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*'Positive Infamy': Self-Surveillance,
Social Ascendancy, and the Discursive
Logic of Romantic Pedagogy in
Andrew Bell and Mary Wollstonecraft*

Every individual man, it may be said, carries in disposition and determination a pure ideal man within himself, with whose unalterable unity it is the great task of his existence, throughout all his vicissitudes, to harmonize. This pure human being, who may be recognized more or less distinctly in every person, is represented by the State, the objective and, so to say, canonical form in which the diversity of persons endeavours to unite itself. But two different ways can be thought of, in which Man in time can be made to coincide with Man in idea, and consequently as many in which the State can affirm itself in individuals: either by the pure man suppressing the empirical – the State abrogating the individual – or by the individual becoming State – temporal Man being raised to the dignity of ideal Man.

Friedrich Schiller¹

The following analysis of Romanticism's production of elementary, moral, and cultural literacy constitutes part of a larger project of rethinking the idea (or ideology) of Romantic 'immediacy'. As my readings in Andrew Bell and Mary Wollstonecraft aim to show, 'immediacy' ought to be conceived as a state not defined by the absence of reflection but, on the contrary, as the enclosure of all cognitive resources available to an individual or even a community of subjects within a holistic and ceaselessly effective technique of unselfconscious 'experience'. In the context of Romantic writing the paradox of a poetically mediated immediacy resolves itself if we understand it to be an integral function of the literary to remain transcendent to the subject's analytic horizon precisely by circumscribing and thus effectively predetermining that horizon. Hence the core of this essay is defined by the question of agency in the early Romantic period, specifically the possibility that agency – and by extension the formation of communal subject-positions (e.g., a regional sensibility or a National character) amounts to an effect of socio-cultural modes of production such as the historically

connected discourses of elemental, moral, and cultural literacy. To inquire into Romanticism's production of a specifically middle-class paradigm of agency is to adopt a loosely Hegelian perspective. For, as will soon become apparent, we will approach agency as a highly mobile, transitory, and unself-conscious subjectivity above all characterized by a cognitive restlessness which, today, we might also refer to as intelligence. Taken in its modern, bourgeois sense as a kind of 'virtual capital', the Romantic paradigm of intelligence inheres fundamentally in a given individual's incessant and seemingly spontaneous monitoring of its own socio-cultural performance. If approached as a historically specific form of desire, the Romantic concept of spontaneity begins to disclose its inherently functional dimension: to forestall the subject's becoming-conscious of economic and political antagonisms by sublating them into the ostensibly private pseudo-experiences of its inwardness (with the usual catch-phrases of 'feeling', 'sensation', and 'melancholy reflection') and into the corresponding modes of aesthetic and specifically literary productivity.

Still, the phrase 'economic and political antagonisms' requires elucidation, as does the hypothesis that certain modes of production of 'cultural capital' might be able to stave-off the consciousness of the antagonistic determinants of the 'Real'.² The Romantic professionalization of pedagogical theory and didactic literature certainly offers evidence for an argument concerning the ways in which cultural forms assist individuals and communities in 'unknowing' the antagonistic determinants of their conscious existence. In the projects of Bell and Wollstonecraft we encounter the late-eighteenth-century paradigm of a consciousness which produces its socio-economic (and inevitably provisional) identity in a highly speculative, vigilant, and disciplined manner. Cumulatively, these attributes all speak to the emergent professionalization of teaching and learning at a variety of socio-cultural levels, such as Romanticism's theoretical and practical accounts of the dissemination of literacy among the lower classes, of the rhetorical construction of a distinctively middle-class moral consciousness, and of the growing middle-class production and consumption of poetry. The transition from the radical protest of the early 1790s to Romanticism's eventual self-definition, around 1800, as a distinctly cultural, specifically literary event coincides with the evolution of a substantially changed paradigm of civic agency and cultural proficiency.³ For the ideal of social intelligence is based increasingly on the ability of given individuals and communities to cultivate a distinctly symbolic competence, to acquire and display particularly those virtual distinctions associated with the professions and their intrinsic ethos, sharply inflected and institutionally policed. With the prospects for an explicit political consensus between the

Tory administration of Pitt and a disenfranchised, highly mobile, educated, and demographically complex middle-class community rapidly fading by 1794, the negotiation of competing political and ideological interests takes on an increasingly mediated, indirect, and symbolic quality. In lieu of programmatic political claims, the antagonism experienced by the first generation of Romantic between the firmly entrenched positions of the early 1790s (e.g. Paley's 'Contentment' – Paine's 'Rights') shifts to the more virtual, technical, and symbolic sphere of social psychology and didactic fiction. In the wake of the political spectacles offered up for public consumption by French Jacobinism, published writing in England increasingly conceives of the reader's affective interiority as the most auspicious focus for the text's symbolic intervention; from Coleridge's conversation poems to Godwin's *Enquirer*, to Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, to the first edition of *Lyrical Ballads*, Romantic writing places growing emphasis on the formal initiation of its subjects into 'literature' as a holistic system and on the 'virtual' expertise called 'judgment' while studiously eschewing the political vagaries of empirical reference and social content. It is precisely their superficial indifference to the political and historical antagonisms here alluded to which links Bell's and Wollstonecraft's writings and, as it was to turn out, bequeathes our century the Romantic and quintessentially bourgeois fiction of the 'non-political'.

I 'DIGESTED THEORY':

SELF-SURVEILLANCE AS PRODUCTIVITY AND PLEASURE IN ANDREW BELL

In 1797, the Reverend Andrew Bell published an initially little-noticed treatise, *An Experiment in Education Made at the Male Asylum of Madras*, the first of Bell's many publications expounding how 'a school or family may teach itself under the Superintendance of the Master or Parent'. Charged by the trustees of the East India Company with the superintendance of 'half-cast children' whose mixed racial and orphaned status rendered them the kind of economic liability that preoccupied Thomas Malthus back in England, Bell began to ponder the most efficient, economical way of 'forming them to habits of diligence, industry, veracity, and honesty'.⁴ Constrained by minimal support from the East India Company and stimulated by his own frugality and love of money, Bell decided to divide the classes into pairs of students, the more talented one acting as tutor and the other as disciple in each pair.⁵ While initially limiting the educational goals to literacy and the most basic mathematical skills, Bell's principal focus was on the form of instruction and on the logic or 'civil economy' of a pedagogical process in which each student was to teach himself under the 'scrutinizing eye' of his tutor.⁶ Developing Locke's *Some Thoughts*

Concerning Education (1693) which had suggested the importance of the pupil's visual surveillance by an adult, Bell essentially collapses the technologies of instruction into those of surveillance. To learn thus means to 'emulate' and, as much as possible, to internalize the very form of surveillance brought to bear on the individual disciple; to cite Coleridge's genial paraphrase, 'emulation' involves 'the substitution of positive infamy for negative shame'.⁷ Since the tutor is, in turn, working under a similarly scrupulous surveillance by the master teacher, and the master teacher under that of the headmaster, any lapse of supervisory attention is bound to compromise interests for at the heart of the method is the idea of ascendancy rather than knowledge.⁸ The constant fear of demotion on the scale of civic and intra-institutional authority preempts personal failure, and can punish the failure to report another subject's deficient performance (which would be construed as a quasi-moral failure to monitor both one's own, as well as everyone else's, performance). As Bell puts it, 'the Scholar is continually stimulated to obtain pre-eminence in his Class, and even to rise above it, and be promoted to a superior; and especially not to sink below it, and be degraded to an inferior Class.'⁹

