



Embodied Experience in British and French Literature, 1778–1814

Women and Belonging

Jillian Heydt-Stevenson

EMBODIED EXPERIENCE IN BRITISH AND FRENCH LITERATURE, 1778–1814

Combining feminist, materialist, and comparatist approaches, this study examines how French and British women writers working at a transformative time for European literature connected vibrantly to objects as diverse as statues, monuments, diamonds, and hats. In such connections, they manifested their own (often forbidden) embodiment and asserted their *élan vital*. Interweaving texts by Edgeworth, Staël, Bernardin, Wordsworth, Smith, and Burney, Jillian Heydt-Stevenson posits the concept of *belonging with*, a generative, embodied experience of the nonhuman that foregrounds the interdependence among things, women, social systems, and justice. Exploring the benefits such embodied experiences offer, this book uncovers an ethical materialism in literature and illuminates how women characters who draw on things can secure rights that laws neither stipulate nor safeguard. In doing so, they – and their texts – transcend dualistic thinking to create positive ecological, personal, and political outcomes. This title is also available as Open Access on Cambridge Core.

JILLIAN HEYDT-STEVENSON, Professor of English at the University of Colorado Boulder, is the author of *Austen's Unbecoming Conjunctions* (2005), coeditor of *Recognizing the Romantic Novel* (2008), associate editor of *The Cornell Wordsworth: Last Poems, 1821–1850* (1999), and author of a wide variety of articles and chapters on Romantic-era topics and writers.

EMBODIED EXPERIENCE IN
BRITISH AND FRENCH
LITERATURE, 1778–1814

Women and Belonging

JILLIAN HEYDT-STEVENSON

University of Colorado Boulder





CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India

103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,
a department of the University of Cambridge.

We share the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of
education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781009463980

DOI: [10.1017/9781009463966](https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009463966)

© Jillian Heydt-Stevenson 2025

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions
of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take
place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press & Assessment.

When citing this work, please include a reference to the DOI [10.1017/9781009463966](https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009463966)

First published 2025

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

NAMES: Heydt-Stevenson, Jillian, author.

TITLE: Embodied experience in British and French literature, 1778–1814 : women and belonging /
Jillian Heydt-Stevenson, University of Colorado Boulder.

DESCRIPTION: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2024. |
Includes bibliographical references and index.

IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2024015844 (print) | LCCN 2024015845 (ebook) | ISBN 9781009463980
(hardback) | ISBN 9781009463997 (paperback) | ISBN 9781009463966 (epub)

SUBJECTS: LCSH: Women in literature. | English literature—18th century—History and criticism. |
French literature—18th century—History and criticism. | English literature—19th century—History
and criticism. | French literature—19th century—History and criticism. |

Belonging (Social psychology) in literature. | LCGFT: Literary criticism.

CLASSIFICATION: LCC PR448.W63 H49 2024 (print) | LCC PR448.W63 (ebook) |
DDC 820.9/352209033—dc23/eng/20240511

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2024015844>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2024015845>

ISBN 978-1-009-46398-0 Hardback

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence
or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this
publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will
remain, accurate or appropriate.

*For my father, Richard Heydt, who taught me to put the greywater
on the red roses – and from this and so much more you gave me,
I learned about belonging with the human and nonhuman.*

Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	page viii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xii
Introduction: The “Delectable Valleys” of Things	i
1 Moving Together: Restoring Imperfection in the <i>Venus de’ Medici</i> and Lady Delacour	35
2 A Resuscitating Thing Theory: Gender and Embodied Cosmopolitanism in <i>Corinne ou l’Italie</i> ’s Monuments	82
3 Listening to the Radiant Voices of Others: Diamonds and Jewels in <i>Les bijoux indiscrets</i> and <i>Belinda</i>	124
4 Recycling and Reembodying, Twining and Untwining: <i>Paul et Virginie</i> and Its After-Things	159
5 Recognizing the Right to Protection: The Scandal and Sanctuary of Hats in <i>Evelina</i> , <i>The Wanderer</i> , and <i>Desmond</i>	210
Conclusion: Living in a Material World	250
<i>Bibliography</i>	255
<i>Index</i>	288

Figures

1.1	<i>Venus de' Medici</i> . First-century BCE copy of a fourth-century BCE statue	page 38
1.2	Bernardo Buontalenti, <i>The Tribuna</i> (1581–1583)	41
1.3	Johann Zoffany, <i>The Tribuna of the Uffizi</i> (1780)	45
1.4	Gérard Audran, <i>The Venus de' Medici</i> (c. 1690)	54
2.1	Giovanni Paolo Panini, <i>The Interior of the Pantheon, Rome</i> (c. 1734)	99
2.2	Antonio Canova, <i>Cenotaph of Archduchess Maria Christina of Austria</i> (1805)	115
2.3	Michelangelo, <i>Tomb of Giuliano, Duke of Nemours</i> (1519–1534)	116
2.4	Michelangelo, <i>Tomb of Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino</i> (1519–1534)	117
4.1	Pierre-Auguste Cot, <i>The Storm</i> (1880)	200
4.2	Scenes from <i>Paul et Virginie</i> , after Charles Chasselat and Antoine Johannot (1825–1830)	202
4.3	Anon., <i>Éventail</i> (c. 1860)	204
4.4	Anon., set of twelve plates with scenes from <i>Paul et Virginie</i> (1849–1867)	207
5.1	George Romney, <i>Catherine Brouncker Adye, later Catherine Willett</i> (1784–1785)	224
5.2	Aaron Martinet, <i>Les Invisibles en Tête-à-Tête</i> (c. 1810)	229

Acknowledgments

I have many people to thank, for many people have allowed me to belong with them in study, conversation, scholarship, friendship, and love. I have joyfully lived with others the thesis of my book. At the University of Colorado, I am grateful to my colleagues Jeffrey Cox and Thora Brylowe, whose intellectual and emotional support was – and continues to be – incalculable. How you remained generous up to the last moment can only be clear to those who know how extraordinary you both are. In reading groups, in response to presentations, in their support for my scholarship, and during so many times when they just made my life better by being extraordinary colleagues, I deeply thank other colleagues from multiple departments: Tiffany Beechy, Christopher Braider, Brian Catlos, Jeffrey Deshell, Katherine Eggert, Jane Garrity, Emily Harrington, Cheryl Higashida, Kelly Hurley, Karen Jacobs, Peter Knox, William Kuskin, Catherine Labio, Warren Motte, Helmut Muller-Sievers, Teresa Nugent, Elisabeth Sheffield, Nuria Silleras-Fernandez, Maria Windell, Laura Winkiel, Nicole Wright, and Paul Youngquist.

Lynn Festa and Sonia Hofkosh have been the best companions one could hope for on a journey toward and with things. We began this trip together while in England at a Jane Austen conference. Thank you for the laughter and the knowledge. The two of you, along with Julie A. Carlson, Angela Esterhammer, Devoney Looser, Anne Mellor, Padma Rangarajan, and Sophie Thomas, offer a dazzling octet that has provided a model for me of collegiality and scholarship. My admiration for your indefatigable drive, your ethics, and your inspirational work knows no bounds.

