childhood, romance love-story, and total seclusion from outside influences, to her fortuitous reunion with her father.

Between the two extremes represented by Lady Delacour and Virginia, Belinda has to negotiate a path which is "true" and "real" in opposition to their imaginative fictions. This is enacted by the tripartite structure of the text itself, Lady Delacour dominating the first section and Virginia the last, while Belinda is the focus of the centre. It is here that the great flaw of the novel manifests itself. Again the problem is associated with narrative interest. Lady Delacour's tale is one of mystery, drama, and incident while, however incredible Virginia's history might be, it still possesses the compensations of romance. There is however a palpable falling off during the section of the novel that deals with Belinda's sojourn with the Percivals. As had occurred so many times in the eighteenth century, the author's desire to give a model of exemplary domestic life, even down to the minutiae of household management and methods of bringing up children, completely stalls the plot - the same anti-novelistic practice undermines large stretches of Sir Charles Grandison and the last two volumes of La Nouvelle Héloïse. Belinda may be impressed with

> the openness with which they talked of their affairs in her presence; that there were no family secrets, nor any of those petty mysteries which arise from a discordance of temper or struggle for power (Bel II, 129-30).

But there can be few readers who have shared her enthusiasm.

For many in the novel's contemporary audience the problem was the character of Belinda herself. Belinda's avoidance of "the terms in the heroine's dictionary" (Bel III, 302), and her behaviour in overcoming a "prepossession" for Clarence Hervey

in order to enter into an engagement with Vincent (included to illustrate the anti-romance principle that, "without being in love like Clelia or Cleopatra, a woman may deserve the affection of a man of sense and honour" (Bel III, 275)), was often interpreted as evidence of cold calculation. Ollyett Woodhouse's response in an article written for The Monthly Review is representative:

> We do not mean to deny the justice of the author's arguments against a belief in the unextinguisable nature of a first flame ... we only object to the exemplification of them by the conduct of the present heroine. According to our ideas, (we have pleaded guilty to a little romance,) it lessens her amiability; and we should have been better pleased to have seen her in the weeds of widowed affection, than in the gay attire of a second courtship.[29]

Motivated by such criticism Edgeworth revised the text so that the heroine does not accept Vincent's proposal of marriage before finding him unworthy.[30] Famously, even the author eventually lost patience with "the cold tameness of that stick or stone Belinda",[31] but not before her repeated employment of the exemplary heroine, in this and other tales and novels,[32] had done much to undermine reviewers' appreciation of her "realism". In a review of 1810 John Ward comments that,

> 'Patronage' obliges us to retract some part of that praise which, with a view to her other works, we have given to Miss Edgeworth for probability of character. The heroine is one of those 'faultless monsters' that would be so delightful in real life, where they unluckily never appear, and that are quite insupportable in a novel, where we continually meet with them.[33]

The strategy which lies behind A Gossip's Story, Sense and Sensibility and Belinda was ultimately unsuccessful therefore. To make a heroine suitable as a model it was not enough to simply offload romance, sentiment, and imagination onto figures set into contrast with them. The technique may have resulted in a "safer" exemplary protagonist but this was not going to

have the desired influence on the readers if they rejected the heroine as too good to be true, giving their interest and sympathy to her deluded counterparts in preference.

When placed in the context of these earlier novels, Austen's achievement in Pride and Prejudice (1813) can be appreciated as remarkable. The increase in subtlety and realism is so great that it is possible to overlook the structural similarities which link the text to its predecessors, though these are nevertheless present. Despite the number of Bennet sisters, Austen's emphasis falls upon the eldest two, who approximate to the familiar pairing of "exemplary" and "deluded" heroines - although the labels, which adequately summarise earlier protagonists, do violence upon Austen's naturalistic characterisation. Unusually, Austen takes as her central figure the misguided heroine, Elizabeth, rather than Jane, anticipating her later interest in Emma Woodhouse rather than Jane Fairfax. Always perceiving Jane Bennet through the medium of Elizabeth's wit and affection prevents her "excellent understanding, and super-excellent disposition" (PP III, 231; 348) from seeming cold or insipid and shows her selflessness and willingness to think kindly of others in a truly admirable light.[34]

The finely drawn contrast between the two sisters is one of the novel's strengths, but even this is not as impressive as the sense the reader receives of their interdependence and relationship. This is something almost wholly missing in earlier sibling based fictions. Louisa and Marianne Dudley hardly ever seem to have a conversation and there is a similar lack of communication and understanding between Elinor and Marianne Dashwood. In the latter case this is undoubtedly a necessity of the plot. The number of secrets to be kept undermines the possibility of the easy openness and trust the elder Bennet sisters enjoy for most of Pride and Prejudice, and

there are powerful moments of unspoken sympathy as when Elinor cries at Marianne's bedside during the depths of her anguish over Willoughby's inconstancy. Nevertheless there is a sense of absence at the heart of the novel. Edgeworth achieved a greater sense of closeness in her account of the Percy girls in Patronage, published the year after Pride and Prejudice. To one reviewer, "Rosamond's unenvious admiration of, and entire devotion to her sister, forms a most pleasing and affecting picture".[35] However, Caroline's superiority and status as an instructive model for her sister prevents the equality and maturity of the relationship between Jane and Elizabeth Bennet.

As has often been noted, Austen respected Edgeworth's abilities as a novelist,[36] and could have seen potential for further development in her fiction. In this respect a connection can be observed between Belinda Portman and Elizabeth Bennet. It may seem strange to compare Edgeworth's paragon with Austen's playful heroine, but, at the beginning of Belinda at least, a potential similarity in characterisation is evident. Both heroines have inauspicious introductions, Belinda having been hitherto "a puppet in the hands of others" (Bel I, 9), Elizabeth only differentiated from her "silly and ignorant" sisters, in Mr Bennet's opinion, by her "quickness" (PP I, 6; 5). Such impressions are however speedily dispelled, as Elizabeth is shown to be far removed from the conventional "giddy girl", while Belinda's initial observations of the Delacours' lifestyle shapes her independent "moral sense" (Bel I, 22) at a very early stage. However, before Lady Delacour is established as the source of the novel's vitality and comedy, there are moments when Belinda seems closer to Elizabeth than her later seriousness would warrant. A notable example occurs after Belinda has overheard the society gentlemen, Clarence Hervey included, mocking the "Stanhope school" (Bel I, 46) of husband acquisition. Rather than dwelling on this in silence, Belinda alludes to the remarks in the presence of Clarence:

> 'Your ladyship should not waste such valuable praise,' interrupted Belinda. - 'Do you forget, that Belinda Portman and her accomplishments have already been as well advertised as Packwood's razor strops?' (Bel I, 157).

Austen could well have had this sequence in mind when writing of Elizabeth's response to Darcy finding her "tolerable; but not handsome enough to tempt me" (PP I, 21; 12), such humour with a touch of audacity being a trademark of the later heroine.

But Belinda is soon frozen into exemplariness and joins the long list of eighteenth-century novel heroines who exhibit no real change or growth of character throughout the greater part of their story. Belinda's moments of inner doubt or conflict are too fleeting to convince a reader even in the case of her supposedly great struggle to overcome a "mistaken" prepossession for Clarence, as the following passage illustrates:

> The confusion of Clarence Hervey convinced her, that he was extremely interested about the person to whom the hair belonged, and the species of alarm which she had felt at this discovery, opened her eyes effectually to the state of her own heart ... 'Fortunately,' thought she, 'I have discovered that he is attached to another, whilst it is yet in my power to command my affections, and he shall see that I am not so weak as to form any false expectations from what I must now consider as mere common place flattery.' (Bel I, 315-16)

Such a formulaic response to a discovery which the reader can only assume has been the cause of real emotional pain, is the norm rather than the exception with Austen's predecessors. The concern with providing a proper model of behaviour overrides an interest in making the situation believable, while the latter is further undermined by the stylised language and generalised sentiments characters are given to express.

Pride and Prejudice therefore represents a breakthrough in

the delineation of credible feeling and motivation. Before, readers were usually aware of all the relevant "characteristics" that distinguished each individual within a few pages of the first appearance, and then looked on as the author changed the circumstances and setting. Now such information could be incomplete, misleading, or subject to revision, as characters alter in the light of their experiences. The difference this makes can be clearly seen in Austen's treatment of Elizabeth's "delusion". Previously characters had suffered from "A Delusion": they read too many books and became quixotes, they overindulged their imaginations and fell prey to superstition, they were influenced by the wrong people and risked ruin. The nature and parameters of the delusion are clearly defined and a character is either in a state of total confusion or (usually for the last few pages of the text) complete cure. Elizabeth's situation could not be more different. Numerous, seemingly unconnected, experiences and conversations lead her towards the formation of certain opinions, this is a gradual and almost unconscious process that the reader witnesses without any awareness that it is leading the heroine into error.

When the moment of realisation comes, it is as sudden and shocking as any "disillusionment" experienced by earlier heroines: "How humiliating is this discovery! - Yet, how just a humiliation! ... I have courted prepossession and ignorance, and driven reason away ... Till this moment, I never knew myself"(PP II, 166; 208). But it is no longer a question of the heroine simply learning what the readers have known all along, since they have been as ignorant as Elizabeth of the circumstances alluded to in Darcy's letter and have formed their attitudes with the heroine. As implicated as Elizabeth is in the mistakes that have been accepted as facts, those reading the text have a greater investment in the ensuing process of reassessment.

Of great importance is the reading of Darcy's letter at the heart of the novel rather than the end - working a way towards truth is shown to be as complex a business as the development of misapprehensions. There are "first impressions" of Wickham, Darcy, Mr Bennet, and Elizabeth and Jane to be revised. Austen achieves a realisation of Johnson's desire for fiction to be a "mock encounter", a way of drawing readers into an imaginary scenario to test preconceptions and learn strategies applicable to life.[37] Pride and Prejudice denies its audience the "godlike" insight into character and events to which they had become accustomed, presenting instead a world where appearances deceive, minds can be changed, and it is necessary to use indirections to find directions out.

This quality of Austen's fiction did not go unnoticed by contemporary reviewers. In an overview of her work written for the Quarterly Review, Richard Whately comments that the

> moral lessons ... are not offensively put forward, but spring incidentally from the circumstances of the story; they are not forced upon the reader, but he is left to collect them (though without any difficulty) for himself: her's [sic] is that unpretending kind of instruction which is furnished by real life.[38]

In respect of Pride and Prejudice at least, even this remark, with its reference to "moral lessons" seems heavy-handed, for the spouting of conventional moralising sentiments is the prerogative of characters who are not "sensible" such as Mr Collins and Mary Bennet.