Throughout his writings, Bell insists on the politically sound character of his system and, in contrast to his non-conformist popularizer Joseph Lancaster, repeatedly heads off criticism that his reform would destabilize the economy of class-relations or the spiritual identity of the lower class: 'It is not proposed that the children of the poor be educated in an expensive manner, or even taught to write and to cypher. Utopian schemes, for the universal diffusion of general knowledge, would soon realize the fable of the belly and the other members of the body, and confound that distinction of ranks and classes of society, on which the general welfare hinges' (AE, p. 90).¹⁰ The rapid rise of Bell's system during the first and second decade of the new century and its widespread support among the Anglican establishment – by 1813 the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor had introduced the system into 230 schools, and claimed its adoption by over 550 institutions two years later – suggests that its stated goal of spreading rudimentary education among the poor was not perceived as a threat to the political order.¹¹ Bell's proposed educational infrastructure bears out his reassurances, first in its subordination of the content of instruction to the student's formal proficiency in tutorial and monitorial discipline and then in the seeming empowerment of each disciple as the agent of his own, as well as everyone else's, disciplinary surveillance. The principal objective of such educational reform is, as Bell proudly notes, the development of a 'system, consisting of a series of consecutive rules, linked together in the closest union, and depending on a common principle' (AE,

p.25). What distinguishes this system is its seemingly invisible and organic efficacy, not merely in the mind but, in a totalizing sense, as that mind itself. Again, Coleridge captures the point succinctly: 'the lesson to be inculcated should be, let the Child [be good] and know it not' (LL, I, p.10). What ensures the efficiency of self-education and self-surveillance is ultimately its being virtually coextensive with the total play of mental functions. In Bell's words,

The system, with its concatenation of Occasional Usher and Sub-Usher, its Teachers, and Assistance, Tutors and Pupils, Registers of daily Tasks, Black-book, and Jury of Peers – being a series of consecutive regulations, linked together in the closest union, and forming a digested theory, composed of laws derived from observation, confirmed by experience, and founded on acknowledged principles of humanity, I regard as completed in all its parts, and requiring no addition. In framing the Scheme, it was studied that no interstices should be left to be filled up, no deficiency to be discovered in its apparatus.

(AE, pp.44–5)

A system reaches a state of maximum return when its infrastructure of civic form has been assimilated as an unconscious, ubiquitous logic underlying and structuring all conscious practice. In the words of Foucault's familiar account of new disciplinary structures emerging at the beginning of the nineteenth century, punishment becomes 'discipline' in that it 'measures in quantitative terms and hierarchizes in terms of value the abilities, the level, the "nature" of individuals. . . . The perpetual penalty that traverses all points and supervises every instant in the disciplinary institutions compares, differentiates, hierarchizes, homogenizes, excludes. In short, it normalizes'.¹² In just that sense of quotidian practice – what Coleridge calls 'emulation without envy' – Bell relishes the unadulterated play of surfaces, that is the material, disciplinary mechanics of his system (LL, I, p.581). Indeed, it is precisely the pedagogical system's incorporation as mind ('digested theory') which guarantees that system's non-transparency to the very subjects it produces. Elsewhere Bell claims 'that a discovery of a new Organ of mind has been made, and measures ingrafted on it for converting those affections and passions which are implanted in the human breast, into instruments . . . which we must never cease to implore, for preventing, checking, and correcting (as far as may be), the evil propensities of our fallen nature'.¹³ No longer an external imposition, 'discipline' is promoted as the organic, affective sustenance of its very subjects and consequently remains beyond the threshold of analytic, conscious reflection.

Among individual disciples no less than among their various supervisors – and indeed among entire schools – the goal of educational success has been effectively collapsed into achieving ever-increasing proficiency in the communal practice of disciplinary form. The agent and object of disciplinary self-cultivation are ultimately one and the same empirical subject, albeit in its discrete potentiations as the cultural and linguistic Unconscious ('agent') and as a socialized and seemingly autonomous self-consciousness ('subject'). Yet it turns out that the empirical subject as such is never simply at one with itself; for its vision of self-improvement arises from its potentially omnipresent surveillance by an imaginary Other – the 'scrutinising eye [that] must pervade the whole system', as Bell notes – an Other to whom it remains bound in an agonistic vision of cultural and economic ascendancy.¹⁴ What distinguishes Bell's pedagogical system of socio-cultural mobility – one's 'career of pleasure, ambition, or interest' – is the extent to which it manipulates its disciples' political and cultural unconscious by continually 'exciting emulation', of both each other and the logic of the entire system. If, in Coleridge's paraphrase, 'education . . . consists in educating the faculties, and forming the habits', then the 'vast moral steam-engine' of Bell's monitorial system engineers conscious subjects in the shadow of a dislocated unconscious, a psyche determined by the latent knowledge that there will never be a stable social, economic, or cultural 'estate' to fall back on.¹⁵ And yet, even as the consciousness of Bell's monitorial subjects is being shaped by a system of formal imperatives that exact of his disciples the price of continual self-alienation, such alienation is experienced materially and psychologically as productivity, as steady progress toward increased civic legitimacy and moral authority. Consequently, the movement or e/motion of Romantic Bildung yields an affective 'interest' or formal-aesthetic 'pleasure' that derives from its successful execution. Both as a subject's disciplinary compulsion into elementary literacy and as the pleasurable assimilation of middle-brow, aesthetic proficiency, Bildung becomes conscious or reproduces itself 'subjectively' as a distinctive 'sensibility'.

Bell's pedagogical innovations thus appear to pivot on the pleasurable assimilation of an unapparent disciplinary 'style' or 'aesthetic' that transfigures the individual into an exemplary sensibility. Under the bourgeois dispensation of spontaneous and private experience, 'sensibility' has emerged as the unconscious agent of the nation's economic and cultural interests. Such an argument, however, invites some weighty if familiar historical objections.¹⁶ To promote, especially during the volatile 1790s, a comprehensive vision of national education would seem tantamount to furnishing the lower classes with literacy and rhetorical skills and thus to

instil in them a desire or political and cultural change that would almost certainly threaten the established order as defined by Edmund Burke, Sir John Scott, Arthur Young, or Bishop Watson, to name only a few. Yet precisely this traditional and rigid opposition between pedagogy as a subsidiary of the state and the state as an effect of pedagogy was to produce its dialectical counter-argument in the form of emergent Romantic theories of education. To begin with, as David Vincent (p. 66) argues, we should consider that the 'pattern of learning which took place in childhood, the acquisition of skills, knowledge, imaginative powers and moral values, constituted what is loosely called "socialization": the induction of a new generation into the ways of thinking and behaving established by its predecessors. In a sense it was a conservative process'. By extending that argument, we can observe how, in the context of Andrew Bell, Sarah Trimmer, and Jeremy Bentham, the national effort for large-scale dissemination of elemental, moral, and cultural literacy produces conformity that takes the form of an interiorized, self-focused type of 'unrest'. Romantic *Bildung* instantiates *e/motion* as unrest, a virtual, cognitive force projected by the self upon itself. To that extent, then, the entire process of social acculturation evolves as a 'virtual' quest for a definitive experience and exemplary representation form of inward affect. As the ceaseless reinvestment of the self's cognitive and imaginative resources in its own, perpetual reorganization, unrest has become pervasive, systematic, and totalizing. At the same time, it is increasingly experienced within and as the sacrosanct affective interiority of middle-class privacy. The political potential of unrest is channeled preemptively – prior to irrupting into consciousness – into the various aesthetic forms which a given historical situation deems authentically expressive of private pleasure.