Other scholars and friends have throughout the years taken time and energy to respond to this book and other aspects of my work. I cannot thank Tim Morton enough: Your influence on me as a friend and scholar is immeasurable. It was a pleasure and distinction to receive Ed Dimendberg's advice early in this project's genesis. Thank you for your careful reading of and suggestions to my manuscript. I hope I have

fulfilled the promise you saw in this work. I continue to be privileged to know and to learn from many scholars in the wide eighteenth- and nineteenth-century community: Suzanne L. Barnett, Bill Brown, Julia S. Carlson, David Clark, Ashley Cross, Roxanne Eberle, Joel Faffak, Michelle Faubert, Mary Favret, Tim Fulford, William Galperin, Michael Gamer, Eric Gidal, Colin Jager, Julie Kipp, Greg Kucich, Mark Lussier, Deidre Lynch, Michael Macovski, Maureen McCue, Julie Park, Judith Pascoe, Alexander Regier, Nick Roe, Peter Sabor, Richard Sha, Kate Singer, Jane Stabler, Charlotte Sussman (my former colleague and a wonderful mentor), Dan White, and Julia Wright. I extend my appreciation to Bruce Graver for a long friendship and for carefully reading this manuscript.

At CU Boulder, several of our former graduate students, now all dear friends and successful colleagues, indefatigably supported my research, especially Peter Hutchings, who read multiple versions of the book, always with insight, intelligence, and precision. I am grateful for your faith in me, for your ability to lighten the most worrisome circumstances, and for sharing your extensive acquaintance of France with me: I can confidently say that you understand *belonging with*. Bringing extensive knowledge and reading to my work, Kurtis Hessel, John Leffel, Kirstyn Leuner, Deven Parker, Terry Robinson, Michele Speitz, and Dana Van Kooy – sharp intellects all – continually kept me learning more, and Terry, you introduced me to so many crucial references that I cannot name them all or fully express my appreciation. I'm also grateful to my more current graduate students Hannah Blanning and Sarah Schwartzman Ramsey: Reading Spinoza and other philosophers with you and learning about how literary works express embodiment helped inform this book and brought enormous pleasure into my life. Additionally, I am grateful for the help you both offered in preparing this manuscript. I express my gratitude as well to Cecile T. Rebolledo.

Many thanks to my anonymous readers: I have never received such insightful, thorough, and far-reaching guidance as I did from them. I am deeply indebted to Bethany Thomas, James Chandler, and George Laver at Cambridge University Press. I am also grateful for the expertise editing of Balamuthukumaran Pasupathy and Penny Harper. I need more eloquence than I have to thank Élisabeth Leprêtre and also Emmanuelle Riand, who is now Directrice des Musées d'Art et d'Histoire, Culture et Patrimoine Ville du Havre, as well as the staff there, my friend, Mike McGee, and the owners of private collections in France who allowed me to spend hours in their homes and to take photographs of their carefully collected and curated *Paul et Virginie* objects.

Only my closest friends and family know what this book means to me and the energy I put into it. I extend my warmest and most loving gratitude to Joy Lanzano, who knows me the best – your wisdom and our long hikes together helped me through. Damaris Methner, I'm at a loss to articulate how much I value and appreciate your wisdom: Thank you for believing in this book. Liz Janowski, Phyllis Levy, and Robert Barris – you taught me how to put *belonging with* into delightful and successful practice. Vernon Minor, thank you for the early years in Rome and Florence. I'm grateful to my son, Will (who taught me more than anyone or any book could), and daughter-in-law, Maia Bennett, who watched some of this unfold. And, last but not most, thank you, John Stevenson, for reading and commenting on so many drafts we lost count, and yet never losing patience. I could not have written this book without you.

Abbreviations

- B* *Belinda*, Maria Edgeworth, ed. Kathryn J. Kirkpatrick, 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Balayé *Corinne ou l'Italie*, Germaine de Staël, ed. Simone Balayé. Paris: Gallimard, 1985.
- BSP* *Being Singular Plural*, Jean-Luc Nancy, trans. Robert D. Richardson and Anne E. O'Byrne. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.
- C* *Corinne, or Italy*, Germaine de Staël, trans. Sylvia Raphael. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- D* *Desmond*, Charlotte Smith, ed. Antje Blank and Janet Todd. Ontario: Broadview, 2001.
- E* *Evelina: or the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World*, Frances Burney. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.
- É* *Études de la Nature*, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. Paris: L'imprimerie de Monsieur, 1789.
- "EH" "Exchanging Hats," *Elizabeth Bishop: Poems, Prose, and Letters*, ed. Robert Giroux and Lloyd Schwartz. New York: Library of America, 2008, pp. 198–199.
- Ehrard *Paul et Virginie*, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, ed. Jean Ehrard. Paris: Gallimard, 2004.
- Ethics* *Ethics*, Baruch Spinoza, ed. and trans. Edwin Curley. London: Penguin Books, 1994.
- G* *On Germany*, Germaine de Staël, ed. O. W. Wight. New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1871.
- IJ* *The Indiscreet Jewels*, Denis Diderot, trans. Sophie Hawkes. New York: Marsilio, 1993.
- PV* *Paul and Virginia*, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, trans. John Donovan. London and Chester Springs: Peter Owen, 1982.

- RC *The Ruined Cottage*, William Wordsworth. *Collected Reading Texts from the Cornell Wordsworth*, ed. Jared Curtis. Penrith: Humanities-Ebooks, LLP, 2009.
- Ségur *Bélinde. Conte morale*, translation of *Belinda*, trans. Octave Ségur. Paris: Maradan, 1802.
- VRW *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* and *The Wrongs of Woman, or Maria*, Mary Wollstonecraft, ed. Anne K. Mellor and Noelle Chao. New York: Longman, 2007.
- W *The Wanderer; or, Female Difficulties*, Frances Burney, ed. Margaret Anne Doody, Robert L. Mack, and Peter Sabor. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Introduction

The “Delectable Valleys” of Things

Préambule

No more than a century ago, Provençal archaeologists would go out on Sunday excursions, as they’d call them. Entering into “delectable valleys” (*vallées délicieuses*), they’d follow the “fanciful curves” (*sinuosités capricieuses*) of river beds in search of prehistoric artifacts: whatever those “archaic societies” (*antiques populations*) might have left in way of vestige.¹

This epigraph from Gustave Sobin captures one of the primary aims of *Embodied Experience in British and French Literature, 1778–1814*: to enter into the *vallées délicieuses* of things that, while they are only two hundred or so years old, often might as well be prehistoric artifacts, given that contemporary readers rarely notice or understand them. How do we listen, connect, and *belong with* those forgotten things that are the “resonance and celebration of Sound,” but which are “never pronounced, but *cast, diffused, exuded*.”² This book studies the connections and separations between humans and nonhumans in a select group of French and English eighteenth- and nineteenth-century texts to show how these cross-cultural works explore women’s relationship to materiality. Finding human–nonhuman alliances decisive for sustaining personal, social, ecological, and political integrity, *Embodied Experience* affirms that to disconnect these is to relinquish justice for both people and objects.³ Throughout

¹ Gustav Sobin, “Archeological Rhetoric,” in *Luminous Debris: Reflecting on Vestige in Provence and Languedoc* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), p. 38. Sobin quotes Hector Nicolas, *Une excursion à Bonnieux et à Buoux: Mémoires de l’Académie de Vaucluse* (Avignon: Académie de Vaucluse, 1886), pp. 214–223, 38, and Didier Binder, *Le Néolithique ancien provençal: Typologie et technologie des outillages lithiques* (Paris: Éditions du CNRS, 1987).