Significantly, Whately singles out as "one of Miss Austin's [sic] great merits", the realistic portrayal of her heroines, expressing his sense of Austen's achievement by a comparison with her predecessors:

> Authoresses can scarcely ever forget the esprit de corps - can scarcely ever forget that they are authoresses. They

> seem to feel a sympathetic shudder at exposing naked a female mind ... Now from this fault Miss Austin is free. Her heroines are what one knows women must be, though one never can get them to acknowledge it.[39]

Although this latter point is expressed with an avuncular tone that borders on the patronising, in these two passages Whately has isolated the key areas in which Austen's fiction resolves novelistic cruxes that have plagued authors for decades; how to involve readers in a narrative that can exert a positive influence without resorting to didactic lecturing and how to depict a central character who is sympathetic and realistic, neither fatally flawed or unapproachably perfect.

To Whately and many contemporary reviewers, Austen was not exceptional in attempting to fulfil these objectives, even if she was particularly successful. Whately speaks of Austen's works as representative of a "new school of fiction",[40] echoing Scott who, in his famous review of Emma, had considered them part of "a class of fictions which has arisen almost in our own times".[41] These phrases are of course familiar ones. This thesis has charted many moments when a "new species of fiction" has been announced: the attempt to establish the novel as the "probable" replacement for the romance in the 1740s and 50s, the desire to "reintroduce" romance elements in the 1760s and 70s which evolved into sentimentalism and gothicism, with a concomitant increase in parody, burlesque and anti-novelistic writings after these forms had entered their "decadent" phase.

What takes place in the first decades of the nineteenth century, therefore, is one in a periodic series of novelistic self-examinations and reassessments. While contemporary writers tend to describe the changes which had occurred as a victory of the credible novel over fanciful romance, this is no more the case than it had been on earlier occasions.[42] Some of the best "pure" gothic novels had yet to be published,

Frankenstein was to appear in 1818, Melmoth the Wanderer in 1820, while the developing sub-genre of the historical novel might have had greater credentials for "realism" than the gothic, but shared its roots in the later eighteenth-century romance revival. Even the heroine-centred texts, that Scott and others saw as central to this "new school", were far from unambiguous in the valorisation of the "probable" over the "romantic", a subject to which I will return.

While the need for such qualifications becomes apparent with retrospect, to the critics of the day the novel had entered a "new phase" with the advent of Edgeworth and Austen. Scott provides the updated version of the history of the novel: romance gives way in the eighteenth century to the romantic novel, which was now being revised in production of the novel of common life.[43] Such sentiments inform the appreciations of Edgeworth's work that appear in the two famous review magazines founded in the first decade of the nineteenth century (The Edinburgh Review in 1802, The Quarterly Review in 1809).[44] Edgeworth is presented as depicting "nature" and "real life", her writing possessed of a new "charm of probability".[45] In Henry Stephens' words, as

> a writer of tales and novels, she has a very marked peculiarity. It is that of venturing to dispense common sense to her readers, and to bring them within the precincts of real life and natural feeling.[46]

This was not simply a reaction to the excesses of the late eighteenth-century novel, as was the case with the parodic fictions being published as the same time. In John Ward's mind at least it entailed a redefinition of the matériel of fiction:

> We do not mean to speak merely of the entire absence of castles, draw-bridges, spectres, banditti-caves, forests, moonlight and other scenes, which have furnished to Mrs. Ratcliffe [sic] and her school, many a gorgeous and terrific tale. Her [Edgeworth's] most distinguished

> contemporaries have been content to forego these easy embellishments. But she has made some sacrifices which ... are peculiarly her own. Her pictures are all drawn in the soberest colours. She scarcely makes use of a single tint that is warmer than real life.[47]

The realistic quality of Edgeworth's fiction, the soberness and common sense which were perceived to characterise them, were particularly admired as they were believed to further the efficacy of the author's communication of improving lessons. This motivates Francis Jeffrey in his championing of Edgeworth, who "has come nearer the true tone of moral instruction than any other writer we are acquainted with".[48] The attitudes of men like Stephen, Ward, Jeffrey and Scott described here, are not essentially different to those afforded "Mrs. Ratcliffe and her school", as discussed in the last chapter. While female gothic novelists were perceived as lacking in "genius" due to their rationalisation of the supernatural, woman writers "paint[ing] to the life"[49] risked having the imaginative and creative aspects of their texts drastically downgraded. Scott's double-edged praise for the "safe", controlled, and smallscale in Austen's novels is a case in point.[50]

The impression of Edgeworth's novels given by contemporary critics was one that had been cultivated by the author. Within Edgeworth's fictions many strategies are employed to emphasis their affinity with the "real" and, therefore, their superiority to those narratives that exhibit improbable "romance". As Butler shows, one of the most characteristic of these techniques is Edgeworth's use of "factual" material in her texts; family history, her father's experiences and anecdotes, newspaper accounts and almanacs.[51] There are footnotes in Belinda announcing that conversations are "Taken from real life" (Bel I, 343), while R.L. Edgeworth, presumably with his daughter's approval, defended Patronage in the preface to its third edition by asserting how, "It is remarkable, that several incidents which have been objected to as impossible or

improbable, were true".[52] This would undoubtedly have been the way Edgeworth shrugged off incredulity regarding Virginia's history, again a circumstance rooted in "fact".

It is interesting that Edgeworth's tactics are not a rejection of "romance" per se, but instead an insistence on the potential of actual existence to include events which are marvellous and romantic. As Alfred Percy argues in Patronage, "the romance of real life is beyond all other romances; it's [sic] coincidences beyond the combinations of the most inventive fancy" (Pt II, 316).[53] This is of course a difficult position for a novelist to sustain, and Edgeworth has to demonstrate how her fiction - which includes the romance as an integral part of its mimetic representation of real life - differs from "low" fiction which is simply improbable in its sentiments, characterisation, adventures and conclusions. The solution Edgeworth favours is constant cross comparisons made by the characters, as Alfred Percy's comment illustrates. Thus when Lady Delacour begins her life history - which will record events far from the "common place" - she asserts her belief that "nothing is more unlike a novel than real life. Of all lives, mine has been the least romantic" (Bel I, 70).

That Edgeworth enacts romance as well as criticising it, is as apparent from her characterisation as it is from the plots. Caroline Percy is a further illustration of the Edgeworthian exemplary heroine and, as usual, the qualities which differentiate her from "the heroine of romance" are detailed, as here in Rosamund's lighthearted account:

> Bless me, Caroline, if you are so prudent at eighteen, what will you be at thirty? - Beware! - and in the mean time you will never be a heroine - what a stupid uninteresting heroine you will make! You will never get into any entanglements, never have any adventures; or if kind fate should ... bring you into some charming difficulties, even then we could not tremble for you ... because we should always know, that you would be so well

able to extricate yourself (Pt I, 208).

Interestingly after this Rosamund mentions Caroline in relation to Richardson's Clarissa. Obviously an affinity with Richardson's heroine is not considered problematic in the same way, even if it is a reminder that the representation of near flawless female protagonists is still a matter of novelistic convention rather than life - and was capable of seeming so to the contemporary audience. Edgeworth cannot escape the dilemma which had faced almost every author of heroine-centred novels since Richardson, the values which they wished to assert and which were embodied in their heroines - honour, virtue, the positive side of sensibility - were idealistic and, when translated into fiction, read as romantic. Even More believed that

> a young woman cannot have any real greatness of soul, or true elevation of principle, if she has not a tincture of what the vulgar would call Romance, but which persons of a certain way of thinking will discern to proceed from those fine feeling, and that charming sensibility, without which, though a woman may be worthy, yet she can never be amiable.[54]

If this was proposed for actual eighteenth-century women, how much more so was it for the fictional "exemplars" set up for them to emulate. As Edgeworth had seen in the reception of Belinda, overstressing reason and prudence was a path which lead to alienation of the readership. This was not a "mistake" she repeated with Caroline Percy, whose exalted views of the power of love and the qualities necessary to be met with in a lover would not disgrace the most idealistic of romance heroines.[55] They are, however, perfectly in keeping with the ethics of her parents and brothers.

One sequence displays the paradox inherent in setting up such high idealism as a model for reality. Shortly after the Percy family enter their exile at the Hills, they are visited by Lady Jane Granville. She is a society woman, constitution-

ally incapable of understanding the Percys' life of retirement, and intent on introducing Caroline to the "world". There is a touch of Mrs Stanhope about Lady Jane. She thinks of marriages as being "good" insofar as they secure wealth and status, and the contrast between her views and the Percys' is managed to show her at a disadvantage. However, many of her points are unanswerable. When Mrs Percy expresses the view that her daughters will be permitted the freedom to decide on any proposals they receive, Lady Jane counters,

> Yes, I believe you safely may ... as long as you keep them here. - You might as well talk of leaving them at liberty in the deserts of Arabia. You don't expect that knights and squires should come hither in quest of your damsels? (Pt I, 385).

Later adding that she, "will be disappointed, if you expect a genius to descend from the clouds express for your daughters" (Pt I, 396). However, while the possibility that single women living away from society could fail to meet a suitable husband, may have had a resonance for many of Edgeworth's readers, it cannot offset Caroline Percy's status as a heroine who must and will be provided with a hero. The "genius" waiting in the wings, Count Albert Altenberg, has already been introduced as "a young man of a romantic Quixotic enthusiasm" (Pt I, 23), so "fortuitously", Caroline's idealism will further her happy ending rather than her disillusionment.

This "double standard" is also apparent in Pride and Prejudice. Charlotte Lucas believes that the time has passed when she could hope for the fulfilment in marriage which novels like Patronage depict. Considering herself "not romantic" (PP I, 293; 125) she can accept and tolerate Mr Collins out of pragmatism. Austen's novel does not vindicate her action, Elizabeth believes a woman who can behave in such a way "cannot have a proper way of thinking" (PP II, 7; 135), while Jane's plea to Elizabeth when unconvinced of her motives in becoming

engaged to Darcy is "do any thing rather than marry without affection" (PP III, 290; 373). For both the elder Bennet girls the situation facing Charlotte does not arise. Elizabeth may joke that "if I have very good luck, I may meet with another Mr. Collins in time" (PP III, 237; 350), but the reader knows that Darcy, Bingley, and with them love, status, and wealth, will provide the "perfect felicity" of the ending. Novelistic heroines can be made ever more naturalistic, but they are still special, still "heroines". Austen may have come closer than any author since Richardson to the portrayal of complex, thinking characters, but her "realism" interacts with the plots and resolutions of the art of fiction - elements which the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries called "romance".