The same argument can also be couched in terms of the increasingly specific differentiation among classes and demographic subjectivities. The schemes for the dissemination of literacy among the poor were, in virtually all cases, conceived, promoted, and funded by middle-class individuals and organizations who recognized that the paradigm of a national community was increasingly being shaped by secular and political as much as by religious institutions. Almost without exception they designed their educational theories with a view to reproducing the socio-economic logic by which they had established themselves as distinctly middle-class. What Alan Richardson describes as the accelerating 'bourgeoisification' of formerly religious institutions of learning and of grammar schools toward the end of the eighteenth century thus amounts to a substantially broader ideological investment in education which, in the case of the middling classes, entails the growing interest in instrumental and more mediated,

'cultural' kinds of knowledge.¹⁷ If the monitorial system sought to reshape the unconscious of the lower-class subject as an agency spontaneously and perpetually recreating a hierarchy of affect within itself and, in its constant oscillation between tutor and disciple, to 'exalt [the subject] in his own eyes, and give[] him a character to support', the function of middle-class Romantic pedagogy is far more mediated, though ultimately cognate with Bell's monitorial system (AE, p. 6). Specifically for Coleridge, the 'middling' classes were to produce their distinctive consciousness or sensibility through an essentially rhetorical and literary conception of education. Pondering Bell's theory, Coleridge wonders in sketches for his 1813 lecture on education, how it can 'be transferred, & what part of it to other/& higher classes'. (LL, I, 581). Notwithstanding his increasingly High-Church Anglicanism, Coleridge's notation that 'in the simplicity of [Bell's] principle, there was a world of richness' places him right alongside the secularist Bentham who, not surprisingly, took great interest in this mode of production of a cultural and economic agency 'under the impulse of emulation' or 'place-capturing principle' – precisely because it appeared a blueprint for a highly efficient administration of cultural, civic, and economic life (LL, I, p. 584).¹⁸ Thus it was only natural for Bentham to use his earlier Panopticon scheme as a heuristic metaphor for the process of self-surveillance and monitorial self-production initially outlined by Bell. As Lawrence Stone (p. 97) notes, 'all three – the acquisition of professional expertise, the confirmation or acquisition of status, and the internalization of social controls – are aspects of a single process of acculturation'. If Foucault's reading of Bentham's Panopticon stresses how 'the productive increase of power can be assured only if . . . it can be exercised continuously in the very foundations of society, in the subtlest possible way', the aspect more relevant to our present concern with the role played by didactic literature and the more refined genres of poetry in the overall shift in the paradigm of the nation (i.e., from a material commonwealth inherited to an imaginary community produced) requires some modulation of Foucault's approach (DP, p. 20). For if the prison is to be regarded as a metaphor for modernity's mode of producing civic subjects, Bell suggests that the efficacy of instruction and learning pivots on the dynamics between material institutions and the forms of practice to which they give rise – or between the social theater of culture and the stylistic and symbolic practices which implement, sustain, and refine that culture's unconscious motivations.

Above all, Bell's writings grasp education as the induction of subjects into an overarching paradigm of productivity. Hence, to grasp the comprehensive ideological function of his educational system as 'the grand desideratum in the political, moral, and religious world', we must concede

that any pedagogical scheme remains 'imperfect, if it do not embrace industry'. Bell's satisfied conjecture that the same 'intellectual machinery' has already begun to operate 'in prison-houses, work-houses, and in manufactories, as well as in school-rooms', complements Sarah Trimmer's appeals that educational reformers pay 'vigilant attention towards the rising generation since no less than the safety of the nation probably depends on the education of those children . . . whose parents are not only incapable of giving them proper instruction but are likely, it is to be feared, to lead them astray by their own bad example'.¹⁹ At its very core, Coleridge's etymological accounting for the word 'education' as derived from the Latin, *educere* – 'that is, "draw forth", "bring out"' – not only adverts to the drawing-out of hidden intellectual potential but, indeed, to the actual removal of the subject from its historical and material sphere.²⁰ To transcend the contingent demographic and economic influences of one's local and regional provenance – in short, to embrace self-alienation as the necessary condition for one's socio-cultural ascendancy – proves the differentia specifica for the fitness and proficiency of educated subjects. Their 'home' is now delineated by the imaginary community of the modern nation-state, whose stress on 'productivity' the individual embodies to the extent that it derives consciousness of its social and cultural legitimacy from the ceaseless mobility of its own unconscious. Wordsworth's 'Immortality Ode' arguably offers the supreme lyric synthesis for this historical antagonism as it elaborates the acculturation of subjectivity, here personified as the child 'trailing clouds of glory' and 'fad[ing] into the light of common day'.²¹ Wordsworth's lyric recreation of capitalist and modernist *Weltschmerz* – a structural and indelible melancholia – mobilizes the cultural credit of the lyric to authenticate the concept of a bourgeois inwardness as a distinctive mode of salvation. Only occasionally (and vicariously) will the lyric mis-speak and disclose the political unconscious that is the historical foundation of its subjects, such as in Wordsworth's slippage from quasi-Miltonic images of Fall into the bland contemporary tropes of self-imprisonment: 'Heaven lies about us in our infancy!/Shades of the prison-house begin to close/ Upon the growing Boy' (s 66–8).

Social and economic antagonisms resulting from increased specialization and professionalization are disguised by the supplemental industry of the visionary poet and lyric poetry, converting the subject's material and affective instability into cultured acquisitions. What to make of the subject's imprisonment has become a matter of representation, of rhetorical form. For in contrast with the material empirical prominence of the modern penitentiary as an embodiment of the 'mildness-production-profit' ratio, the cultivation of a confident, discipline, and quintessentially bourgeois

sensibility hinges on the effective forgetting or transcending of the material, external, and constructed quality of this process (DP, p.). As the canonization of Wordsworth's 'Ode' suggests, the accumulation of formal-aesthetic proficiency and of greater civic and cultural authority is based on the elaboration of an 'authentically' spiritual and poetic realm whose superior and abiding 'power' will confront the subject not in the terrifying shapes of an overwhelmingly complex, alien, and bluntly material national economy but in the form of a rarefied 'pleasure'. Education, as we have seen, unfolds as the subject's gradual acquisition and organic incorporation of formerly extrinsic modes of surveillance. As the correlate of an inward desire (rather than of an objective force), discipline emerges as the unconscious core of the middle-class subject's affective and cognitive experiences. Hence the subject's imagination definitively surrenders all awareness of the mode of production undergirding the 'pleasure' which it derives from its socio-economic ascendancy and from its acquisition of cultural literacy within a liberal, educated, and distinctive middle-class community.