² Sobin, “Notes on Sound, Speech, Speech-Crystals and the Celestial Echo,” in *Collected Poems*, ed. Esther Sobin, et al. (Greenfield, MA: Talisman House, 2010), p. 25.

³ I use the words objects, nonhuman, and things interchangeably and thus do not differentiate between things and objects, as Bill Brown does, wherein the latter, once emancipated into things through “misuse” become refreshed in unpredictable ways. Instead, I see human-nonhuman

the book, I sift through the political and gendered ramifications that arise when literary texts resuscitate women’s relationship to things: the *Venus de’ Medici*, the Uffizi’s Tribuna, hats, diamonds, Roman monuments, the book *Paul et Virginie* and the *objets d’art* crafted to honor it.⁴ In concert with literary characters, these things, I argue, embody and interrogate prismatically and often paradoxically many of the most crucial events of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries – war and peace, colonial power and domesticity, and gender and ecological imbalance.⁵ Each chapter charts how an experience of what I call *belonging with*⁶ follows when literature illuminates a character’s connection to things, a process that constitutes an active ethical practice, for characters belong with the nonhuman as surely as it belongs with them.

The concept of the “*vallées délicieuses*,” particularly apt for my work, emphasizes that juncture where female characters and things convene, where the slope of one meets that of the other. This is indeed a “delicious” thought – that these varying kinds of material existences could belong together. To flesh out that thought, I draw on six keywords: movement, listening, radiance, resuscitating, restoring, and recycling, all of which emphasize the energetic intersections and divergences between thing–human and thing–thing communications. These keywords help me explore how certain female characters turn to objects to secure rights that laws do not ensure and how they attempt to reembody themselves in cultures that debase matter and female physicality. Although these words are familiar, I bring them together for the first time to structure this book,

connections rendering both volatile. *Other Things* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), p. 51. Further, while I do not dispute that humans are also things, I do not assert the ontological argument that all matter is “flat”; certainly, different registers of consciousness exist. See Christopher N. Gamble, Joshua S. Hanan, and Thomas Nail, “What Is New Materialism?” *Angelaki, Journal of the Theoretical Humanities* 24.6 (2017): 111–134, p. 123.

⁴ The objects thing-theory scholars choose vary as much as the authors themselves. For example, Crystal Lake fruitfully studies “the nameless,” – coins and grave goods – “the small bits and bobs whose origins or backstories were unknown and whose worth or meaning was not self-evident.” *Artifacts: How We Think and Write about Found Objects* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2020), p. 4. In contrast, most of my objects, apart from the discussion of food in [Chapter 4](#), are both valuable and named, their creation arising from well-known histories of fashion, art, and literature.

⁵ Many scholars have influenced and inspired *Embodied Experience in British and French Literature*. My biggest debt is to Bill Brown’s work, which has helped shape this book, and I share with him and with Elaine Freedgood, *The Ideas in Things: Fugitive Meaning in the Victorian Novel* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), an investment in studies of things and thing–human connections that yield deep social and political meanings. Conversely, my focus on things as material entities differs from the more language-centered approach that Larry Peer discusses in his “Introduction: Romanticizing the Object,” in *Romanticism and the Object*, ed. Peer (New York and London: Palgrave, 2009), pp. 1–7. I cite other scholars and philosophers throughout the book.

⁶ When I use “belonging with” as a noun rather than a verb phrase, I italicize it.

but also because they, and the relationships among them, emerge organically from the interweaving of texts I analyze. As I will explain, each work I address flexibly conceptualizes its own theory of connecting with things: This involves a transit through varying channels wherein characters and things, longing to relate, move toward and listen to each other; when this occurs, what I call a “radiant” moment ensues that opens possibilities for *belonging with*, which, in turn, supports human–nonhuman resuscitation, restoration, and recycling. These literary examples, however, never follow this process rigidly or schematically, but rather rearrange the steps along this living journey.

As this book breaks down binaries between human and nonhuman, matter and spirit, and women and virtue, so does it elide national boundaries by interpreting French and British works. A comparatist approach motivates me to underscore how these writers were mutually influencing and inspiring each other, as well as responding to many of the same world historical events. Most specifically, these texts move toward the other nation’s culture and things. As I will unearth more thoroughly in this Introduction, seeing French and British literature from a thing-theory vantage point further enriches each one while showing how these novels and poems impact one another. The fit is well tailored, since comparatism, feminism, and thing theory together intensify their complementary projects: to think inclusively, to examine connections and differences as fruitful, to consider the consequences of binaries between subjects and objects, and to watch the exchanges between cultures. The French-English link also offers a productive field study of the materialist issues I take on, since I interweave literary interrelations, feminist comparatism, thing theory, and history with the conundrum France and England faced before, during, and after the Revolution: to wit, how radical ideals concerning the “rights of man” too often remained abstractions. Given that this era’s British and French authors influenced each other’s writings, and because many English travelers ventured across the channel before the Revolution, during the Peace of Amiens, and after Waterloo, considering these relative to each other helps meet what I perceive to be a need for more critical attention to their cultural intersections, especially regarding theories of materiality.⁷

⁷ “Ideally,” for Catherine Brown, “comparatists bring together works” in conversations “worth overhearing for what” they “revea[l] ... about themselves and/or the topic.” “What Is ‘Comparative’ Literature?” *Comparative Critical Studies* 10.1 (2013): 67–88, p. 83.

I.1 Gender and the Nonhuman

Embodied Experience renders connections between gender and materiality its nerve center, revealing forgotten histories that fire or extinguish transmissions between women and things and women and their bodies.⁸ Literary studies often address feminist and thing-theory methodologies separately, but here I bring them together, investigating the ways women interact with their belongings and with the things in their environment.⁹ I reason against a fixed constellation of prejudices which deleteriously conjoin the nonhuman with insignificance, that bind women with matter (allegedly pernicious), and that tether consumption and women to lassitude, luxury, and lust.¹⁰ While I acknowledge that extravagance can lead characters to ignore nature or to create alienating labor conditions – and that such “feasting” can shatter whole populations and the environment, the materialist ethics I identify spotlight how fictional women’s relationships to expenditure and in general to nonhuman things can be

⁸ Many critics incorporate thing theory with feminism. For example, see Katherine Behar, “An Introduction to OOF,” in *Object-Oriented Feminism*, ed. Behar (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016); Susan Hekman, *The Material of Knowledge: Feminist Disclosures* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008); Estelle Barrett and Barbara Bolt, eds., *Carnal Knowledge: Towards a “New Materialism” through the Arts* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013); Cecilia Åsberg, Kathrin Thiele, and Iris van der Tuin, “Speculative before the Turn: Reintroducing Feminist and Materialism Performativity,” *Cultural Studies Review* 21.2 (2015): 145–172; Rick Dolphijn and Iris van der Tuin, *New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies* (Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press, 2012); and Richard Grusin, ed., *The Nonhuman Turn* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015). In Grusin, see Rebekah Sheldon’s “Form / Matter / Chora: Object-Oriented Ontology and Feminist New Materialism,” where she argues for “choratic reading” of literature and matter (p. 216).

⁹ Like Laura Gray-Rosendale and Gil Harootunian I bring together multiple feminist “positions . . . simultaneously”; for example, “conviction in the critical cultural and social value of women’s work, words, and cultures” and “assistance for cultural, ideological, structural, and linguistic modifications that will enhance women’s productive growth and development,” in “Introduction,” *Fractured Feminisms*, eds. Gray-Rosendale and Harootunian (Albany: SUNY University Press, 2003), pp. 2, 7.