A greater reconciliation of these aspects of the novel came in Austen's Persuasion (1818). Austen's attitude to romance is a complex one. When made to think about earlier romance literature her response is almost always expressed through comedy and burlesque, as in her reply to James Stanier Clarke's suggestion that she should write a "Historical Romance illustrative of the History of the august house of Cobourg":[56]

> I could not sit seriously down to write a serious Romance under any other motive than to save my Life, & if it were indispensable for me to keep it up & never relax into laughing at myself or other people, I am sure I should be hung before I had finished the first Chapter.[57]

Allied to an appreciation of the potential absurdity of romance is a suspicion of the influence which its ethics have upon behaviour. In her earlier novels, "romantic delicacy" is often unfavourably juxtaposed with "common sense, common care, common prudence" (SS I, 199; 85). But, in Persuasion, contrast is replaced by integration. The key is Anne Elliot's "unusual" circumstances; she "had been forced into prudence in her youth, she learned romance as she grew older".[58]

Anne has displayed the "correct" behaviour of duty and sense, and rather than being rewarded, proves to have jeopardised her future happiness. As was the case with Clarissa's dilemma, she had been placed in a situation where no "right" answer existed. Here to be a heroine is to live with the consequences of decisions made under such conditions. Anne's endurance does eventually achieve the desired resolution; like all Austen's heroines (with the complication of Marianne Dashwood) her story concludes with marriage to the man of her choice. But in coming to romance through prudence, Anne has earned her happy ending through surviving its earlier loss - her story shows the value of comprehensive experience, that which encompasses different possibilities without having to valorise one at the expense of another. Ironically it was in this avoidance of schematic oppositions rather than the rejection of the romantic that the potential realism of fiction was truly located.

ii: "An Imaginist, Like Herself":[1] The Ideas of Emma Woodhouse

Jane Austen's Emma is the inevitable point of conclusion for this thesis. As one of the best known and acclaimed novelistic representations of the deluded heroine, it can be considered in relation to the century of previously published texts also based upon such figures. The use of narrative to record a protagonist's progress from inexperience and error to a more mature understanding of self and society had been long established as the most effective way for an author to satisfy the demands of providing both entertainment and enlightenment for their readers. Awareness of this is part of the positive inheritance Austen acquired from her predecessors. While Austen's characteristic reaction to the conventions of contemporary fiction was revisionary, both in the parody of her juvenilia or early novels and in the corrective naturalism of later works, it is important not to overlook the real influence of eighteenth-century fiction upon Austen's art. Austen's understanding of the genre in which she worked, and the content of her tales, results from a knowledge of the novels of Richardson, Burney, Smith, Radcliffe and Edgeworth, among others, that inspired creation as well as critique.[2]

With regard to Emma specifically, Austen can be seen drawing upon the literary tradition of the female quixote. Austen had a high opinion of the two most significant texts of this "type", Lennox's The Female Quixote and Barrett's The Heroine,[3] whose comic techniques came naturally to Austen herself.[4] Many modern critics have noted the connection between Austen and the authors of female quixote narratives,[5] tracing this influence primarily in Northanger Abbey, Sense and Sensibility and Emma.[6] The two former texts have been considered in earlier sections of this thesis in slightly different contexts. Both show the influence of quixotic

novels, although the narrator's positioning of Catherine Morland as an "anti-heroine" and the brevity of her period of gothic delusion make Northanger Abbey as much a revision as an enactment of the form, while Marianne's story chiefly illustrates "the dangers of sensibility" theme common in later Burney, Radcliffe, West, and Edgeworth.[7] This uses the materials of quixotism (the protagonist's sensibility often derives from her reading) but as a means to an end rather than as the central focus of the narrative interest.

It is Emma which possesses the clearest relationship to the "full-blown" female quixote novel as composed by Lennox or Barrett (Tenney's Female Quixotism is a further example but, despite its appearance in 1801, it is an American publication and there is no evidence of Austen's familiarity with it). The structural similarities are pronounced. Arabella, Cherubina, and Emma are all motherless young women who live alone with their fathers in circumstances which risk isolation and boredom. Cherubina and Emma have not been aided by governesses who indulge rather than restrain them. Emma and Arabella seek a solution to their solitary lives in a female companion. Emma plucks Harriet Smith from obscurity seeing her as "exactly the something which her home required" (Em I, 48; 26) while, when her father has died and the Glanvilles have left her alone, Arabella makes an ill-fated attempt to befriend Miss Groves:

> When they were gone, she found her Time hung heavy upon her Hands ...
>
> As she wished for nothing more passionately than an agreeable Companion of her own Sex and Rank, an Accident threw a Person in her Way, who, for some Days, afforded her a little Amusement (FQ I, 98-9; 66-7).

Emma is not so particular as Arabella on the subject of rank, recognising that social superiority increases the potential for manipulative control. Emma's involvement with Harriet Smith, specifically her attempt to conduct Harriet's love affairs, is

reminiscent of Cherubina's encounter with the rustic Mary in The Heroine.[8] Cherubina meets Mary when the latter's courtship by a suitable would-be-husband called William is well under way, a parallel to the situation of Harriet and Robert Martin before Emma takes charge. Cherubina is appalled by the lack of romance interest in the relationship and sees it as a kindness to spice up the plot,

> I then began to consider whether any thing could yet be done in their behalf, or whether the matter was indeed past redemption. I reflected that it would be but an act of common charity, - hardly deserving praise - to snatch them awhile from the dogged and headlong way they were setting about matrimony, and introduce them to a few of the sensibilities (Hr II, 101-2).

Unlike Emma's intervention in Harriet's relationship with Martin, Cherubina is not intent on separating the lovers although this is what she achieves. William's departure and Mary's grief-stricken descent into madness are the second of Cherubina's two real "crimes" in the novel, the other being her cruelty to her father, a failure of humane behaviour which Austen does not repeat in her portrayal of Emma.

The comparison between Emma and her quixotic predecessors is equally marked in the progress of her own love story. Arabella, Cherubina, and Emma are each presented with "false" and "true" suitors between whom they must choose. The false lovers are the ones who seem most attractive on a superficial level, largely because they are adept in appropriating romance roles - unscrupulous actors with hidden motives. The heroine's involvement with the "wrong man", Sir George, Montmorenci, or Frank Churchill, can potentially blind her to the "correct" choice, Charles Glanville, Robert Stuart, Mr Knightley. The true lovers are always presented to the heroine before they meet the false. In the case of Cherubina and Emma they are men the heroine has known from childhood, which emphasises the ill

consequences risked by quixotic delusion, leading the protagonists away from the simple path to happiness.

Realisation of love for the "right man" is a conventional element in the denouement of a quixotic narrative. In previous sections of this thesis other aspects of the concluding movements have been considered; the instructive lecture, the heroine's illness and "cure". While these are more related to the experience of Catherine Morland and Marianne Dashwood, the shock awakening to love clearly links Emma to the female quixote, especially Lennox's Arabella. When Arabella hears the tale of "Cynecia, Princess of Gaul" and is made to believe that Cynecia has the prior claim on Glanville (as "Ariamenes"), it hastens an awareness of the heroine's real feelings with regard to her long-suffering suitor:

> Our charming Heroine, ignorant till now of the true State of her Heart, was surpriz'd to find it assaulted at once by all the Passions which attend disappointed Love. Grief, Rage, Jealousy, and Despair made so cruel a War in her gentle Bosom, that unable either to express or to conceal the strong Emotions with which she was agitated, she gave Way to a violent Burst of Tears (FQ II, 271; 349).

Both the circumstances behind Arabella's enlightenment and the way her emotions are described show this sequence to be a foreshadowing of Emma's acknowledgement of "the whole truth" (Em III, 198; 408) to herself after Harriet has spoken of Knightley.[9]

However, the parallels between Emma and the earlier female quixote narratives are easy to overlook while reading Austen's novel. The material Austen inherits is transformed to the extent that it becomes barely recognisable as the conventions of a prior literary tradition. This was a necessary change as the tradition had proved to be one with inbuilt limitations. The female quixote was essentially a static model for charac-

terisation. It was successful because it provided a formula which authors could adopt in outline while varying it according to their particular concerns. Thus, whatever the specific bête noire of an author, be it romance, sensibility or radicalism, opposition could be expressed by recording the ill-effects of its influence upon a "reading Miss" (the conspicuous omission of the heroine's reading in Emma is a topic to which I will return). During the period when Austen was originally writing and revising her novels, the vogue was for female quixotism produced by revolutionary modern philosophical ideals in general, and Rousseau in particular; Elizabeth Hamilton's Bridgetina in Memoirs of Modern Philosophers (1800) and Mary Brunton's Julia Dawkins in Self-Control (1810-11), are Cherubina's sisters in this respect.

Paradoxically, an awareness of "sources and models" for Austen's masterpiece only increases the appreciation of her originality. Creating psychologically credible fiction from the framework of the female quixote narrative was a remarkable achievement. It is what makes Emma both the culmination of the eighteenth-century treatment of the deluded heroine, which has been the subject of this thesis, and a starting point for consideration of the celebrated heroines of the nineteenth-century European novel who reveal a similar lineage: Dorothea Brooke, Emma Bovary, Anna Karenina, Isabel Archer.[10] Literary quixotism of the eighteenth century was artificial almost by definition: bound up with books, readers, plots and self-referentiality. As it originated with Cervantes, this was the very feature which created the fascination of the text - what Formalist critics would see as fiction laying bare the devices by which it operates. Cervantes' imitators too often reworked the quixotic in terms of schematic oppositions between romance and reality, imagination and judgement, madness and sanity. Although the authors of the best female quixote novels, such as Lennox and Barrett, are usually adept in avoiding reductionism,

their narratives are comically entertaining and occasionally thought-provoking but no more. Austen's Emma again encases these themes within the complexities of the highest art.