II 'SEARCHING THEIR HEARTS':

THE AESTHETICS OF MORAL PEDAGOGY IN WOLLSTONECRAFT

First published in 1788 and reissued in 1791, *Original Stories from Real Life* illustrates particularly well the pleasure/unrest interplay that defines the subject of Romantic *Bildung*. As her subtitle also makes clear, Wollstonecraft's prose remains intensely committed to the didactic conceptions of a post-Rousseauvean Enlightenment: 'Conversations calculated to regulate the Affections and Form the Mind to Truth and Goodness'. Indeed, the work explores vernacular dialogue as particularly conducive to moral and cultural improvement. Implementing the conceptual figure of a 'monitorial' and wholly unself-conscious system of 'mutual tutoring' which Bell, Bentham, and Coleridge would progressively bring into greater focus, Wollstonecraft notes that 'good habits, *imperceptibly fixed*, are far preferable to the precepts of reason'.²² Insofar as the implementation of a totalized vision of Rationality depends on the objective disappearance of Reason, on its elision as an object for the very self whose cognitive reach it delimits, Rationality can fulfill its didactic mission only by assuming a historically determinate, albeit contingent, symbolic form. In *Original Stories* rational pedagogy thus objectifies itself as fiction in two distinct senses. The first of these is fiction *sui generis* because the pedagogical agency of Reason must appear in some determinate form, which is to say, as necessarily displaced from its presumptive universal authority. Taken in that arguably generic, Hegelian sense, each and every appearance (*Erscheinung*) of Reason necessarily instances a fiction or 'semblance' (*Schein*). More important

and of greater specificity, however, is the second sense: a gradual, reflexive convergence between the global motive of Rational pedagogy and didactic fiction as the implementation of that motive in aesthetic form.

Wollstonecraft's stories initially limit the symbolic play of narrative to a strictly subsidiary function, a dialogic working-out of the putatively universal (rational) 'truth' of moral and civic competency between the two girls, Mary and Caroline, and their governess, Mrs. Mason. And yet, as her charges attain greater sophistication, Mrs. Mason's increasingly mediated and complex stories disclose a more profound and extensive potential of fiction. No longer the mere 'device' or 'design' of a rational core-message which the narrative initially credits with autonomous existence, the rhetorical and aesthetic play of fictional narration and lyric imagery effectively comprehends, and usurps, the work of Rational pedagogy. Having reached the latter half of *Original Stories*, we have not only read a didactic narrative of the girls' moral education but have, at least implicitly, also endorsed the necessary mediation of Rationality as 'literary'. It thus becomes critical to move beyond traditional, historicist accounts of the impact of Wollstonecraft's didactic writings to a consideration of the dialectic between her narrative's avowed pedagogical objectives and the deeper historical motivation which determines her book's rhetorical organization and formal development. Wollstonecraft's objective of detailing in narrative form the unself-conscious production of a Rationalist and transparent model of subjectivity, shapes her style as progressively (and more and more insistently) 'literary', to the point where her writing's thematic agenda – the inculcation of moral propriety effectively coalesces with the governess's embodiment of aesthetic competence. What is of interest, then, is precisely this collapsing into one another of ideological motive and cultural practice, a synthesis of universal bourgeois rationality with contingent, middle-class cultural practices and figural idioms (e.g., the lyric, the confessional, the memorial). By gradually conceding that notions of morality and rationality possess operative value and actual being (to recall Coleridge's term for the 'effect' of an unconscious process) only as rhetorical styles and genres – that is, as reproducible cultural forms – Wollstonecraft's *Original Stories* (and indeed much didactic fiction and poetry in early English Romanticism) substantially confirm Benedict Anderson's suggestion that 'communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined'.²³

As the embodiment of the solid moral constitution that resonates in her name, Mrs. Mason at the opening of the tale proposes 'a walk before breakfast, a custom she wished to teach imperceptibly', by rendering it amusing:

The sun had scarcely dispelled the dew that hung on every blade of grass, and filled the half-shut flowers; every prospect smiled, and the freshness of the air conveyed the most pleasing sensations to Mrs. Mason's mind; but the children were regardless of the surrounding beauties, and ran eagerly after some insects to destroy them. Mrs. Mason *silently observed* their cruel sports, *without appearing to do it.* (OS, pp. 1–2; italics mine)

Clearly, it is Mrs. Mason's interest to transfer her own rational reflexivity onto the children in her care. In unmistakable analogy with the sun smiling down on 'the half-shut flowers', Mrs. Mason's pedagogical function is to recreate her own mode of vigilant self-awareness within her proteges. Anticipating the strategic concerns of Wollstonecraft's narrative as a whole, such self-awareness soon coalesces with the all-encompassing infrastructure of the children's unconscious: their 'sensibility'. Wollstonecraft's deceptively simple account thus extends to its (adult) readers a consciousness whose political and cultural self-monitoring would emulate the organic relationship between the sun and the blades of grass and 'half-shut flower'. In his *Logic* (pp. 9–10) Coleridge makes an etymological case for education by remarking how, in its 'primary sense it is applied to plants, and expresses the process by which man imitates, carries on, and adapts to a determined human purpose, the work of *education* (evolution, development) performed by nature'. Alluding to Catullus' *Poems*, he rebuilds the familiar analogy of *educare* as a word 'applied to the householder man in relation to the young of his own species, and made to express the collective process in which the educator is himself (instead of) the dews and showers, the sun and the breeze, to the congenerous plant'. Most certainly, however, Coleridge's reliance on organic imagery here does not mean that he conceives of education as an essentially organic or 'natural' process; on the contrary, he knows all too well what a world of difference separates the spontaneous and non-reflexive concept of organic maturation from the irreducibly mediated world of 'determined human purpose[s]'. Precisely because of that distance, authority can be achieved only as a rhetorical and figural vanishing-act, as an instance of *dis/appearance* into an ontologically separate sphere, such as organic nature, and as the subsequent *re/appearance* and reconstitution of that sphere in the rhetorical image or simulacrum of the flower. As Paul de Man put it long ago, 'the obviously desirable sensory aspects of the flower express the ambivalent aspiration toward a forgotten presence that gave rise to the image, for it is in experiencing the material presence of the particular flower that the desire arises to be reborn in the manner of a natural creation'.²⁴ In just

that sense, the organic imagery of *Original Stories* aestheticizes an instance of intense civic scrutiny as a moment of Romantic (if slightly elegiac) pleasure.