¹⁰ Victoria de Grazia argues against this eighteenth-century tendency to link “mother/mater with vile or fertile matter” and to couple femininity and “treacherous inconstancy and change.” “Changing Consumption Regimes,” in *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective*, ed. de Grazia and Ellen Furlough (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), p. 13. In the same volume see Jennifer Jones’s “*Coquettes* and *Grisettes*: Women Buying and Selling in Ancien Régime Paris” (p. 36). Maxine Berg explores associations made between women’s sexual and material proclivities in “Luxury, the Luxury Trades, and the Roots of Industrial Growth: A Global Perspective,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption*, ed. Frank Trentmann (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 181. Erin Mackie demonstrates the eighteenth-century fear that an “indulgence of consuming passions may mean enslavement to the market.” *Market à la Mode: Fashion, Commodity, and Gender in The Tatler and The Spectator* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), p. 71.

constructive.¹¹ The encounters I study frequently transcend mere acts of superfluous consumption and diversion, becoming a way to survive and flourish: If a woman with no other property could own and sell her diamonds, she could evade the intensive control political bodies use to try to manage her power.¹² Women's sororalizing with the nonhuman further reveals that they can counter covenants endemic to colonial and ecological alienation; these connections are what I would call, after Sobin, "unpredictable curves" (*sinuosités capricieuses*) toward an ethical position. As Frank Trentmann claims, consumption represents not just "the withering of imagination and spontaneity" but "an active, creative, and authentic practice."¹³ Accordingly, consumption is "social, relational, and active, rather than private, atomic, or passive," and commodities, like people, "have social lives" and "life histories," ones with "very complex social forms and distributions of knowledge."¹⁴ Thus, in discussing things' provenance and women's exchanges with them, I dispute the period's mainstream concerns that women were merely superficial and thoughtless consumers devoted to idle spending.

Situating thing theory alongside eighteenth- and nineteenth-century women characters constitutes a feminist intervention: Texts challenging binaries between humans and things break down the negative associations between women and matter, a change that also undermines conservative divisions between a woman's reason and her body, between "female virtues" – that is, behaviors such as passivity, dependence, and coquetry – and actual ethical beliefs and independence.¹⁵ Stacy Alaimo claims that it

¹¹ In this sense, I do not focus only on what Julie Park describes as "spectacles of humans transformed into commodified and consumable objects," such as dolls, but also turn to women's ability to transform themselves from commodified objects into subjects with rights. See *The Self & It: Novel Objects in Eighteenth-Century England* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), p. xv.

¹² Sometimes, however, a wife was forced to return her husband's family jewels. As Hannah Grieg states in *Beau Monde: Fashionable Society in Georgian London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), "shared consumption" was not "necessarily equated to shared ownership"; she further offers instances of diamonds' mobility: Women lent them to others, either out of friendship or from political motives (pp. 57, 60).

¹³ "Introduction," *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption*, pp. 10, 11. He quotes Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), p. 94.

¹⁴ Arjun Appadurai, "Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value," in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 31, 3, 17, 41.

¹⁵ On consciousness and the mind-body / subject-object conundrum, see Colin Jager who returns to the "hard problem" of mind-body connections, claiming that some scholars find that "it is solvable [but] only through an appeal to some form of dualism. Mind-body dualism is largely out of fashion now." "Can We Talk about Consciousness Again? (Emergence, Natural Piety, Wordsworth)," in *Romantic Frictions*, ed. Theresa M. Kelley, *Romantic Circles* (September 2011,

is “productive for feminist theory to undertake the transformation of gendered dualisms . . . that have been cultivated to denigrate and silence certain groups of human as well as nonhuman life.”¹⁶ Texts such as *Corinne ou l’Italie*, *Belinda*, and *The Wanderer* bring a hearty and sometimes “profane” materiality to their female characters as they seek to mend binaries between the human and nonhuman. From a feminist perspective this move reconnects women’s corporeality, reason, spirit, and sexuality, rendering these cooperating, rather than sparring, bodies. Studying the dualism inflicted on women and things reminds us, as Sean Silver remarks, that “[d]ualism has a history – and it is entangled with the rise of the discourse justifying the modern marketplace”;¹⁷ to this, I would add that dualism’s history is also enmeshed in and rationalizes the marketing of women.

Binaries between human and nonhuman, women and reason, and spirituality and sexuality, of course, too often remain intractable; thus, I acknowledge the paradox dualism instantiates, one “founded on a . . . profound entanglement. The very distinction between subject and object, self and property, is elaborated in and through the embeddedness of intellect in its material surroundings.”¹⁸ Nevertheless, I puzzle out the aftermaths of binary thinking and the benefits of trying to transcend such inelastic structures, especially regarding the impact on female characters’ lives. Thus, I concentrate on feminist ramifications of human–nonhuman reunions and dispersings rather than on “the cognitive life of things.”¹⁹ In more general terms, Marjorie Levinson reminds us that it is fundamental to “probe” in “serious and collaborative” ways “the deep binaries that still support many of our readings (e.g., mind/matter; part/whole; cause/effect, entity/environment, individual/group)”; if this is “supplemented by efforts to acquaint ourselves with philosophical materialisms available to the writers we study,” such probing “might reveal points of identity and

para. 6). <https://webarchive.loc.gov/all/20220831125402/https://romantic-circles.org/praxis/frictions/HTML/praxis.2011.jager.html>

¹⁶ *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), p. 5. Critiquing dualism, Barbara M. Benedict observes that “objects have rarely been understood separately from their human and cultural contexts.” See “Encounters with the Object: Advertisements, Time, and Literary Discourse in the Early Eighteenth-Century Thing-Poem,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 40.2 (2007): 193–205, p. 193.

¹⁷ *The Mind Is a Collection: Case Studies in Eighteenth-Century Thought* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), p. 247.

¹⁸ Silver, p. 15.

¹⁹ Silver, p. 134; quoting John Sutton, “Porous Memory and the Cognitive Life of Things,” in *Prefiguring Cyberculture: An Intellectual History*, ed. Darren Tofts, Annemarie Jonson, and Alessio Cavallaro (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), pp. 130–141.

difference across the materialist board, so to speak, effectively enlarging the common ground and improving the quality of the conversation that takes place there.”²⁰ Levinson here speaks to the benefits of a nondualist stance for interpreting literature and for sharpening materialist methodologies. This constitutes an intervention into late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century studies. For me it further underscores the value of linking “points of identity and difference” across the material-*feminist* “board.” I reiterate throughout *Embodied Experience* that from both feminist and ecological perspectives, diminishing women and objects is a related activity. Obviously, not all literary works or characters therein objectify women; neither do they ignore nor denigrate all nonhuman things; nevertheless, supple notions of gender politics emerge when we study literature’s rich relationship to things and vice versa. Each work I include envisions contiguities among women, materiality, and embodiment – whether these involve the *Venus de’ Medici* and her viewers, a female improvisatrice and her Roman monuments, an alienated socialite and her battered body, a young girl exiled from physical fulfillment, or women seeking to hide their faces and bodies from abuse. Each chapter investigates how human–nonhuman belonging can champion greater potential for women and for our social and environmental collectives.