One significant illustration of this is Austen's portrayal of imagination within the novel. There has been a tendency in modern criticism of Emma, particularly that written prior to the last decade, to read the text as advocating the necessity of restraining imagination. Hence Emma, as the obviously "imaginative" character, is seen to be deluded by her own fancy into a series of mistakes which culminate in disillusionment and an acceptance of the primacy of sense and judgement, the latter represented by Mr Knightley who "specifically rejects any part in 'imagination' for himself".[11] Such a reading is not supported by the text. Austen's attitude to her heroine's inventiveness is far from uncritical, but she does not advocate suppression of imagination or its replacement by some other, more "rational", mental faculty. When Emma announces her intention to repent by "repressing imagination all the rest of her life" (Em I, 303; 142) she is revealing her inexperience rather than outlining an authorially sanctioned plan of action. Some eighteenth-century novels may have implicitly condoned her plan but Austen's text recognises its impossibility.

As a creative artist, Austen was perfectly placed to understand the centrality of imagination to human existence. This is demonstrated in Emma by its integral role in the characters' awareness of both self and the world beyond. With regard to the former, the emphasis on the mental life of the novel's protagonists conveys a strong impression of how an individual's self-perception is bound up with hopes, dreams, and schemes. These do not have to remain restricted to the level of self-apprehension but can also relate to that which is external to consciousness. While it may never be possible to enter fully into the mind of another, individuals can attempt

to achieve greater comprehension with the aid of a mental power that allows them to go beyond the self. The imagination enables the creation of images of other beings, which ideally reflects their reality and permits empathy and understanding.

Such concepts inform the patterns of individual and social communication in Highbury that are the basis of Emma's structure. It does, of course, provide a challenge for the readers of the text, for while they are trying to achieve a mental "picture" of the characters the author has invented, these characters are busily assessing and evoking each other in a manner upon which the reader cannot rely. Emma is as much about the difficulties that arise from imagination, perception and communication; specifically the "gaps" which emerge between individuals when sympathy and understanding fail, as it is a record of the necessity of these elements in true insight. As Adena Rosmarin has convincingly argued, the novel encourages the development of such qualities in its audience by tempting them into a reenactment of the errors of its protagonists.[12]

Highbury is an imaginative realm in more ways than one. It is peopled by individuals whose fascination is achieving some form of access into the minds and motivations of their neighbours. The main reason why the reader receives such a forceful impression of Emma as an imaginative character is because her consciousness happens to be the central focus of the narrative. There is the sense that the same pattern of speculation, prophesy, and mistake would be apparent if the tale were told from the perspective of Mrs Weston, Harriet Smith, Frank Churchill or even Mr Knightley himself. The fundamentally significant aspect of all this imaginative activity is that it ensures each character's experience of acquaintances is as much a product of an inventive recreation of personality as it is of an objective awareness of fact. There is no better way of illustrating this than by considering

the peculiar position within the novel of "the idea of Mr. Frank Churchill" (Em I, 251; 118).

Frank Churchill is one of Highbury's most elusive figures. This is initially the result of his failure to visit his father. Such non-appearance has a powerful effect on the collective imagination of the town, where he

> was looked on as sufficiently belonging to the place to make his merits and prospects a kind of common concern.
> Mr. Frank Churchill was one of the boasts of Highbury, and a lively curiosity to see him prevailed, though the compliment was so little returned that he had never been there in his life (Em I, 28; 17).

This "lively curiosity" has numerous consequences prior to Frank Churchill's belated arrival. He is already a significant preoccupation of the Westons, Emma and, more surprisingly, Mr Knightley who all - with varying degrees of enthusiasm - have an awareness of him as a possible partner for Emma. This is the unspoken context whenever Frank's name is mentioned in the early stages of the novel, partially explaining the strange silence surrounding Mr Knightley's obvious eligibility. That the "wishes at Randalls respecting Emma's destiny" (Em I, 82; 41) are known to Mr Knightley is not made explicit in the narrative, but it can be assumed that, if Emma is aware that she is linked with Frank Churchill in "their friends' imaginations" (Em I, 252; 119), then Mr Knightley has picked up the hint. Certainly the end of his solo talk with Mrs Weston where subtle tensions give way to a sudden change of subject would seem to suggest this (Em I, 82; 41).

By the time Frank Churchill becomes a direct topic of conversation between Emma and Mr Knightley, the reader has been made aware that Emma is not averse to the Westons' plotting, that she believes, "if she were to marry, he [Frank Churchill] was the very person to suit her in age, character and

condition" (Em I, 251; 119). Throughout their antagonistic debate it is important to bear in mind that neither has any first hand knowledge of the man they are discussing, but only of the imaginative constructs of "Frank Churchill" which are proliferating by this stage in the novel. Both Emma and Knightley reveal as much about themselves as their ostensible subject. In fact the working out of their relationship through rival interpretations of others is entirely characteristic as seen in the following exchange:

> 'I will say no more about him,' cried Emma, 'you turn every thing to evil. We are both prejudiced; you against, I for him; and we have no chance of agreeing till he is really here.'
> 'Prejudiced! I am not prejudiced.'
> 'But I am ... My love for Mr. and Mrs. Weston gives me a decided prejudice in his favour.'
> 'He is a person I never think of from one month's end to another,' said Mr. Knightley, with a degree of vexation, which made Emma immediately talk of something else, though she could not comprehend why he should be angry (Em I, 321; 150).

Prejudices are established and opinions fixed long before Frank Churchill's actual appearance - and, while Emma believes these can be revised when "he is really here", predetermined "ideas" of Frank Churchill are to cast a long shadow over the later events of the narrative.

What goads Mr Knightley into his impatient response in the above dialogue is the account Emma gives of her "idea" of Frank Churchill as a chameleon-like social being who has "the power as well as the wish of being universally agreeable" (Em I, 320; 150). It is Emma who expresses the most elaborate predictions of Frank Churchill and there is a sense in which his physical presence never offsets the imaginative version Emma holds in her mind.[13] She has become accustomed to thinking of him as a kind of possession, an outline onto which she can project romantic daydreams with complete safety. Undoubtedly being

brought into contact with the "real" Frank Churchill, the moment when "The Frank Churchill so long talked of, so high in interest, was actually before her" (Em II, 81; 190), is rather disconcerting. This is reinforced by Austen's subtle depiction of Emma creating a mental image of Mrs Weston's anxious wait, that is suddenly undermined by coming across "Mr. Weston and his son", the latter having arrived ahead of time (Em II, 80-1; 189-90). The characters in Emma are prone to such imaginative evocations of absent figures and, in Emma's case particularly, these are often deflated later by the narrator's commentary (the timing of Mr Elton's trip to London with the picture being another example (Em I, 116; 56, I, 142-3; 68)).

Emma cannot see Frank Churchill distinct from the expectations and imaginations with which he is surrounded. His guileful easiness to please makes the task more difficult, since Frank has his own reasons for "becoming" the character others wish him to be. But just as Lennox's Arabella was protected from Sir George by her romance quixotism, so Emma's imagination prevents her from being a victim of Frank Churchill's deviousness. As Frank primarily exists to Emma as an idea in her mind he is, on this level, under her control. Indeed this is the point of admitting an "imaginary" lover, he has to follow the heroine's script,

> as she sat drawing or working, forming a thousand amusing schemes for the progress and close of their attachment, fancying interesting dialogues, and inventing elegant letters; the conclusion of every imaginary declaration on his side was that she refused him. Their affection was always to subside into friendship (Em II, 242; 264).

This beautifully handled insight into Emma's imaginative life serves the purpose of "explaining" Emma's immunity from an unrequited attachment to Frank Churchill. She has mentally worked through and concluded their attachment and as such is prepared for real circumstances to follow the same course.

This twist in the tale is not perceived by Highbury generally - while Frank is using Emma as a "blind" (Em III, 239; 427) and Emma is plotting ways to pass him on to Harriet - on-lookers consider them a match. For Mr Knightley, that

> Emma was his [Frank Churchill's] object appeared indisputable. Every thing declared it; his own attentions, his father's hints, his mother-in-law's guarded silence; it was all in unison; words, conduct, discretion, and indiscretion, told the same story (Em III, 62; 343).

Hence the eventual awkwardness of Emma's position, called upon to admit her indifference to the man she has been seemingly encouraging when the Westons and Mr Knightley rally to her aid after the announcement of Frank's engagement to Jane Fairfax.[14] It is her admission to Mr Knightley, "that, in short, I was somehow or other safe" from Frank (Em III, 240; 427), that paves the way for Knightley's proposal, and this scene is a reminder that Emma is not the only character whose "idea" of Frank Churchill has influenced attitudes towards him. Mr Knightley's resistance to Frank predates the latter's arrival in Highbury and, while it is often noted that Emma's account of Jane Fairfax's culpability with regard to Mr Dixon varies depending on where Jane stands in her opinion at any given time,[15] the fluctuations of Mr Knightley's perceptions of Frank Churchill from "villain" to "very good sort of fellow" (Em III, 252; 433) are equally subjective.[16]

It is a remark of Miss Bates' which, unintentionally, provides a commentary on the imaginative speculations rife in her neighbourhood. Digressing onto a fancied comparison between Mr Dixon and Mr John Knightley that is rejected by Jane Fairfax, Miss Bates is led to conclude: "Very odd! but one never does form a just idea of any body beforehand. One takes up a notion, and runs away with it" (Em II, 50; 176). This is a lesson which many of Highbury's inhabitants eventually learn, particularly as a result of the general obsession with

matchmaking. Emma believes her delusions regarding Mr Elton and Harriet result from her having "taken up the idea ... and made every thing bend to it" (Em I, 286; 134). Then, when Mrs Weston suggests a possible alliance between Jane Fairfax and Knightley, the heroine responds by claiming, "You take up an idea, Mrs. Weston, and run away with it; as you have many a time reproached me with doing" (Em II, 161-2; 226).

Matchmaking speculations are not restricted to the principals of Austen's narrative. Indeed, Miss Bates' remark shortly follows a passage where she has hinted at rumours that had circulated regarding Emma and Mr Elton during his period of favour at Hartfield. It is one of the moments when the readers of the novel can appreciate how Emma's behaviour is interpreted from the outside by characters who do not have the readers' privileged access into the heroine's thoughts. Box Hill is a further instance, only there it is Emma's "flirtation" with Frank Churchill which is under observation (Em III, 114; 368). Miss Bates makes it clear that she has been the recipient not the instigator of gossip about Emma and Mr Elton

> I do not think I am particularly quick at those sort of discoveries. I do not pretend to it. What is before me, I see (Em II, 49; 176).

This would appear to put Miss Bates in a stronger position than many of her neighbours, who tend to look at what is before them but "see" only that which supports pre-existing ideas. However, the novel does not favour "literalists" like Miss Bates over the "imaginists": being mentally limited to the facts of existence does not permit true understanding. Miss Bates has, for example, been provided with enough information to permit real insight into Jane Fairfax's situation but her inability to select and interpret means that the "clues" remain buried in the mass of reportage which constitutes her conversation. Her well-meaning help therefore becomes a part of the oppressive

attentions which only exacerbate Jane's isolation.