Blake's frontispiece to *Original Stories* recalls his design for 'Nurse's Song' in *Songs of Experience*, a poem itself connected with the issues here under discussion. It is in the two contrary versions of the 'Nurse's Song' (among other poems) that Blake undertakes a shrewd critique of pedagogical practice and its manipulation of the verbal and visual icons of organic 'care' and 'support'. In *Songs of Innocence*, the song's design shows the governess reading under a barren tree, isolated from the children's merry-go-round. Satisfied with knowing that time is on her side, she grants the children an extension of their self-forgetful pleasure: 'Well well go & play till the light fades away'.²⁵ What initially appears as a kind accommodation of the children's 'joy' turns out, upon rereading, to be suffused with the darker symbolic significance of all children's inescapably temporal and mortal predicament ('till the light fades away'). Indeed, the literary sophistication which undergirds the nurse's pedagogical authority becomes more apparent in the companion poem in *Songs of Experience*, whose design shows the nurse's body leaning toward the child in emulation of the iconic motif of 'care': an intensely mediated, ornate posture embodying precisely what, in his *Logic*, Coleridge will analyze as the intrinsically duplicitous nature of pedagogical 'support'. The scene of instruction is rendered yet more ominous by an abject figure lingering in the doorway, a figure wholly incompatible with the simulations of empirical instruction and 'care' that occupy the foreground. Is that figure the *alter ego* of the Nurse, an abject embodiment of her reflexive nihilism: 'Your spring & your day, are wasted in play/And your winter and night in disguise'? coerced, Or might it be taken as a temporal projection of the consciousness being literally and figuratively, by the claw-like hand of the nurse? The concluding two lines of the poem certainly constrain us to reevaluate our potentially 'innocent' first reading of the scene of instruction in either version of 'Nurse's Song',²⁶ In aligning their verbal and visual symbolism of night/day, winter/spring with the abject and barren consciousness of the adult instructor, Blake's poems point up the deeper ambivalence of the literary itself as a potential disguise for the entropy against which notions of adult rationality, maturity, wisdom, and pedagogical support establish themselves. Or, to cite but one of Mrs. Mason's countless revealing admonitions to her charges, 'remember that idleness must always be intolerable, because it is only an irksome consciousness of existence' (OS, p. 109). Originating as the displacement of idleness, the 'virtual' forms of middle-class cultural productivity are embodied by the practical dedication of Blake's governess in *Songs of Innocence*

and by Coleridge's discernment of the 'high instinct' of language as the most genial subject through which to mediate the interests of pedagogy. 'Every new branch of taste that we cultivate, affords us a refuge from idleness . . . [and] the highest branch of solitary amusement is reading' (OS, p. 110), Mrs. Mason sermonizes. The first quatrain of Blake's 'Nurse's Song' from *Songs of Experience* makes the same point in more concrete form:

When the voices of children, are heard on the green
And whisprings are in the dale:
The days of my youth rise fresh in my mind,
My face turns green and pale.

'Nurse's Song' throws into relief the corrosive and inauthentic logic of adult 'feeling'. It does so by destabilizing the governess's iconic posture of care and support for the child through semantic interference between the two mentions of the color green. Thus the phrase 'on the green' situates the literal common that hosts the children's innocent play in unsettling proximity to the vacillating physiognomy of the adult nurse. Her face momentarily reveals how the agonistic tensions of the Real (the empirical world into which adult consciousness has fallen) can be contained only in displaced, 'aesthetic' form, such as the Nurse's expression of imaginative reminiscence ('The days of my youth rise fresh in my mind'). Where Wollstonecraft's *Original Stories* implements literature toward practical ends Blake's designs bring the social efficacy of the literary into reflexive focus as 'a fantasy construction which serves as support for our "reality" itself. Precisely the maintenance of that fantasy in the virtual domain of the literary – objectified as one generation's investment in reproducing elemental literacy in the next – enables us to function within an inherently 'insupportable reality'.²⁷ Elsewhere in Wollstonecraft's *Stories*, we witness the function of delayed pedagogy, and of a correspondingly deferred narration, in an incident that shows Mrs. Mason correcting her disciples' proclivities toward mendacity and vanity:

it was one of Mrs. Mason's rules, when they offended her, that is, behaved improperly, to treat them civilly; but to avoid giving them those marks of affection which they were particularly delighted to receive. Yesterday, said she to them, I only mentioned to you one fault, though I observed two. You very readily guess I mean the lie that you both told. Nay, look up, *for I wish to see you blush; and the confusion which I perceive in your faces gives me pleasure*; because it convinces me that it is not a confirmed habit . . . When I speak of falsehood, I mean every kind; whatever tends to deceive, though

not said in direct terms. Tones of voice, motions of the hand or head, if they make another believe what they ought not to believe, are lies; . . . but, if you consider a moment, you must recollect, that the Searcher of hearts reads your very thoughts; that nothing is hid from him.

(OS, pp. 37–8; italics mine)

Mrs. Mason's and, by extension, Mary Wollstonecraft's solid moral dramaturgy shrewdly capitalizes on the delay between transgression and pedagogical intervention. By withholding the expected tokens of affection, Mrs. Mason ensures that this won't go unnoticed by her protégés. In contrast to the manipulative and likely inauthentic inventory of 'tones of voice, motions of the hand or head', the girls' 'blush' (much to the 'pleasure' of Mrs. Mason), signals the advent of a deeper self-consciousness, as yet devoid of any particular content or abiding 'truth' and provisionally characterized as a state of 'confusion'. Such confusion points up the girls' emergent awareness of the monitorial principle, an agency at once invisible and implacable. Hence, for Mrs. Mason's disciples or any subject whatever, to develop a reliable and effective understanding of their civic and moral value, they must internalize or 'sublate' (*aufheben*) the monitorial function so aptly and ultimately troped by the narrative as 'the Searcher of hearts'.

Resembling the omniscient and inexorable 'supreme Being' of the French Revolution, Wollstonecraft's 'Searcher of hearts' constitutes the most fitting trope for her ultra-rational mode of producing civic and moral legitimacy. Indeed, Mrs. Mason subsequently invokes that revolutionary trope, noting that 'the supreme Being has every thing in himself; we proceed from Him, and our knowledge and affections must return to Him for employment suited to them' (OS, p. 111). To accentuate the theoretical implications of Wollstonecraft's text but slightly, God is the power of 'negativity' – what Hegel refers to as the 'absolute unrest' of intelligence – an incessant revolution of the subject's interiority that elsewhere is characterized by Hegel as 'difference left to itself, unresting and unhalting Time'.²⁸ In the educational projects of Andrew Bell and Mary Wollstonecraft, God thus constitutes no longer an absolute essence but instead is understood as a totalized imperative or *function*. In quasi-Gothic personification as 'the Searcher of hearts', God figures the temporal difference which condemns every individual consciousness to awareness of its non-identity, to the ghastly recognition of its suspension between a 'no-longer' and a 'not-yet'.²⁹ The subject's consciousness of its provisional state, its residual illegitimacy, can only be displaced productively, namely into a vocational

ethos and the cultural capital of a literary 'work.' The ultimate embodiment of such cultured, vocational work is, of course, the subject as a fully self-supporting and transparent *function*, as mind or intelligence: 'Music, drawing, works of usefulness and fancy, all amuse and refine the mind, sharpen the ingenuity; and form, *insensibly*, the dawning judgment. – As the judgment gains, so do the passions also' (OS, p. 110). In other words, 'God' tropes the imperative of ceaseless, rational and moral self-production. This process makes the subject reawaken continually to the distances between private vices and public approval, between contingent affect and rational accountability. The result is a compromise between the *e/motion* of interiorized self-surveillance and the *pro/motion* of social ascendancy perpetually negotiated by Romanticism's interconnected discourses of mutual tutoring, didactic fiction, literary expertise, and aesthetic theory.