I.2 On Connection and on Belonging

While we intuitively understand the meaning of “connecting” and “connection” (as well as some of its attendant synonyms: joining, assembling, and linking), the *OED* offers several definitions relevant here. For example, “[t]he action of connecting or joining together”²¹ makes things stronger, one of my central points. We see this when Benjamin Franklin writes, “[a]t present [this colony] is like the separate filaments of flax before the thread is formed, without strength, because without connexion” (n.i.a.). A further denotation, “[r]elationship by family ties, as marriage or distant consanguinity” (n.6.), appeals given that a “distant consanguinity” exists between humans and nonhumans. “The condition of being related to something else by a bond of interdependence” (n.3.) conveys the ecological and eco-social resonances this book gathers. And the meaning, “[t]he linking up of electric current by contact” (n.i.c.) applies since it captures

²⁰ “A Motion and a Spirit: Romancing Spinoza,” *Studies in Romanticism* 46.4 (2007): 367–408, p. 372.

²¹ “Connection, n.i.a.” *OED* Online. December 2021. Oxford University Press.

the radiating light and heat sparking when readers or characters brightly link themselves to objects and to objects’ histories and contexts. When we connect to the nonhuman we can, in these varying ways, recognize and relish our interdependence with it, thereby creating strong, mutually supporting “immune” systems.²²

In this book, the word belonging provides a visual, theoretical, and methodological structure for understanding what a connection with the nonhuman offers; it refers to a process in which things can be heard, seen, respected, and shared: that is, the word helps describe the ethical materialism some eighteenth and nineteenth-century literature evinces. I ask broadly how things belong in novels and poems, and how readers belong with them, which leads me to think seriously about this word’s constituent parts. How might the “on” in belonging refer to the time and space of the movement toward connection with the nonhuman? How does the “longing” to belong and the longing for belonging in books help characters, narratives, and plots “be”? Central to this is the question of who and what entities – both human and nonhuman – “deserve” to belong in ecological and social arrangements.²³ *Belonging’s* “long” invites us to think about how our relationship to the nonhuman is important in the environmental and historical “long run.” Further, regarding the literary-critical “long run,” what constitutes a “be”-ing if characters, readers, and things are understood as productive units rather than as dualistically engineered into separate groups?²⁴ Readers often miss how literary belongings *belong with* multiple worlds and multiple individuals, simultaneously having lives inside the text and often personal existences outside of it that transcend whatever intentions may be imposed upon them. Embedded in literature, they exceed their singular existence by forming relations with meaningful systems. Belonging also suggests something concrete, especially concerning the subject of human rights: Can rights “be” if they are

²² Wendy Wheeler discusses how healthy interconnections between human and natural ecosystems secure the immune strength of both. See *The Whole Creature: Complexity, Biosemiotics, and the Evolution of Culture* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 2006), especially pp. 116–127.

²³ James Lilley uses “belonging” to make a case for loosening up definitions of genre; although he does not discuss thing theory, I agree that “[b]eing-in-common” gets performed “as an open and fugitive process that is enacted on the level of the verb rather than collected on the level of the noun,” see *Common Things: Romance and the Aesthetics of Belonging in Atlantic Modernity* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), p. 13.

²⁴ As Karen Barad argues: “To write matter and meaning into separate categories” and “to divide complex phenomena into one balkanized enclave or the other is to elide certain crucial aspects by design.” See *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), p. 25.

only abstractions, “longed” for, but not yet embodied, either by law or social codes?

In exploring how parts relate to the whole and how “be” associates with “longing” and with a belonging contrasting to possession, which constricts, I draw on one strand of Jean-Luc Nancy’s thought.²⁵ To reconceive how communities could more justly function, he advocates a move from a reliance on the subject and individualism to what he calls the singular plural, where beings find meaning in relationship *with* others. As he says, “[t]here is no meaning if meaning is not shared. . . . [M]eaning is itself the sharing of Being,” and “Being cannot *be* anything but being-with-one-another” (*BSP*, pp. 2, 3; emphasis original). When we acknowledge and practice this, we can escape a hierarchical relationship where the subject dominates. Indeed, to search for meaning solely within the self or solely from an individual point of view, as if “I” were prior to “we,”²⁶ would be an act of violence. Adapting this idea to materialist ethics renders clearer how resisting interdependence with this world’s things bolsters human antagonism toward the nonhuman and vice versa.

What attracts me, then, as I conceive of the longing to belong is Nancy’s idea that “at the heart of a connection, [is] the *interlacing* [l’*entrecroisement*] of strands whose extremities remain separate even at the very center of the knot” (*BSP*, p. 5; emphasis original). For my purposes, then, each human and each thing has its own singular distinctiveness – or strand – but that distinctiveness cannot be acknowledged except in relation. Nancy maintains that being-with “operates in the same ways as a collective [*collégial*] power: power is neither exterior to the members of the collective [*collège*] nor interior to each one of them, but rather consists in the collective [*collégialité*] as such” (*BSP*, p. 30). That is, “[t]hinking in the singular-plural . . . is at once an ethos and a praxis” which “attends simultaneously to their specificity and their relationality,” warranting “an openness to the inexhaustibility and open-endedness of meaning and signification.”²⁷ With this in mind, I see *belonging with* occurring when humans and nonhumans are linked to and rely upon each other for nutrients and energy;²⁸ thus even if a belonging is legally owned, it is

²⁵ Although I do not include Nancy’s theories of sense and touch, I find appealing his idea that they are “mode[s] of relation” in which each, being singular plural, enact “both a transcendence and an immanence, a ‘transimmanence.’” See Ian James, *The Fragmentary Demand: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Jean-Luc Nancy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), p. 216.

²⁶ Nancy, *BSP*, cover copy. ²⁷ James, p. 112.

²⁸ To clarify, Nancy would not see the singular plural in terms of belonging – coming to aid of others. Though in his overall schema, singular-plural existences do lead ultimately to a thinking, operative

not a possession, since the latter can be mistreated simply because of property laws. The difference I emphasize is simple: For one to “have” belongings and to experience belonging, one must actively cooperate with other humans and nonhumans. This constitutes a dynamic, conscious realization that existing is coexisting: “The co-implication of existing [*V'exister*] is the sharing of the world” (*BSP*, p. 29). I ask which characters can or cannot “share” their lives with the nonhuman – whether that is the Pantheon or a diamond – and the sometimes tragic outcomes arising when those characters see themselves as independent from these objects.

As I analyze these literary works, I search for when and if the characters can belong and collaborate with the nonhuman, which happiness and indeed existence require. Thus, although Timothy Morton has especially stimulated *Embodied Experience*, I rotate away from his conviction that objects remain withdrawn, as well as from Jonathan Lamb’s premise that things are “obstinately solitary,” able “to communicate directly only with themselves.”²⁹ Belongings are important in their own right, but also as part of an “eco-lit-system”: with “lit” signifying both literature and things lighted up.³⁰ Each text creates its own delicate latticing with individual parts which simultaneously join a larger complex, as each network on the planet is inexorably linked with all others. Jane Bennett, for example, argues that “in a knotted world of vibrant matter, to harm one section of the web may very well be to harm oneself.”³¹ And Morton urges us to “open the concept *Earth* to full amplitude,” where “anthropocentric distinctions” such as “*here* versus *there*, *person* versus *thing*, *individual* versus *group*, *conscious* versus *unconscious* . . . *part* versus *whole* . . . cease to be thin and rigid.”³² Recognizing the nonhuman as having its own “being” and having its own longing to belong thus involves an isometrical relation that can open readers’ and characters’ awareness to transformation and sustainability. The implications are considerable. Material attentiveness

community. He carefully distinguishes between a “being-with” of “singularities” versus “a collection of individual subjects who bind themselves together on the basis of a shared identity” (James, *Fragmentary Demand*, p. 177).