Connected to this are the reasons why the text does not condemn matchmaking per se. Matchmaking was the perfect focus for the characters' speculations in Emma because, like the imagination itself, it has the potential to be both positive and negative. At one end of the scale, matchmaking can reflect a kind and self-effacing involvement in the lives of others, an essentially harmless pursuit, suggestive of a sympathetic understanding beyond the capabilities of the "literalist". However, at its worst, it can express desires for manipulative control that are self-serving and blind to the inner lives of the individuals involved. It is because matchmaking in the abstract is a neutral concept that Mr Knightley does not initially see Emma's interest in it as a danger. In the first discussion of the subject he remarks,

> Your time has been properly and delicately spent, if you have been endeavouring for the last four years to bring about this marriage. A worthy employment for a young lady's mind! (Em I, 18; 12)

This complacent irony is soon to vanish as Emma's next scheme takes shape. The characters in Emma generally achieve the clearest perspective when their own interests are out of the question and Mr Knightley is to find Emma's involvement with Harriet Smith strikes much closer to home.

If the subject of Frank Churchill is loaded with connotations that make him a conversational minefield for Emma and Mr Knightley, similar controversy arises over Harriet Smith and Robert Martin. Again the reader is made to see the relevance of certain characters not consisting in "themselves" but only as they reflect the relationship between the principals. Characterisation in Emma works through a complex process of juxtaposition, doubling and fragmentation - while the

resulting text may appear realistic, this effect is the product of artistic devices ranging far beyond the simply mimetic.[17]

The sense that the figures of Highbury are conceived in relation to each other, rather than as distinct individuals, is connected to the point made earlier that characters in this novel perceive others through imaginative projections which reflect subjective feelings as much as objective reality. The reader has to negotiate a path around the biassed, and conflicting, accounts of the characters which co-exist within the text. This endeavour is rendered more problematic by the construction of the narrative along similar principles. The reader does not just see others from Emma's perspective. These characters seem designed to reenact aspects of Emma; thus Miss Bates is described by the reversal of the terms used to outline Emma (Em I, 36; 21), Mrs Elton who has "replaced" Emma in Mr Elton's affections is an exaggerated caricature of the worst of Emma's manipulativeness and snobbery, while Mr Knightley believes Emma's dislike of Jane Fairfax is "because she saw in her the really accomplished young woman, which she wanted to be thought herself" (Em II, 28; 166).

If Jane Fairfax's dark elegance stands as one contrast to Emma, Harriet Smith's doll-like beauty and simplicity provides another.[18] Emma "admires" the appearance of both (Em I, 41; 23, II, 29-30; 167) and projects upon them fantasy stories to match - Jane's an intrigue, Harriet's a romance. Emma's plans for Harriet initially come up against two problems: Robert Martin's existence and Knightley's disapproval. The two are linked. Emma, in matchmaking for Harriet rather than herself, shows a desire to remain detached from love relationships, to experience the game of courtship at a distance where her control is not threatened, and the same principle applies to her "imaginary" love for Frank Churchill. Mr Knightley is generally opposed to Emma's wish to place herself in the role

of dispassionate observer of others, but he has a particular interest in overcoming her sense of being personally above the matrimonial plannings of Highbury. Even if he has not become aware of his own wishes regarding Emma at this early stage, he is intent on reeducating Emma's "ideas" of what constitutes masculine eligibility, and one way of attempting this is through his "representative" and protégé Robert Martin.

The association of Robert Martin with Mr Knightley is explicit in the text. They both live upon the Donwell estate and are shown to be actively engaged in its business. They are men of sense and feeling and have a high opinion of each other. Robert Martin's rather shadowy presence, a character who only appears to the reader through the reported narratives of others, means he has no opportunity of developing an individuality distinct from his role as Knightley's satellite. The closeness of this identification explains the deeply-felt shock which Knightley experiences when he realises Emma has contrived for Harriet to refuse Martin. He has encouraged his protégé to propose to Emma's only to see Martin rejected out of hand as beneath Harriet's notice. Undoubtedly Mr Knightley has many valid reasons for condemning Emma's intervention and believing that it will be detrimental to Harriet's long term prospects, but these alone do not explain his vehemence. Emma is right when she points out that Knightley is "a very warm friend to Mr. Martin; but ... unjust to Harriet" (Em I, 131; 63), and he later concedes this when admitting Emma, "would have chosen for him [Mr Elton] better than he has chosen for himself" (Em III, 35; 331).

Significantly Knightley never gives up on the potential match between Harriet Smith and Robert Martin. His attempts to re-establish the relationship in the latter stages of the novel often repeat aspects of Emma's plotting to bring Harriet and Mr Elton together. It is comic that Emma overlooks the potential

implications of Knightley's conversation with Harriet at Donwell after all her earlier efforts to manoeuvre Elton into such a tête-à-tête; the fact that Harriet also misunderstands Knightley's intentions shows that his matchmaking efforts are not without dangers of their own. Knightley has more success with his next attempt to reunite Harriet and Martin. Like Elton before him, Martin is dispatched to London as an element of his courtship but his journey has a positive outcome enabling the marriage of the protégés to precede that of the principals. Making Emma approve of the connection, and value Robert Martin, has been inextricably linked with her movement towards the realisation that such men as he and Mr Knightley are the true lovers who must be chosen above Mr Elton and Frank Churchill.

Certainly when Emma is thinking of men who could be a match for Harriet or herself it is Mr Elton and Frank Churchill who come to her mind. They superficially conform to a romance type, both described as "heroes" during the narrative (Em I, 171; 81, II, 225; 256), their manners to women are marked by a studious gallantry. John Knightley observes that pleasing ladies "is downright labour" to Mr Elton while he reserves his "rational and unaffected" (Em I, 235; 111) side for male company. At Hartfield, Elton reads while ladies draw, composes courteous charades, and showers the women with compliments, to an extent Emma can only tolerate due to her mistaken belief that it is for Harriet's benefit. Frank Churchill is not as oppressively polite but still he shares much with Elton. Both prefer the company of women and relish a leisured lifestyle which contrasts strongly with men of business like Mr Weston or the Knightley brothers. The flourishes of Frank's writing style are stressed, and are a source of irritation to Mr Knightley, hence his exasperated remark: "Oh! when a gallant young man, like Mr. Frank Churchill ... writes to a fair lady like Miss Woodhouse, he will, of course, put forth his best"

(Em II, 317; 298). The romance connotations implied here, of the relationship between a lady and her chivalric worshipper, are later played out in the mock ceremony of Box Hill.

One of the quietly submerged ironies of the text is that Harriet may well not share Emma's appreciation of the gallant suitor although she accepts him when presented to her. Harriet's prepossession for Robert Martin shows that she values the qualities he represents and, as the story progresses, it becomes strangely apparent that this is because he is a version of Mr Knightley placed near her level. Throughout Harriet has been very aware of Knightley's presence. When Emma is trying to make her admit that the gentlemen she has met at Hartfield are superior to Robert Martin, Harriet immediately concedes, "Certainly, he is not like Mr. Knightley ... But Mr. Knightley is so very fine a man!" (Em I, 63; 33) and Emma has to remind her of other candidates such as Mr Elton. During the Elton affair Harriet uses Knightley as her touchstone, Elton is "a man that every body looks up to, quite like Mr. Knightley!" (Em I, 157; 75), and, with the hindsight provided by the later debacle over Frank Churchill, it becomes apparent that the same misunderstanding could potentially have taken place regarding Mr Elton earlier. When Harriet speaks of "one ... so very handsome and agreeable" (Em I, 111; 54) it is natural to assume she is referring to Elton, and it is more than likely that she is, but neither Emma, or the reader, can know for sure.

The possibility remains that the initial reason Harriet "could not have imagined" (Em I, 155; 74) Elton as her suitor, is that she instinctively looks to a different type of would-be-husband. The inherent ironies multiply later when Frank Churchill comes under consideration. Emma may be mortified when Harriet pronounces, "to be sure it was paying him too great a compliment, but she did think there were some looks a little like Mr. Elton" (Em II, 148; 220). But Frank Churchill

does bear more resemblance to Mr Elton than Emma wants to admit at this stage. The comedy is that, while Frank wins the love of the accomplished and intelligent Jane Fairfax, and is seriously considered as a possible husband by Emma, the lowly, much ridiculed Harriet Smith has mentally dismissed him in favour of his "superior", Mr Knightley,

> I know we agreed never to name him - but considering how infinitely superior he is to every body else, I should not have thought it possible that I could be supposed to mean any other person. Mr. Frank Churchill, indeed! I do not know who would ever look at him in the company of the other. I hope I have a better taste than to think of Mr. Frank Churchill, who is like nobody by his side (Em III, 193-4; 405).

It is hard to think of a way Emma could be more comprehensively humbled than by having to listen to this speech, especially when it is here that she begins to acknowledge that it is not only Harriet who "never could have an idea of anybody else" (Em III, 195; 406) than Mr Knightley.

The question that has to be answered is why Emma is so repeatedly and completely deluded. It is not because she has a vivid imagination - the opposition which the novel establishes is between those who are "blind" and those who have "penetration", and this is not an imagination versus sense division. Mr Knightley uses his imagination to see further into Frank Churchill's relationship with Jane Fairfax than any one else does,[19] although Emma comes closer to the truth than many, certainly close enough to disconcert Frank. But, while Emma knows there is something suspicious about Jane Fairfax's continued residence in Highbury, reticence about the piano, and mysterious insistence on picking up her own letters, the narrative she supplies to fill in the gaps is widely off the mark. It may be true that, one "might guess twenty things without guessing exactly the right" (Em II, 140-1; 217), but Emma does seem to have a peculiar genius for guessing wrong.