Elsewhere, after behaving poorly to some visitors, Caroline and Mary once again receive but a token 'kiss of peace' and thus discover 'that they had done wrong'. Uncannily devoid of all personal affect – 'She was never in a passion', the narrator assures us – Mrs. Mason's 'quiet steady displeasure made them feel *so little in their own eyes*, they wished her to smile that they might be something; for all their consequence seemed to arise from her approbation' (OS, p. 52, italics mine). Deprived of any account for Mrs. Mason's 'displeasure', Mary and Caroline subsequently begin to retrace their entire social performance on that day, thereby effectively reproducing the same vigilant and distanced 'searching eye' whose dispassionate scrutiny continues to anticipate any shortcoming in the girls' social and moral performance. "I declare I cannot go to sleep", said Mary, "I am afraid of Mrs. Mason's eyes" (OS, p. 53). An ominous anticipation of William's comparatively (if deceptively) innocent natural philosophy in Wordsworth's 'Expostulation and Reply' – 'the eye it cannot chuse but see' – Mary's remark illustrates a growing conformity between the subject and the system of pedagogical discipline that is consistent with Bell's principle'. If their identity is being produced by their reproduction of monitorial pedagogy *within* and *as* the self, the system's overarching imperative that *all* time be employed in the monitoring of one's own civic and moral performance also insures that this mode of self-production remains definitively unconscious and non-transcendable.

As the educational and seasonal calendar wears on, 'harvest time' finds the children 'continually out to view the reapers' (OS, p. 112) and it also enables Mrs. Mason to bring her material and pedagogical acts of improvement into full alignment by launching into an account of how, some time ago, she eased the distress of a Welsh harp-player. A victim of relentless oppression by a feudal system, the 'settled hatred' of the local justice, yet

also of his own defiant spirit of independence, the harper functions as the moral core of the country.³⁰ As an honest, hard-working, and productive individual, his material destitution stands in inverse relation to his moral capital. Now reduced to maintaining his family 'by playing on the harp' at the local inn and picking up 'a few pence, just enough to keep life and soul together', the harper and his instrument embody precisely the early Romantic ideology of mutual 'resonance' between moral, aesthetic, and social improvement. Having met him first while stranded in the Welsh countryside as the result of an overturned carriage, Mrs. Mason comes to think 'the accident providential' (OS, p. 119) when the landscape, the harper's tunes, and her own mood coalesce in a symbolic reverie:

It was almost dark, and the lights began to twinkle in the scattered cottages. The scene pleased me, continued Mrs. Mason, I thought of various customs which the lapse of time unfolds; and dwelt on the state of the Welsh, when this castle, now so desolate, was the hospitable abode of the chief of a noble family. These reflections entirely engrossed my mind, when the sound of a harp reached my ears. Never was any thing more opportune, the national music seemed to give reality to the pictures which my imagination had been drawing. I listened awhile, and then trying to trace the pleasing sound, discovered, after a short search, a little hut, rudely built. OS, p. 113)

Upon encountering the old man whose 'national music' has 'give[n] reality to the pictures' of Mrs. Mason's imagination, the governess learns that the fate of his family represents not simply another instance of aristocratic power carelessly crushing a poor tenant farmer or freeholder; it is in effect aristocracy consuming itself. For 'the old man then informed me that the castle in which he now was sheltered formerly belonged to his family – such are the changes and chances of this mortal life' (OS, p. 119). The disruptive powers of political dissent, aristocratic dissipation, and class antagonisms coexist uneasily in Mrs. Mason who, even before learning the fate of the hard-working old man, has already dwelt on the general moral and material decline of the aristocracy and on the abject regional status of Wales. What renders the encounter with the harper so 'providential' is precisely the *an/aesthetization* of her historical consciousness by his 'national music' and 'pleasing sound'. She repays him by securing for his family the tenancy of 'a small farm' on the estate of a friend nearby and by giving him the money to buy stock for it (OS, pp.119–20). The work of 'providence' has here objectified itself in the aesthetic sensibility or receptivity of Mrs. Mason to the harper's tunes, and it is her cultural and moral capital – receptive to

beauty and committed to justice – which accredits her as the narrative's social and ethical mediator.

The logic of mediation here is complex, however, for it involves not only Mrs. Mason's counterbalancing the effects of hereditary aristocratic privilege by securing for the harper's family the capital needed to resume their lives. Well beyond furnishing such objective, material assistance, her most significant act is to mobilize the aesthetic, the lyric image, on behalf of a far more complex agenda of social and ideological mediation. In Wollstonecraft's *Original Stories*, the salvaging of an ideal image from the material textures of feudal history – a consummately rhetorical (and ultimately utopian) effort at separating virtue from power, 'tradition' from history – ultimately benefits the middle-class subject whose aesthetic productivity commutes a history of social conflict into a didactic narrative designed to reproduce its message both *in* and *as* the sensibility of its listeners.

Indeed, the harper's 'unbounded' gratitude assumes the quasi-institutional expression of his annual pilgrimage to Mrs. Mason at harvest time, an occasion, as the governess informs her charges, about to be celebrated again. And though the celebration features the pleasures of music and dance, 'it was not the light toe, that fashion taught to move, but honest heart-felt mirth, and the loud laugh, if it spoke the vacant head, said audibly that the heart was guileless' (OS, p.120). Always inclined to assess material pleasure and physical joy in contrast to the virtual, if elusive, domain of genuine affect ('honest heart-felt mirth' and a 'guileless' heart), Wollstonecraft's narrative now introduces its most elaborate aesthetic set-piece: the nocturnal serenade by the harper, with a voice-over commentary by Mrs. Mason for the pedagogical good of her children. With an explicit purpose and rhetorical precision rarely found in the didactic fictions of Wollstonecraft's contemporaries, the following passage performs the crucial transition from pedagogy as elemental socialization to a full-fledged induction into cultural and aesthetic literacy. As the harper plays some of Mrs. Mason's favorite airs,

the moon rose in cloudless majesty, and a number of stars twinkled near her. The softened landscape inspired tranquillity, while the strain of rustic melody gave a pleasing melancholy to the whole – and made the tear start, whose source could scarcely be traced. The pleasure the sight of harmless mirth gave rise to in Mrs. Mason's bosom, roused every tender feeling – set in motion her spirits. – She laughed with the poor whom she had made happy, and wept when she recollected her own sorrows; the illusions of youth – the gay expectations that had formerly clipped the wings of time. – She turned to the girls – I have

been very unfortunate, my young friends; but my griefs are now of a placid kind My state of mind rather resembles the scene before you, it is quiet – I am weaned from the world, but not disgusted – for I can still do good – and in futurity a sun will rise to cheer my heart. – Beyond the night of death, I heal the dawn of an eternal day! I mention my state of mind to you, that I may tell you what supports me. (OS, pp. 122–23)

This deeply ambivalent passage not only recalls the almost nihilistic inwardness of Blake's Nurse; it also echoes the structural critique of pedagogy instanced by *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*. While it initially appears as but another lyric canvas filled with the 'I' pastels and shades of sentimentalism, Wollstonecraft's governess soon qualifies the distant kinship between didactic and sentimental fiction by supplementing the lyric image with an exegesis that simultaneously serves as a lesson to the children. In so doing, however, Mrs. Mason, and indeed the overall text of *Original Stories* unwittingly opens a far deeper, unconscious logic of melancholy of which the sentimentalism of the passage is but a symptom.