²⁹ For example, see Morton’s “All Objects Are Deviant: Feminism and Ecological Intimacy,” *Object-Oriented Feminism*, ed. Behar, p. 65, and Lamb’s *The Things Things Say* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), p. xi.

³⁰ “ReLit,” the charitable Foundation for bibliotherapy Paula Byrne and Jonathan Bate created, inspired this sentence.

³¹ *Vibrant Matter* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), p. 13.

³² *Dark Ecology: For a Logic of Future Coexistence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), pp. 24, 32; emphases original.

offers a broader view of history, literature, and the quotidian relations between humans and nonhumans.

Literary belongings, whether biotic or abiotic, become more emphatically themselves when allowed to belong with characters and readers. In this state, they generate supererogatory significance that can remind humans of the potential joy in the universe, and they can manifest prismatic connections that offer greater knowledge than one could learn from just one of these entities. Elizabeth Grosz observes that “Nietzsche elaborates a small space of excess that functions outside of natural selection, where life does not simply fulfill itself in surviving in its given milieu successfully enough to reproduce, but where it actively seeks to transform itself, where it refuses reproduction and instead seeks transformation.”³³ This transformative space releases surplus implications: These can embody history’s lesions or offer ameliorative gifts, as when Greek statues are seen to heal grief. This is excess because it provokes freedom from a dominating subjectivity and entry into a creative moment when the human and nonhuman can open, or fold into the other – though not symbiotically.³⁴ Sometimes the *belonging with* occurs when authors interweave concepts normally distinct (diamond and marriage markets). Such instances unveil how events and characters, prismatically interdependent, disclose significant and surprising – indeed excess – information, as when, in *Belinda*, the Pigot Diamond generates bonds among the East India Company, money-made-marriages, gambling, and the Irish Union. What W. J. T. Mitchell observes is crucial for my argument: A thing’s “value and life . . . becomes more interesting” when it emerges “as the center of a social crisis. . . . Use-values may keep us alive and nourished, but it is the surplus value of images that makes history, creates revolutions, migrations, and wars. And surplus value is, as Marx showed long ago, only explicable in terms of a logic of animated images.”³⁵ As I study the radiant overflow arising from belonging, I uncover a relationship between value and connection versus the lack arising from possession.³⁶ Decrying this latter state, Christoph Asendorf observes “the ancient leitmotiv that the possession of something is possible

³³ *In the Nick of Time: Politics, Evolution, and the Untimely* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), p. 11.

³⁴ Nancy sees “excess as a site of creation or birth.” See James, *The Fragmentary Demand*, p. 233.

³⁵ *What Do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), p. 94.

³⁶ The intellectual presence of Marx’s notion of commodities lurks in my project; however, although I study material culture, I do not depend upon familiar categories of reification and ideological manipulation. Similarly, Potkay argues that

only at the cost of the soul, shadow, heart, or whatever might otherwise be the figuration of the self.”³⁷

I reflect, then, on the differential tones of how *belonging with*, versus possession of, can have regenerative impacts. Each chapter explores characters who strive to exist companionably with the nonhuman energies whose orbits they share. For example, belonging with the diamond in *Belinda* and with a stone in *Les Bijoux indiscrets* stimulates characters to mirror the former as a paradigm for seeing prismatically, especially fueling them to perceive the joint ways women and these sparkling entities are mistreated; in *Paul et Virginie* this state of being protects the survival of communities by ensuring women’s right to a materiality that can accommodate virtue; and in Burney’s novels, belonging with the hat fortifies women’s just claim to privacy and thus self-protection. In each of these cases, *belonging with* becomes an ethical way to preserve the human and nonhuman.

Lamb, discussing possessions and being possessed by them, insists that “emergencies” develop when one tries “to fix property contractually beyond the faintest likelihood of truancy, . . . a sure method to make it delinquent.”³⁸ While I agree with that, I do not go as far as he does in his claim that “[t]hings gain independence when their owners desire to possess them uncontrollably” and, when, contrarily, in doing so “possession itself is redefined as transport, not what you own but what possesses you, and passion is experienced as the impression of the sense of things, the irresistible ‘power of some external cause compared with our own.’”³⁹ I contend, instead, that things can only be independent when they exist in relationship with the plural. Thus, for me, “transport” – my term is radiance – does occur, but only when humans and nonhumans connect, a point I develop in [Section I.3](#) on keywords. Conversely, when humans alienate themselves from things, both are estranged, for, as I see it, outside of *belonging with*, humans live in dearth. Accordingly, while Lamb determines the “difference between property and that [which] is no longer

Marx addresses [the] tide of materialization with his concepts of reification (when human activities turn into alien, fungible things) and commodity fetishism (when made things become our new masters). Yet these industrial-era developments did not foreclose a more encompassing sense of things, one that persists to this day in ordinary locutions such as *the way things go* and *thinking about things*. “Wordsworth and the Ethics of Things.” *PMLA* 123.2 (2008): 390–404, p. 40; emphasis original.

³⁷ *Batteries of Life: On the History of Things and Their Perception in Modernity*, trans. Don Reneau (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), p. 10.

³⁸ Lamb, p. 4.

³⁹ Lamb, p. 78; he quotes Spinoza’s *Ethics*, trans. Andrew Boyle and G. H. R. Parkinson (London: Everyman, 1993), p. 146.

owned or ownable, and how the unowned thing finds itself idolized as a subaltern deity of Fortune,” I explore how these literary texts suggest a co-being with property that neither has to be “ownable” nor an “unowned” idol; for me, it is not “violence that liberate[s] [things] from ownership,”⁴⁰ but belonging – that is, cooperation and alliance. For example, characters in *Paul et Virginie*, *Corinne*, and *Desmond*, identifying with abstractions and forcing separations between the human and nonhuman, perpetuate “emergencies,”⁴¹ propelling ruthless acts, where they will sacrifice anything or anyone for supposed security. I argue, then, that fearing scarcity and withdrawing from connection sends humans fleeing from matter and from each other.

In *Fiction without Humanity*, Lynn Festa crucially asks: “What happens to our understanding of Enlightenment humanity when we recognize that person and thing, human and animal, are intertwined rather than opposed?”⁴² And although I do not examine, as she does, the definition of what is human, her question is absolutely vital for me. In fascinating and persuasive ways, Festa scrutinizes how “anthropomorphized animals and personified things” can reveal “humanity’s own creaturely and thinglike nature, offering estranging descriptions of the world from perspectives that are not (necessarily) lodged in human beings.”⁴³ While estranging perspectives open our mind, and while I concur that “these nonhuman viewpoints” craft “a greater awareness of what a human viewpoint might be,” I center on how human–nonhuman belonging must exist before either can experience the fulfillment of justice (a topic I will return to).⁴⁴ Thus, I reveal the consequences, as literary authors conceive them, of such connection and its relationship to women’s rights. Indeed, for me, neither human nor nonhuman identity can be known outside of the relationships they share together.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Lamb, pp. xxix, 29.

⁴¹ “Emergency” is Lamb’s term, which he uses to describe circumstances that lead humans to idolize things (p. 4).