The explanation which is often provided in criticism of the novel links Emma to the female quixote narrative. Almost without exception, the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century female quixote is deluded because of the content of her reading matter. "Romances and novels" provide these figures with a set of behavioural "rules", and an expectation of particular varieties of "adventure", that they proceed to apply to their own experience, with inevitably comic results. The classic exposition of this approach in relation to Emma is the following, much-quoted, passage from Mary Lascelles' Jane Austen and her Art. Lascelles believes Emma is

> more elaborately deceived than Marianne Dashwood, betrayed further into active folly than Catherine Morland - by the false notions current in the world of illusion. It is true that no reference is made to this world - because, I think, Jane Austen had no particular novel or comedy of intrigue in mind. But the bookish origin of such follies does not need to be stated explicitly. Such a young woman as Emma, so constituted and so circumstanced, could have become acquainted with illegitimacy as an interesting situation, infidelity as a comic incident, only in her reading.[20]

Such an interpretation has many attractions. If Emma is perceiving her reality through an inappropriate literary frame of reference, it would explain why her imagination seems always to mislead while, for others in the novel, it can be a positive benefit.

There are, however, numerous difficulties with this solution. The first Lascelles mentions herself: "no reference" is made to the reading which Emma has done to have initiated her quixotism. If anything, Austen appears to have gone out of her way to preclude this possibility by placing so much stress on Emma's failure to read, specifically through Knightley's remarks about the heroine's reading lists and his prescient predictions that her attempts to educate Harriet will come to nothing. These have been frequently cited to reject

Lascelles's view.[21] However, Mr Knightley's comments do not necessarily disprove the "female quixote" interpretation. Knightley believes Emma incapable of a "course of steady reading" because she "will never submit to any thing requiring industry and patience, and a subjection of the fancy to the understanding" (Em I, 72; 37). A "sensible man" (Em I, 11; 9) like Knightley is not going to be referring to novel reading here, the pursuit which was conventionally seen to submit the understanding to the fancy. His "course" would presumably be a mix of non-fiction and canonical literature - the sort of reading a girl like Emma would feel she "ought" to have done to be well-educated. It would not be that which the Northanger Abbey "defence" showed girls to display "affected indifference, or momentary shame" (NA I, 63; 38) about. One presumes that if young women kept lists of the novels they intended to read, they were more careful to conceal them.

But, if the "proof" that Emma is not a reader of fiction can be overcome, it is harder to dispel a feeling that Emma is an unlikely candidate for such literary obsession. There is no reason why novel reading should hold Emma's attention any more than "serious" literature, drawing, or music have done - it is hard to imagine this active, mercurial girl wading through the three volume productions of a circulating library, or indeed taking such books seriously enough to become deluded by them. Many have pointed to Emma's role as an "author" within the text.[22] She is a creator of fictions for others to enact rather than herself the slavish follower of quixotic rules. Using the active/passive distinction mentioned with regard to Belinda's Lady Delacour and Virginia St Pierre in the last section, Emma can be seen to fall firmly into the former category, in contrast to characters such as Harriet Smith, "similar in some respects to Catherine Morland", who is a gothic novel reader.[23]

If the actual content of Emma's "narratives" are taken into consideration then it becomes harder to see what their "bookish origins" could have been. Some, like the myth of Harriet's parentage or the "adventure" of Harriet and the gypsies seem rooted in romance and fairytale, but Emma also has an eye for the scandal narrative, as the Dixon intrigue and her speculation about the Churchill family suggest, "Half a dozen natural children, perhaps - and poor Frank cut off!" (Em III, 170; 393). Interestingly, this latter example which Lascelles states is "no way coloured by the conventions of fiction",[24] is cited by other critics as evidence of Emma's application of her readings in romance.[25]

This is the great problem of the "reading theory" approach to Emma. With a totally unspecified model (Lascelles mentions "novel" and "comedy" to which can be added "romance"), the nature of Emma's literary quixotism is too diffuse. Traditionally the quixote can give chapter and verse about her sources, she has rules and precedents by which to build delusions and hence the comic plot of the novel. It is here that the comedy of Emma parts company with the techniques of its predecessors. Even moments which seem most comparable to quixotic parody, for example the comments incorporated into Emma's reaction to Knightley's proposal concerning the "heroism of sentiment" and the "simple sublimity of resolving to refuse him" for Harriet's sake (Em III, 247; 431), are problematic (in this instance because the parallel is made by the narrator not Emma herself).

The reading quixote interpretation also tends to perceive Emma as an actual contemporary woman. Lascelles bases her argument on an assumption that a proper lady of Emma's period could only have picked up such ideas through fiction. Leaving aside the fertile gossiping environment of Highbury, capable of such speculations as those concerning Mr Weston's "promise to his wife on her death-bed" (Em I, 17; 12), Emma's status as a

figure in a fiction cannot be ignored. It seems rather bizarre to insist that a novel character has to go away and read a book to find out how characters in romances and novels are supposed to behave, especially when the text they inhabit has many features derived from romantic comedy.

Emma may have more about her that seems "life-like" than the majority of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century heroines, but she is not "real". Her experience is as governed by the nature of fiction as it is by the need to refer to actual existence beyond the text. Austen's awareness of this is made evident by her avoidance of the traditional quixotic conclusion where the quixote renounces the realm of romance, fiction, and imagination in favour of a reality which seems more appropriate for the novel's reader than its protagonist. In Lennox's, Barrett's, and of course Cervantes', text this replacement necessitates the silencing of the quixote and the end of the novel. Emma does not have to see a world free of fiction but rather accept that other narratives have a greater validity than her own.

These narratives are, of course, Austen's.[26] Deborah Ross points out that Emma has to accept the fact, "she has not been the author of Harriet but the central character of Emma".[27] Perhaps Austen's joke is that the imagination of her heroine has been too limited in the stories she invents. Emma picks up the hackneyed and the "obvious" - that Harriet is "really" highborn, that Jane harbours an illicit love - but misses truly audacious romances like that between Frank and Jane based on the remarkable coincidence of their shared Highbury connection (not to mention their similar "orphan" background).[28] Emma can see adventure in the shape of Frank Churchill's "rescue" of Harriet, but even Harriet knows that the true romance moment is the service which Knightley has done her.[29] Emma represents a complex interweaving of choices between different genres and

registers of fiction and in the light of this it is unsurprising that the straightforward female quixote narrative was too fixed a structure to base the novel upon. In addition, it is likely that Austen understood that, traditionally, quixotic texts had made the role of the audience too passive. Readers were told exactly why and how the heroine was deluded and then looked on as events unfolded in the predetermined manner. Emma does not permit this comfortable distance.

It could also be argued that the author of the defence of the novel in Northanger Abbey was unlikely then to employ a model which tended to be so inclusive and indiscriminate in its parody of fictional conventions. Emma if anything vindicates the reading of creative literature to a greater degree than Austen's earlier work. While Marianne's dangerous romantic attitudes derive from poetry such as Cowper's, to Mr Knightley the work of this author acts as a warning that he could be potentially, "'Myself creating what I saw'" (Em III, 63; 344). It is even possible that the source of Catherine Morland's gothic delusions helps guide Harriet Smith to an appreciation of the importance of paying attention to men whose names have "chivalric overtones"[30] and who live in abbeys.

However, even if Austen did not want to present the reader with the neat "explanation" that Emma's "errors of imagination" (Em III, 62; 343) are attributable to her reading, there are other ways in which consideration of the female quixote casts light upon this heroine's delusion. In the account given earlier of the similarity between Emma's circumstances and Arabella's or Cherubina's, there were suggestions of how these produce behavioural likenesses. Quixotism does necessitate a high degree of self obsession, the protagonist has to be able to perceive others purely as, in Cherubina's phrase, the "dramatis personae" (Hr I, 86) of the heroine's text. While Emma wants to create heroines rather than be one herself, which

is the ambition of Arabella and Cherubina, her schemes involve the same kind of manipulation and self-centredness as theirs. The female quixote does make a claim for power, however transient and delusory it may prove. Emma, and Arabella, are aided in this by the possession of the wealth and status which confers real social power. This, in particular, makes Emma appear more like the eighteenth-century quixotic heroine than her mainstream counterparts who, instead of being handsome, clever and rich, tend to be beautiful, intuitive and poor.[31]

Female quixotism is also an expression of the difficult passage from youth to maturity, the transition from the child's perspective of the centrality of the self to the adult's awareness that an individual is subsumed within a wider social context. These youthful heroines are characterised by their inexperience, and in their belief that emotion and love can be theorised and controlled. It is this inward looking perspective which, above all, is responsible for Emma's mistaken schemes and ideas of others. In her matchmaking plans she singles out figures she believes she can dominate and direct; Harriet, Elton, Frank Churchill. The disillusionments she undergoes occur when she is forced to face up to the fact that her "puppets" are capable of independent decisions. Ironically, Emma is forever predicting the kinds of "crisis" she sees ahead of her, believing the courtship between Harriet and Elton "must come to a crisis soon now" (Em I, 151; 72) or later that Frank Churchill's love for her will mean, "the spring would not pass without bringing a crisis, an event, a something to alter her present composed and tranquil state" (Em III, 2; 315). But when trouble emerges it comes from unexpected angles; Elton "getting above himself" by proposing to Emma, the shock announcement of Frank's engagement, or Harriet's quiet admission that she believes her love for Knightley is reciprocated.

Significantly, while readers of the text can attempt to establish a distance from Emma's mistakes - by seeing without her prejudices and using the "neutral" perspective provided by the narrator - we do not know what is to happen and are caught up with her delusions and shocks. The culmination of this is the tour de force of the eleventh chapter in volume III. On one level it is the entirely conventional quixotic denouement where a deluded heroine experiences a moment of revelation in which she becomes aware of her "blindness ... [and] madness" (Em III, 199; 408), intense confusion being followed by a lasting enlightenment. What has changed is first, the position of the reader, no longer allowed a safely detached perspective from which to view the heroine comically, and secondly the level on which the heroine experiences her disillusionment.

Emma has not thrown herself into a river, incarcerated her father in a madhouse or gone through a visible process of sickness, conversion and cure. On the surface nothing has altered and she manges to dispatch Harriet without any loss of control. The reader can nevertheless perceive the intense mental turmoil that accompanies Emma's realisation of "the deceptions she had been thus practising on herself, and living under!" (Em III, 207; 411). Austen brings the reader into the mind of a quixote at the precise moment that her imaginary realm is collapsing and every word is made to take on an immense weight of emphasis:

> She was most sorrowfully indignant; ashamed of every sensation but the one revealed to her - her affection for Mr. Knightley. - Every other part of her mind was disgusting.
>
> With insufferable vanity had she believed herself in the secret of everybody's feelings; with unpardonable arrogance proposed to arrange everybody's destiny. She was proved to have been universally mistaken; and she had not quite done nothing - for she had done mischief (Em III, 209; 412-13).