What *appears* as a sentimental image cannot simply be explained as the *effect* of empirical atmospherics: the moonlit night, harped airs, twinkling stars, and a 'softened landscape'. To be sure, the opening description amounts to a conspicuously schematic, rehearsed cultural acquirement that is almost mannerist in its evocation (or citation) of lyric sentimentalism. Yet unless we are to settle for the reductive explanation that such generic imagery is an immediate, authentic expression of a 'deep' sensibility, we can only grasp it as a symptom, a displacement and effect, of a far more alarming recognition, unspeakable as such yet pressing enough for Mrs. Mason to follow her description with a highly reflexive commentary. As that commentary makes clear, what renders the preceding sentimental images stylistically so apposite here is *precisely* their hollowness, for they forestall Mrs. Mason's unbearable recognition that, in fact, she has no being except as a social *function*: 'I am weaned from the world, but not disgusted', she protests, 'for I can still do good'. The governess has no history, no authentic expression, and no valid application for her subjective memories to which, quite tellingly, she repeatedly alludes yet whose content she never divulges. Traced in its stylistic objectification as a dissociated sentimentalism, melancholy can thus be understood as the aesthetic expression of the loss of history that has produced the middle class, a demographic subjectivity defined by its ability to differentiate itself rhetorically and aesthetically from the sensual corruption associated with aristocratic wealth and from the material and spiritual deprivations of the poor. Yet such moral and aesthetic

authority, it now appears, has been purchased at the price of no longer being able to symbolize and represent *any* subjective, personal, and individual value. As the governess's gendered and sociological status (unmarried and lower middle-class) makes particularly clear, her authority depends on her subjective disembodiment, taking that term in its physical, affective, and representational senses. Her authority is vested solely in carrying out a professional function, to teach, to instruct, and to be compensated for efficiently reproducing an impersonal idiom of social conformity. Stylistically the lyric moment under discussion appears strained, almost incapable of supporting the structural antagonisms that circumscribe the governess's social identity. Thus the refuge afforded by a sentimental style (it 'roused every tender feeling – *set in motion her spirits*', she claims) is eventually replaced by the motif of the 'immortality of the soul'.

Wollstonecraft's *Original Stories* offer a compelling articulation of Romanticism's mode of producing and transmitting civic competence, a symbolically mediated ('literary') practice facilitating the ascendancy of England's intensely productive middling classes. What allows us to formulate the contiguity between early Romanticism's concern with the elementary education of the poor and the middle-class quest for cultural literacy – aside from the fact that both projects were conceived and advanced by members of the middle class – is these projects' incorporation of the unconscious as the 'organic system' or 'high instinct' of language itself. Wollstonecraft's text marks Romanticism's emergent conceptualization of language as the paradigmatically structural agency, the reflex of (and response to) an inscrutable yet permanently operative causality 'experienced' only belatedly as the pleasure or pain associated with upward or downward social mobility, itself generative of consciousness in its specific historical forms of subjectivity. Instruction allows the subject to produce itself in a series of moral dislocations and, at the same time, to derive 'pleasure' from the proficiency with which it integrates these dislocations into a narrative form. Contingent both in its transcendental and empirical senses on its monitorial reflexivity and on its cultural productivity, Romantic subjectivity presents itself as the agent, scene, and telos of *Bildung*.³¹ In its holistic and self-confirming operations, Romanticism's idea of the 'literary' thus displaces the objective, historical alienation of its bourgeois subjects into the virtual spheres of affective self-discovery and cultural ascendancy: the spontaneous (or 'immediate') answer to the period's historical antagonisms, in process well before the subjects produced and constrained by these antagonisms could ever begin to grasp them. \mathfrak{R}

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1. *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, tr. by Reginald Snell (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1965), pp. 31–22.
2. 'The fact of increased upward mobility is at once the premise of "bourgeois ideology" – that anyone can succeed – and its prime source of social anxiety. Hence the continuous appropriation by the bourgeoisie of aristocratic caste traits, precisely in order to reinforce and stabilize a class structure founded upon a necessary degree of instability and fluidity. Needless to say, this functional instability of social hierarchy requires complex practical and discursive strategies in order to maintain the structure as a whole. . . . Only those in possession of some capital are in a position to acquire the knowledge that in turn signifies the at once attractive and dangerous possibility of upward mobility, even if this mobility is essentially enacted in the realm of the imaginary, as the imitation of upper-class behavior or educated manners, that is, as social emulation.' John Guillory, *Cultural Capital: The Problem of Literary Canon Formation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), pp. 95–6.
3. On the connection between an aesthetic and an economic conception of 'Romanticism', see Jerome Christensen, 'The Detection of the Romantic Movement', in *South Atlantic Quarterly* (Summer 1996).
4. See *An Experiment in Education* (London: Cadell and Davies, 1797), pp. 6–7.
5. After leaving England in 1787 with £128, Bell negotiated and invested his salaries shrewdly and, nine years later, returned to England with £25, 000. See entry for Bell in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.
6. *An Experiment*, p. 26. The term 'civil economy' derives from Bell's *Sketch of a National Institution for Training up the Children of the Poor* (London: John Murray, 1808), p. 1.
7. S. T. Coleridge, *Lectures 1808–1819: On Literature*, ed. by R. A. Foakes, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1987), I, p. 588, hereafter LL with references in text where appropriate. For a recent, critical discussion of Locke's and Rousseau's impact on Romantic theories of catechistic instruction, see Alan Richardson, *Literature, Education, and Romanticism* (New York: Cambridge U.P., 1994), pp. 48–51.
8. In the words of the *Manual of the System of Primary Instruction Pursued in the Model Schools of the British and Foreign Schools Society* (London, 1831), p. 8, 'the first great and leading principle of the British system is that it is the teacher's duty to pay more regard to the formation of the character of his scholars than to the success in any, or all of the branches of learning professedly taught'.
9. Bell, *An Analysis of the Experiment in Education* (London: Cadell & Davies, 1807), p. 4. This revised and expanded third edition of Bell's 1797 treatise offers the most explicit account of Bell's scheme and has become the basis for most critical assessments of his monitorial system, including that offered by Jeremy Bentham in his *Chrestomathia*.
10. Joseph Lancaster's system, as presented in his *The British System of Education* (London: Longman, 1810), differs from Bell's system on several counts, including Lancaster's soon notorious elaboration of corporal punishment, his mass-marketing of his educational system which took him as far as to Simon Bolivar's newly founded Bolivia, and subsequently to New York. For general accounts of the rise of literacy, reading, and the displacement of oral culture between 1750 and the early twentieth century, see David Vincent, *Literacy and Popular Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Lawrence Stone, 'Literacy and Education in England, 1640–1900', *Past and Present*, 42 (1969), pp. 69–139; and Alan Richardson, *Literature, Education, and Romanticism*, pp. 91–103.
11. For the adoption of Bell's system in schools throughout England, see R. A. Foakes's excellent introduction to LL, I, pp. 97–8. He also addresses Wordsworth's and Coleridge's considerable interest in Bell's system between 1808 and 1812 in "'Thriving Prisoners":

Coleridge, Wordsworth, and the Child at School', *Studies in Romanticism*, 28 (1989), pp. 187–206. Support for Bell also involved Southey, whose *The Origin, Nature, and Object of the New System of Education* (London: John Murray, 1812) was followed by a three-volume biography, *The Life of the Rev. Andrew Bell* (London: John Murray, 1844); only the first volume was written by Southey, and this was edited posthumously, by his wife; the remaining volumes were written by his son, Charles Cuthbert Southey. In his will, Bell had actually requested Southey and Wordsworth to act as his literary executors, though the wish was omitted from the final version of the will.