⁴² Lynn Festa, *Fiction without Humanity: Person, Animal, Thing in Early Enlightenment Literature and Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019), p. 1. Hereafter cited as *Fiction*.

⁴³ *Fiction*, p. 2.

⁴⁴ *Fiction*, p. 8. To anticipate what might seem like a contradiction, I do discuss in [Chapter 2](#) how *Corinne*’s thing theory embraces defamiliarization insofar as seeing things anew can lead to love for and companionship with them.

⁴⁵ As Festa shrewdly argues, acknowledging “[t]he close relation of persons and things . . . calls into question the conventional understanding of identity as the manifestation of an interior life and psychological depth that individuals de facto possess” (*Fiction*, p. 4).

Section I.3, addressing my keywords, shows how the energies these terms generate together help make connecting and thus *belonging with* and justice possible. And though these human–nonhuman networks require “consciousness” or what we often call awareness – an intuitive, a cognitive, and physical proprioception that galvanizes us to read and experience our environment⁴⁶ – mysteries remain as to how this happens from the perspective of nonhuman energies in relation to humans. As I address these keywords, readers familiar with Diana Coole, Samantha Frost, Bennett, and Karen Barad will see traces of their ideas. Each reconsiders the nature of matter and champions its agency in inspirational ways, delving into the moral benefits of these findings.⁴⁷ Their pulsating language – “matter’s immanent vitality,” its “emergent, generative powers,” its “vibrating strands of energy,” the “self-transformative, practical aspects of corporeality”;⁴⁸ “conatus,” the “vitality of matter,” “shi,” and “*élan vital*”⁴⁹ – rouses the mind to reject an inert or dualistically posited matter, what Barad calls those “well-worn debates that pit constructivism against realism, agency against structure, and idealism against materialism.”⁵⁰ Though this language and these fresh theories influence my book, which charts nonhuman agency, unlike these scholars I do not take on the question of *why* matter can act; rather, I explore *how* its agency manifests and *how* humans can belong with it in literary works. Like the scholars I quote throughout this paragraph, I spotlight the ethical costs of diminishing matter’s clout, but as a literary critic and not a philosopher, scientist, or social scientist, I focus on how belonging with things – not just “thing-power”⁵¹ – emerges in British and French literature.

⁴⁶ Jager observes that “the historicism that has dominated Romantic studies for the past-quarter century has . . . had little patience with consciousness talk” (para. 2).

⁴⁷ Diana Coole and Samantha Frost, “Introducing the New Materialisms,” in *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics*, ed. Coole and Frost (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010). Barad helpfully claims that “[p]henomena . . . are neither individual entities nor mental impressions, but entangled material agencies” (*Meeting the Universe*, p. 56).

⁴⁸ Coole and Frost, pp. 8, 9, 12, 19. ⁴⁹ Bennett, pp. 2, 5, 35. ⁵⁰ Barad, p. 26.

⁵¹ Bennett, p. xvi. This seminal study influenced my work, but my book differs insofar as it is not a “philosophical project,” and although I dig into the “vibrant materiality” of things and their ability to “impede” or function as “forces with trajectories . . . of their own,” where Bennett focuses on the “moment of independence from and resistance to us and other bodies: a kind of thing-power,” I concentrate on how the experience of belonging with matter allows for mutual power (Bennett, pp. vii, viii, 18).

I.3 Keywords

I.3.1 Movement

This first keyword, and its attendant corollaries of action, dynamism, and kinesthesia, drives this book.⁵² Siegfried Giedion states that “[o]ur thinking and feeling in all their ramifications are fraught with the concept of movement.”⁵³ I track how characters and things *move* toward and interact with each other, maintaining that this galvanic process unfolds unpredictably: Things have their own choreography; each figures disparately in different texts, but once puzzled out – as far as is possible – literary things release pulsing and often transgressive meanings as they simultaneously unearth history’s wounds and deliver opportunities for intimacy between humans and nonhumans. For example, diamonds form links to horrific labor conditions, even as their dazzle tenders a model for multifaceted thinking; in the Uffizi’s Galleries a statue’s shoddily restored arm incites a wince but also recalls the scintillating vitality that fragments provoke. These paradoxes divulge matter’s mercurial and transformative properties, ones that when recognized stimulate characters and readers’ sensitivity to and insight into natural and social ecosystems. Encouraging or obstructing this sensitivity, the texts experiment with rejecting binaries and positing lively paradigms for being and belonging with society and nature. When characters strive to interconnect with things, I suggest that their criss-crossing between human and nonhuman matter and then back toward the self and community involves a movement we can call transcendence. This is not transcendence from matter, but into a state of mind and being that boosts discovery of something beyond our own subjective viewpoint.

Movement, of course, can also entail a negative exodus from things. For example, Evelina and her grandmother, finding the latter’s hairpiece repulsive after it has rolled around in weeds and filth, both experience alienation from the nonhuman, separation which leads to more human

⁵² Helmut Müller-Sievers impressively analyzes how nineteenth-century technology impacted movement in serialization, plot structures, and the mechanical rhythms of prose. This study is, like mine, interdisciplinary and comparative, but I focus on gender politics and on cultural and art histories, while he concentrates on machines and how their motions influence nineteenth-century French and British literature. *The Cylinder: Kinematics of the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

⁵³ *Mechanization Takes Command* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948), p. 14.

unhappiness.⁵⁴ Refusing to hear the human coincides with the failure to hear the nonhuman (and vice versa), leading to ruinous breakdowns, as when Paul curses Madame de la Tour for exiling her daughter, crying out, “[i]nhuman mother! Pitiless woman! May the ocean to which you expose her never return her to you” (*PV*, p. 86); indeed, nature fulfills the hero’s oath, for the sea embodies his words, drowning Virginie. His execration functions as a thing-theory commentary since he accurately identifies Madame de la Tour’s “inhuman” actions as arising from her disconnection from things – like her own daughter and the ocean’s own force – that she should consider belongings. She thus estranges herself from both the human and the nonhuman.

In the main, however, I focus on how the characters and texts navigating through this human–nonhuman vascular system hope to subvert, as much as is possible, dualisms that restrict the flow of breath, blood, and vim through political, gendered, and social arrangements. Moving toward belonging, these fascicles of intellect, emotion, and matter can charge and recharge each other. Especially for women and the environment, such kinesthesia could (potentially) fulfill the truth that things and women do have agency, a process that could also demystify ecological breakpoints and ideological contradictions. Forging contiguities – shimmering agitation and sometimes equipoise – among empyreal, physical, material, and virtuous momenta characterizes much Romantic-era writing and certainly the texts I scrutinize. For me, the most dazzling literary things constitute the ones which generate mobile thoughts and emotions. Following things as they move through narratives, activating volatility and excess, I resuscitate the lives objects lived before their entry into and during their literary life cycles.