Emma's situation at this point is not "caused" by imagination, romance fantasy, or even the self-regarding desire for control, but the peculiar combination of the negative aspects of all three characteristic of the female quixote. Here Emma shows that she can rationally understand the mistakes she has made. Her "reward" however is reserved until she expresses this on an emotional level, finally achieving a self-denying act of empathy for another,

> Emma could not bear to give him [Mr Knightley] pain. He was wishing to confide in her - perhaps to consult her; - cost her what it would, she would listen (Em III, 243; 429).

Mr Knightley's attempts to correct Emma's behaviour throughout the novel have been motivated by her lack of respect for the feelings and individuality of others. He does not oppose her matchmaking on principle and does not even know about a great deal of her fantasy life. The reason he has "blamed ... and lectured" her (Em III, 246; 430) is her failure of sympathy and tenderness. In strong contrast to the mainstream eighteenth-century heroine, Emma perceives tenderness of heart to be a sign of weakness, associated in her mind with figures like Harriet, Isabella and her father (Em II, 252-3; 269). The consequences of this belief become clear at Box Hill, where every negative element of Emma's personality surfaces in the moment when she turns her power and wit against Miss Bates.

As Adena Rosmarin's reading capably demonstrates, the most significant aspect of Emma's "insolent" (Em III, 128; 374) act is that it is so easy for the reader of the text to overlook until Mr Knightley's unequivocal rebuke.[32] Having become accustomed to the enjoyment of Emma's vitality and intelligence, the reader can fail to appreciate its potential danger, becoming as implicated in the Box Hill incident as the heroine herself. In a novel where every major event is prepared for,

or followed up by, subtle parallels at other points in the text, Emma's face to face insulting of Miss Bates has been prefigured by her sharply accurate piece of mimicry at the Coles' dinner party, at which she receives no greater check than Mrs Weston's "You divert me against my conscience" (Em II, 159; 225). In the Box Hill sequence Austen shows that she is not prepared to have the reader so "diverted" by her heroine.

Gradually then an ideal emerges as Emma progresses. The finest qualities of understanding and empathy are displayed by those who possess a sympathetic imagination. Both elements are essential. With sympathy and tenderness alone a character such as Miss Bates results, incapable of insight and powerless to provide real support. In contrast, imagination combined with self-obsession and detachment creates a personality prone to quixotic delusion, such as Emma's: a figure who can be compelling and creative but who denies the validity of emotional experience. The sympathetic imagination is the key to true perception, enabling individuals to see beyond the limits of their existence and feel as others feel. After the century of novelistic trials, delusions, disillusionments and educations which this thesis has examined, Austen's concept, behind which stands a philosophical and literary tradition that stretches from Johnson and Adam Smith to Wordsworth and Shelley,[33] seems an optimistic place with which to close.

CHAPTER FOUR: JANE AUSTEN

Section i: Notes

1 Richard Whately, review of Austen's Northanger Abbey and Persuasion, The Quarterly Review XXIV (1821), 367.

2 See Spencer, Woman Novelist pp. 168-9 and M. Myers, "Reform or Ruin: 'A Revolution in Female Manners'", SECC XI (1982), 199-216. A critique of this position is provided by A. Richardson, Literature, Education, and Romanticism: Reading as Social Practice, 1780-1832 (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 168 and 170.

3 Henry Stephen, review of Edgeworth's Tales of Fashionable Life, The Quarterly Review II (1809), 147.

4 As parodied by Austen in the first chapter of Northanger Abbey, (NA I, 3-9; 13-16). It has often been suggested that her "target" is Smith's Emmeline; see M. Lascelles, Jane Austen and her Art (1939; repr. Oxford, 1954), p. 60; F.W. Bradbrook, Jane Austen and her Predecessors (Cambridge, 1966), pp. 102-3 and Ehrenpreis, introduction, Eml (1971), pp. xi-xiii.

5 See e.g. Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792), vol. V of The Works of Mary Wollstonecraft eds. J. Todd and M. Butler, (London, 1989), p. 130 and Hannah More, Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education 3rd ed. (London, 1799), I, 32.

6 Wollstonecraft, review of Emmeline, Analytical Review I (1788), 333: repr. in Williams, Novel and Romance pp. 355-6.

7 More, Strictures I, 163-4. This warning was a long-standing conduct book convention, see e.g. Hester Chapone, Letters on the Improvement of the Mind, Addressed to a Young Lady 2nd ed. (London, 1773), II, 144-6.

8 Jane West, The Advantages of Education: Or, the History of Maria Williams (London, 1793), I, 3.

9 See e.g. Wollstonecraft, Rights of Woman V, 96-101, 133-5, 141-3 and More, Strictures II, 125-6.

10 Maria Edgeworth, Belinda (London, 1801). References are included in the text abbreviated as Bel. This remark has been associated with Austen's "defence of the novel", NA I, 61-4; 37; see Bradbrook, Predecessors p. 113.

11 Jane West, A Gossip's Story and A Legendary Tale (1796), 4th ed. (London, 1799). References are included in the text abbreviated as GS.

12 P.M. Spacks, "Sisters", Fetter'd or Free? eds. Schofield and Macheski, pp. 136-8. See also the discussion of these texts above, chapter four, section i.

13 Noted by J.M.S. Tompkins, see "Elinor and Marianne: A Note on Jane Austen", RES XVI (1940), 33-43. Also M. Butler, Jane Austen and the War of Ideas (1975; repr. Oxford, 1987), pp. 100-1; Figes, Subterfuge p. 90; J. Harris, Jane Austen's Art of Memory (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 50, 244n; and K.S. Green, The Courtship Novel, 1740-1820: A Feminized Genre (Lexington, Kentucky, 1991), p. 116.

14 See Tompkins, "A Note", pp. 35-6 and Butler, War of Ideas, p. 182.

15 Cited in P. Honan, Jane Austen: Her Life (London, 1987), p. 324.

16 Jane Austen, Sense and Sensibility (London, 1811). References are included in the text abbreviated as SS and followed by the corresponding page number in The Novels of Jane Austen vol. I, ed. R.W. Chapman, rev. M. Lascelles. 3rd ed. (1933; repr. London, New York, Toronto, 1967).

17 More, Essays on Various Subjects, Principally Designed for Young Ladies (London, 1777), p. 79.

18 ibid., p. 87.

19 ibid., pp. 81-2.

20 ibid., p. 83.

21 ibid., p. 85.

22 ibid., p. 87.

23 ibid., p. 88.

24 For a lighthearted account of Marianne's "advances towards heroism", see SS III, 21; 265.

25 Scott, review of Emma, The Quarterly Review XIV (1815), 194.

26 Leading M. Mudrick to argue that, "Marianne, the life and center of the novel, has been betrayed; and not by Willoughby", Jane Austen: Irony as Defense and Discovery (1952; repr. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1974), p. 93. See also H.T. Harmsel, Jane Austen: A Study in Fictional Conventions (London, The Hague, Paris, 1964), p. 47 and Figes, Subterfuge pp. 95-6.

27 Quarterly Review II, 146. Such qualifications are still made, see e.g. I. Topliss', "If we take the heroines first (though the word heroine is not quite apposite ...)", "Mary Wollstonecraft and Maria Edgeworth's Modern Ladies" in EI n.s. VI (1981), 23. See also E. Kowaleski-Wallace, Their Fathers' Daughters: Hannah More, Maria Edgeworth, and Patriarchal Complicity (Oxford, New York, 1991), p. 181.

28 See Kowaleski-Wallace, Fathers' Daughters pp. 125, 127. M. Butler discusses the sketch in Maria Edgeworth: A Literary Biography (Oxford, 1972), pp. 282-4. It is reprinted in Belinda ed. E.N. Chuilleanain, (London, Vermont, 1993), pp. 457-62.

29 Ollyett Woodhouse, review of Belinda, The Monthly Review n.s. XXXVII (1802), 369. Repr. in Belinda ed. Chuilleanain, p. 463.

30 Revisions of Belinda are discussed by Chuilleanain in Belinda p. xxv and Butler, Edgeworth: Biography pp. 494-5.

31 Edgeworth in a letter of December 1809, A Memoir of Maria Edgeworth Mrs Edgeworth, (London, 1867), I, 229.

32 The exemplary heroine is one of Edgeworth's most characteristic figures. Butler lists their appearances in Edgeworth: Biography p. 54.

33 John Ward, (later Earl of Dudley), review of Patronage, The Quarterly Review X (1814), 316.

34 Austen, Pride and Prejudice (London, 1813). References are included in the text abbreviated as PP, followed by the corresponding page number in The Novels of Jane Austen vol. II, ed. R.W. Chapman, rev. M. Lascelles. 3rd ed. (1932; repr. Oxford, 1967). See Harmsel, Fictional Conventions pp. 69-70 and 75.

35 Sydney Smith, review of Patronage, The Edinburgh Review XXII (1814), 420.

36 Evidence includes her remark, "I have made up my mind to like no Novels really, but Miss Edgeworth's, Yours & my own", Letters p. 278. See also Bradbrook, Predecessors pp. 112-19 and Butler, Edgeworth: Biography p. 328-9.

37 As expressed in The Rambler no. 4, III, 23.

38 Quarterly Review XXIV, 360.

39 ibid., p. 367.

40 ibid., p. 352.

41 Quarterly Review XIV, 189.

42 Ross shows it was not long before the moral certainties of Edgeworth's and Austen's fiction began to look "romantic" to a Victorian age intent on establishing its own "realism", Excellence pp. 170-1.

43 Quarterly Review XIV, 189-93.

44 Butler analyses the critical reception of Edgeworth's works in Edgeworth: Biography pp. 338-51 and War of Ideas pp. 153-7.

45 Quarterly Review II, 147.

46 ibid., II, 146.

47 Quarterly Review X, 304.

48 Francis Jeffrey, review of Leonora, The Edinburgh Review VIII (1806), 211.

49 Quarterly Review II, 147.

50 Quarterly Review XIV, 200. Also Ross, Excellence p. 10.

51 To Butler, "Maria began and ended with the facts", Edgeworth: Biography p. 270; see pp. 239-70 and War of Ideas p. 155. See also Chuilleanain, introduction, Belinda p. xxiii.

52 R.L. Edgeworth, preface to the 3rd ed. of Patronage by Maria Edgeworth, (London, 1814), I, v.

53 Maria Edgeworth, Patronage (London, 1814). References included in the text abbreviated as Pt

54 More, Essays pp. 101-2. However this was written relatively early in More's career. The following is a better indicator of her position at the end of the 1790s, "A woman may be knowing, active, witty, and amusing; but without propriety she cannot be amiable", Strictures I, 6.