12. *Discipline and Punish*, tr. by Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1979), pp. 182–83, hereafter DP, references in the text.

13. *The Wrongs of Children* (London: Rivingtons, 1819), pp. 9–10.

14. *An Experiment in Education*, p. 26.

15. Andrew Bell's *Sketch of a National Institution for Training up the Children of the Poor*, p. 3; *An Experiment in Education*, p. 25. Coleridge's phrase is from *The Statesman's Manual*, ed. by R. J. White (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1972), pp. 40–41. I concur with Lawrence Stone's observation that 'because of the wide variety of the objectives which men have had in mind when they sponsored or embarked on education, it is impossible to justify the use of distinctions like functional and non-functional'. Stone's view of the deceptively 'non-functional' status [of education] as serving a status-conferring or disciplinary function' is effectively anticipated by Bell and Bentham. 'Literacy and Education in England, 1640–1900', p. 97.

16. The issue recurs throughout Stone's 'Literacy and Education in England, 1640–1900', see, for example, his remarks on pp. 84–7.

17. *Literature, Education, and Romanticism*, pp. 77–91 (p. 81). Such 'bourgeoisification' also illustrates the displacement of the Enlightenment's axiomatic faith in a universal rational standard for subjects of *all classes* effected by Bell's system of pedagogy. To contrast Bell's approach with the vintage-Enlightenment educational writings of Catharine Macaulay, for example her capacious *Letters on education* (London: C. Dilly, 1790), is to become aware of the progressive disestablishment of content by the form of instruction and, by implication, of the Enlightenment belief in the universality of reason and the educability of individuals of *all classes* being supplanted by a conception of pedagogy instrumental for strategic, class-based social policing.

18. Bentham's phrases are from the *Chrestomathia*, ed. by M. J. Smith and W. H. Hurston (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), pp. 44, 102.

19. Andrew Bell, *Sketch of a National Institution*, pp. 5, 10; and *The Wrongs of Children*, p.

13. Sarah Trimmer, *The Oeconomy of Charity* (1801), quoted in Vincent, *Literacy and Popular Culture*, p. 73. Vincent also notes that Bell's and Lancaster's 'artificial and complex structure' of monitorial instruction tended, by dint of its over-elaborate hierarchy and abundant technical discriminations, to exclude 'parents and amateur teachers in private day schools', *ibid.*, p. 77.

20. S. I. Coleridge, *Logic*, ed. by J. R. de Jackson (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1981), p. 9.

21. Quotes of Wordsworth's 'Ode' follow the text in *Poems in Two Volumes*, ed. by Jared Curtis (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1983), pp. 271–77.

22. *Original Stories from Real Life*, 2nd ed. (London: J. Johnson, 1791), p. iii (italics mine); hereafter cited parenthetically as OS.

23. *Imagined Communities*, 2nd rev. ed. (New York: Verso, 1991), p. 6.

24. 'The Intentional Structure of the Romantic Image', in *The Rhetoric of Romanticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), p. 6.

25. William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose*, ed. by David Erdman (Berkeley:

University of California Press, 1982), p. 15, subsequent references to this edition.

26. For a concise and lucid discussion of the hermeneutics of reading Blake's *Songs*, see Tilottama Rajan, *The Supplement of Reading* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 222–34.

27. Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (New York: Verso, 1989), p. 45.

28. *Phenomenology of Spirit*, tr. by David Miller (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 489. For the German text, see *Phenomenologie des Geistes*, ed. by Johannes Hoffmeister (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1952), p. 560. As Hegel elaborates, 'time is the Notion [Begriff] itself that is *there* and which presents itself to consciousness as empty intuition; for this reason, Spirit necessarily appears in Time, and it appears in Time just so long as it has not grasped [erfaßt] its pure Notion, i.e. has not annulled Time [die Zeit tilgt]. It is the *outer*, intuited pure Self which is *not grasped* by the Self, the merely intuited Notion; when this latter grasps itself it set aside its Time-form, comprehends this intuiting, and is a comprehended and comprehending intuiting. Time, therefore, appears as the destiny and necessity of Spirit that is not yet complete within itself.' *ibid.*, p. 487 (Eng)/p. 558 (Ger).

29. As Alan Richardson notes, 'the school is beginning to displace the church and other traditional communal institutions as the principal site for regulating social relations of power and domination', *Literature, Education, and Romanticism*, p. 39. In detailing that transformation, his subsequent chapter, 'School Time', pp. 44–108, reviews much of the valuable research on changes in literacy, the interdependency of changing socio-economic demographics, transformations in the fiscal and curricular policies of Sunday schools, grammar schools, dissenting academies, and the so-called 'public' or 'great' schools (Eton, Winchester, Harrow, etc.), and the formulation of particular instructional methods, among them, the catechistic model developed by Bell, Lancaster, and Bernard.

30. Wollstonecraft's narrative here exhibits some of the formal features of the ballad, as the construction of a past by a text purporting to ensure that past's survival; as such, the narrative's focus on Welsh musical culture is not insignificant either. Prys Morgan shows in an intriguing study how figures such as Edward Jones (1752–1824), harpist to George IV and author of *The Bardic Museum*, 'turned Welsh culture from being one of decaying but unselfconscious survival into self-aware revival, and the result, though often bogus, was never dull'. 'The Hunt for the Welsh Past in the Romantic Period', in *The Invention of Tradition* ed. by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 44.

31. As Catherine Davidoff and Leonore Hall note in their recent study of the rising English middle class, 'the need for information and guidance in the increasingly complex everyday world encouraged advice manuals covering all aspects of business and private life. In short, any claim to participate in the "polite world" depended in part on a capacity to read, think and speak correctly . . . Such writers [Hannah More, Felicia Hemans, Maria Edgeworth, Jane Taylor] and such publications were at the heart of middle-class culture for there was both a national and local "cultural market-place". Popular writers formed the subject of conversation and letters between people, the imaginative food for thought of individuals. Their works and ideas were discussed, their lives a source of fascination, their homes and gardens places to visit and revere. Such authors answered existing needs from an expanding literate public seeking not only diversion but instruction. They were instrumental in constructing an audience, and in their responses to the changing world they themselves inhabited were defining what came to be understood as specifically middle-class beliefs and practices.' See *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780–1850* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), pp. 160, 162.