55 See e.g. Pt II, 95-100.

56 Austen, Letters p. 311.

57 ibid., p. 312.

58 Jane Austen, Northanger Abbey and Persuasion (London, 1818), III, 67.

Section ii: Notes

1 Jane Austen, Emma: A Novel (London, 1816), III, 43. Further references are included in the text abbreviated as Em, followed by the corresponding page number in The Novels of Jane

Austen vol. IV, ed. R.W. Chapman, rev. M. Lascelles, 3rd. ed., (1933; repr. London, New York, Toronto, 1966), p. 335. As has been noted by S.M. Tave, Some Words of Jane Austen (Chicago, London, 1973), p. 205; Harris, Memory p. 170 and M.B. Mandel, "Fiction and Fiction-Making: Emma", Pers issue 13 (1991), 103n, the word "imaginist" (a nonce-word according to OED) was coined by Austen for her depiction of Emma in vol. III, chap. iii.

2 For Austen's relationship to previous eighteenth- and nineteenth-century novelists, see Harmsel, Fictional Conventions; Bradbrook, Predecessors esp. pp. 83-120; Moler, Allusion and, for Richardson, Harris, Memory. Accounts dealing primarily with Austen's female predecessors include Moers, Literary Women pp. 44-5; Spender, Mothers pp. 1-2, 115-17, 145-52; Spencer, Woman Novelist pp. 167-8 and Ross, Excellence p. 206.

3 See Letters p. 116 for Austen's comment, in a 1807 letter to Cassandra Austen, "the 'Female Quixotte', which now makes our evening amusement; to me a very high one, as I find the work quite equal to what I remembered it". For her praise of The Heroine see above, notes for chapter four, section ii.

4 See E.M. White, "Emma and the Parodic Point of View" NCF XVIII (1963-4), 55.

5 See Lascelles, Austen and her Art pp. 55-7, 70-1; Baker, "Idea of Romance", pp. 519-20; Bradbrook, Predecessors pp. 90-94; White, "Parodic Point", p. 60; Moler, Allusion pp. 157, 162-6, 169-79, 181; Harmsel, Fictional Conventions pp. 134-41, 148; Kauvar, "Austen and The Female Quixote", pp. 211-21; Messick, "Reading As If", pp. vii, 14-15, 17-18, 21, 43-80; Kirkham, Feminism pp. 129-39; A. Rosmarin "'Misreading' Emma: The Powers and Perfidies of Interpretive History", JELH LI (1984), 326. Dissenting voices include Johnson who argues that the female quixote novel is too simplistic to be of use in an interpretation of Emma, Women, Politics pp. 133-6, and M. Williams who doubts whether "the many rigid imitators of Don Quixote ... who borrow Cervantes's shape to suit their own narrowly didactic purposes" are relevant, Jane Austen: Six Novels and their Methods (London, 1986), p. 18, also pp. 19-20, 140-1.

6 Other instances occur in the juvenilia, e.g. Love and Freindship, while the influence reemerges in the character of (this time a male quixote) Sir Edward in Sanditon.

7 e.g. Burney's Mrs Berlinton, Radcliffe's Emily St Aubert, West's Charlotte Raby and Marianne Dudley, Edgeworth's Lady Olivia (in Leonora).

8 See Kirkham, Feminism pp. 130, 134-5.

9 Noted by Kauvar in "Austen and The Female Quixote", p. 213. See also Ross, Excellence p. 107.

10 The continued use of the female quixote in the nineteenth century is outlined by Messick in "Reading As If", pp. 81-160. See also A.W. Litz, Jane Austen: A Study of her Artistic Development (London, 1965), p. 135 and S. Morgan, Sisters in Time: Imagining Gender in Nineteenth-Century British Fiction (New York, Oxford, 1989), p. 53.

11 White, "Parodic Point", p. 62, also pp. 56, 58. Butler argued that although "so much of the action takes place in the inner life, the theme of the novel is scepticism about the qualities that make it up - intuition, imagination, original insight ... Emma matures by submitting her imaginings to common sense, and to the evidence", War of Ideas pp. 273-4. For Gilbert and Gubar, "Austen could not punish her more thoroughly than she does ... Emma resembles the other imaginative girls. For all these heroines are mortified, humiliated, even bullied into sense ... The very brilliant and assertive playfulness that initially marks her as a heroine is finally criticized on the grounds that it is self-deluding", The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination (New Haven, London, 1979), p. 159. C.f. those who find at least a "partial vindication of Emma Woodhouse's romantic imagination", Moler, Allusion p. 157. Also S. Morgan, who in In the Meantime: Character and Perception in Jane Austen's Fiction (Chicago, London, 1980), argues that "Emma's move to understanding does not curb imagination but is itself an imaginative act", p. 6; see also Williams, Six Novels pp. 117-20, 144-9. For a recent instance of "anti-imagination" criticism see Mellor's Romanticism and Gender, "Above all, Emma must curb her romantic imagination, must cease being an 'imaginist' like Cowper before his fire in The Task", p. 53.

12 Rosmarin, "'Misreading' Emma", pp. 319, 322-5, 327, 336. See also Williams, Six Novels pp. 119-20.

13 Not only Emma finds that "imaginary" versions of Frank Churchill have as great an attraction as the man himself, even Mr Weston comments, "I do not know ... whether the uncertainty of our meetings, the sort of constant expectation there will be of his coming in to-day or to-morrow, and at any hour, may not be more friendly to happiness than having him actually in the house", Em II, 343; 309.

14 Overlooked by Johnson who argues "Emma herself has gone from considering herself the confident author of other people's stories to realizing that she has instead been the hoodwinked and quite powerless subject of another very stale one ... of an eminently flatterable provincial girl deceived by a duplicitous and mobile man who is pulling all the strings she herself could not", Women, Politics p. 139.

15 See e.g. Moler, Allusion p. 179.

16 Discussed by Harmsel, Fictional Conventions p. 156; Williams, Six Novels p. 135 and Johnson, Women, Politics p. 140.

17 See J. Kissane, "Comparison's Blessed Felicity: Character Arrangement in Emma", SN II (1970), 173-4.

18 See Kissane, "Comparison's", p. 176; Butler, War of Ideas p. 267; Gilbert and Gubar, Madwoman p. 159; and Morgan, In the Meantime pp. 31-34.

19 See Tave, Some Words pp. 234-5.

20 Lascelles, Austen and her Art pp. 68-69. Those who follow Lascelles include White, "Parodic Point", pp. 56, 58-9; Moler, Allusion p. 156 (although Moler argues that Emma is "a 'female Quixote' novel from which the crude device of novel-reading ... has been removed", pp. 169-70, rather than just not "stated explicitly"); also Messick, "Reading As If", pp. 66-7. Recent critics often hold the same position without direct reference to Lascelles, see Mooneyham's interpretation of how Emma's "fictions" about Jane Fairfax derive from events which occur, "in the romantic fiction of Emma's day", Romance, Language p. 120; also Ross, Excellence p. 197, Rosmarin, "'Misreading' Emma", p. 326.

21 See Harmsel, Fictional Conventions p. 134n; Kauvar, "Austen and The Female Quixote", p. 219 and Williams, Six Novels p. 141-2.

22 See White, "Parodic Point", p. 58; Moler, Allusion p. 180; Gilbert and Gubar, Madwoman p. 158; Messick, "Reading As If", pp. vii, 15, 17-18, 44, 69-74, Brownstein, Becoming a Heroine p. 104; Johnson, Women, Politics p. 139; Morgan, Sisters in Time pp. 53-4; Mandel, "Fiction-Making", pp. 100-1; and Ross, Excellence p. 197-8.

23 Moler, Allusion p. 173. See also Williams, Six Novels p. 141.

24 Lascelles, Austen and her Art p. 69n.

25 e.g. White, "Parodic Point", p. 56.

26 Emma is the last in the line of protagonists examined in this thesis whose attempts to write their own "plot" and create their own "characters" are eventually subsumed within the greater structure of the author's novel. For Mandel, "the difference between Emma and Austen, [is] between the imaginist who merely embroiders reality and the artist who creates it",

"Fiction-Making", p. 101. Also Tave, Some Words pp. 205. 248; Morgan, Sisters in Time pp. 54-5 and In The Meantime p. 28.

27 Ross, Excellence p. 198.

28 See Morgan, In The Meantime p. 34.

29 See Morgan on Austen's practice of undercutting "conventional masculine heroics", Sisters in Time p. 44. The "gypsy" chapter is discussed in Mandel, "Fiction-Making", pp. 100-3.

30 Mooneyham, Romance, Language p. 125. The implications of Knightley's name are noted by Baker, "Idea of Romance", p. 520; Harmsel, Fictional Conventions p. 151 and G.S. Gross in "Jane Austen and Psychological Realism: 'What Does a Woman Want?'", Women's Lives eds. Bowers and Brothers p. 27.

31 As discussed above, chapter three, section iii, when "mainstream" heroines have wealth and status conferred upon them, e.g. Clarissa and Cecilia, it paradoxically tends to only increase their powerlessness.

32 See Rosmarin, "'Misreading' Emma", pp. 331-3.

33 Locating Austen within eighteenth-century theories of the sympathetic imagination is simpler than considering her alongside the poets of the Romantic period. Austen's concept of imagination has to be deduced from the way she depicts her protagonists rather than from a first-hand account of her own creativity. Consequently it is Romantic texts which, instead of recording or celebrating the imagination of the author, attempt to place themselves within a wider social, cultural, or intellectual context, that are most relevant to Austen's position; e.g. Wordsworth's The Prelude or Shelley's A Defence of Poetry, "The great secret of morals is Love; or a going out of our own nature ... A man, to be greatly good, must imagine intensely and comprehensively; he must put himself in the place of another and of many others; the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own. The great instrument of moral good is the imagination", Shelley's Poetry and Prose eds. D.H. Reiman and S.B. Powers, (New York, London, 1977) pp. 487-8. While Shelley's confidence with the abstract and the spiritual seem a stage beyond Austen, she is beyond the cautious theories proposed by Smith or Johnson in the mid eighteenth century, e.g. "All joy or sorrow for the happiness or calamities of others is produced by an act of the imagination, that realises the event however fictitious, or approximates it however remote, by placing us, for a time, in the condition of him whose fortune we contemplate; so that we feel, while the deception lasts, whatever motions would be excited by the same good or evil happening to ourselves", The Rambler no. 60, III, (1750) pp. 318-9.

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