1.3.2 *Listening*

As I asked in the *préambule* to this Introduction, how do we *listen* to those forgotten things that are the “resonance and celebration of Sound,” but which are “never pronounced”? Above all, characters must first move

⁵⁴ I discuss this phenomenon in *Mansfield Park* when Fanny Price observes the “bread and butter growing every minute more greasy than even Rebecca’s hands had first produced it.” *The Novels of Jane Austen*, ed. R. W. Chapman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 439. *Sense and Sensibility* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). See Heydt-Stevenson, *Austen’s Unbecoming Conjunctions: Subversive Laughter, Embodied History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 152–156.

toward things “cast” aside.⁵⁵ And what is heard can shock, stop, and transport the listener down unexpected footpaths, enlightening and disrupting. Alexandra Vazquez illuminates how “music and the musical reflect – in flashes, moments, sounds . . . the colonial, racial, and geographic past and present . . . as much as [they reflect] the creative traditions that impact and impart from it.”⁵⁶ Listening to the things in *Embodied Experience* similarly reveals that they sound out their cultural, generic, and political landscapes. We attend to “the voice of things,” or, to use Francis Ponge’s phrase, “*Le Parti pris des choses*”⁵⁷ by considering the object’s provenance, its history, its placement, and its “excesses.” I look for textual events where the human and nonhuman mutually *recognize and listen* to each other, thereby creating a reciprocal experience of belonging, generating potentiality out of seeming nothingness.

Listening to *things* and listening to *humans* are kindred practices, and such listening to a thing’s life force can grip us ethically, as we enter into play with sound, participating in mutual conversion and transfiguration with characters and things. Here, I am especially drawn to Mary Jacobus’s contemplative study, *Romantic Things: A Tree, a Rock, a Cloud*. Referring to Nancy’s work, *Listening*, she explains that for him, sound “not only spreads in space but resonates internally – ‘still resounding “in me,” as we say.’ Sound goes both ways: ‘To sound is to vibrate in itself or by itself,’ to emit sounds as a sonorous body, but it also refers back to itself, as interior resonance.”⁵⁸ Investigating how sound unfurls spatially as it reverberates internally, I examine how listening augments interconnections. *If* characters and viewers *listen*, they hear the voice of things: the swish of air as the *Venus de’ Medici* moves through space; Corinne’s beating heart beckoning her back to Italy; women’s bijoux and *Belinda’s* diamonds becoming mouths that speak; Virginie’s white muslin ringing out danger, and the sound of a hand adjusting a hat’s brim. Listening to things helps characters exceed possession and surpass their own subjectivity, for this practice enables them to render things belongings. In turn this activates readers

⁵⁵ Sobin, “Notes on Sound, Speech, Speech-Crystals and the Celestial Echo” (p. 25).

⁵⁶ *Listening in Detail: Performances of Cuban Music* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013), p. 4.

⁵⁷ *The Voice of Things* is the English title the translator, Beth Archer, gives to Francis Ponge’s *Le Parti pris des choses* (Paris: Gallimard, 1942; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972).

⁵⁸ (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), p. 162. Jacobus brilliantly articulates the “expressivity of the nonhuman and inanimate and the ways in which the material and technological world act on the human, as well as being acted upon by it” (p. 5). She quotes Nancy’s *Listening*, trans. Charlotte Mandell (New York: Fordham University Press, 2007), p. 6.

to think vigorously about their interactions with the world and the world of literature.

I.3.3 *The Radiant*

My third keyword captures the connective energy transfer I find when the human–nonhuman literary nexus *works* – when they travel toward each other, thereby illuminating matter in texts and interactions across the character–thing network. I chose this term because it connotes heat exchanged between systems. And because temperature determines how much force a thing will radiate, more movement between the human and nonhuman means more fire. Doubtless, certain literary things that radiate the most significant data are “hotter” than others, and these drive characters more intensely toward them. To create a conceit, as the thing’s “temperature” rises – because of its significance and centrality to a text or character – and its “molecules” start vibrating, it increases the flow of meanings between these exchanges. Moving toward the nonhuman and recognizing the degree to which it prompts flux or germinates excess meaning provides an entry into *belonging with*. Thus, because radiance flashes out when humans and nonhumans listen and connect, interdependence is possible regardless of a thing’s size, value, or utility. I underscore this since the dowdiest of straw hats and the most magnificent of glittering diamonds participate in a world of matter that matters, for as these texts show, even the lowliest can belong. In these radiant moments, literature, readers, and characters, responding to nonhuman energy, can learn from it. Sometimes these interlacings better resemble a conduction between systems since they occur via physical contact, such as stroking a statue or wearing a hat; at other times, a thing remains untouched, and yet matter still agitates and cultivates implications.

I.3.4 *Resuscitation and Restoration*

The authors I address concern themselves varyingly with patriarchal efforts to dematerialize women and reduce the nonhuman to abstractions; others try to heal such conditions by *resuscitating* and *restoring* what has been rendered incorporeal or irrelevant. To yoke to a thing, whether human or not, its matter must matter. It must be allowed to breathe. And to rematerialize requires a full sensory commitment. Consequently, I strive to make the things I study more tangible by historically contextualizing them and highlighting their sensory aspects. Fritjof Capra’s statement that

“the origin of our [current ecological] dilemma lies in our tendency to create the abstractions of separate objects”⁵⁹ rings true to me insofar as letting literary things remain abstract can lead readers to ignore the larger textual ecosystem; more generally speaking, it exemplifies a disregard for our environment and the levies we place on gender choices. From my perspective, this reinforces that the work of *belonging with* often constitutes resuscitation, for when characters commune with things which have been driven into obscurity or abstraction, characters (and correlatively readers) can hear and feel their breath, can breathe with them. The objects I discuss differ in size, portability, and cost – statues, diamonds, monuments, a book, sentimental objects, and hats – but each is either resuscitated or they themselves resuscitate characters. To quote Sobin’s title again, these constitute “luminous debris.”

I envision my work as participating in recovery, but also in *restoration*, which readers will find is a punning phrase, given that each chapter addresses, to some degree, the literal restoration of things or characters. *Embodied Experience’s* literary texts accomplish their own revitalizing work, for each one strives to rematerialize characters by finding them a body or generating their body anew: *Belinda’s* characters restore Lady Delacour’s ethical being by restoring her physically; Corinne exercises a sacred duty in urging Oswald to connect to things and thereby restore his *élan vital*. Wordsworth’s and Edgeworth’s recyclings of *Paul et Virginie* reexamine the eponymous heroine’s physical sacrifice, restoring her to life in their own text’s alternate endings to the novel. I also examine restoration’s inverse, the ruin or damage to fictional female bodies manipulated and refashioned for profit rather than independence and love. When *Belinda* invokes the *Venus de’ Medici*, it restores the ideal female body not as one perfectly proportioned, but as fragmentary and mixed: as more “Romantic” than Neoclassical, as more in-motion than flawlessly static, as more rational and virtuous than that kind of woman Mary Wollstonecraft contemptuously calls a “fair defect in nature” (VRW, p. 65). Crystal Lake insightfully claims that “fragmented objects . . . lead us to believe that we can complete their shapes, reconstruct their histories, and determine their meanings”; indeed humans often desire such a finale and artifacts “always keep us guessing and second-guessing about what they are . . . and why they matter.”⁶⁰ I focus, however, less on artifacts’

⁵⁹ *The Web of Life: A New Scientific Understanding of Living Systems* (New York: Anchor Books, 1996), p. 295.

⁶⁰ *Artifacts*, p. 193.

playful intransigence than on the belief that neither human nor nonhuman can even try to complete the other unless some fundamental sense of *belonging with* exists between the two. For example, [Chapter 1](#) anatomizes how restorations of the *Venus de’ Medici* and the *Venus Belvedere* fail since fashion and politics external to the statues’ desires – styles particular cultures long to replicate – decree those refurbishments.⁶¹ Thus, human–nonhuman restoration simultaneously requires connection and distance (I return to this calibration in [Chapter 4](#)), since symbiosis between restorer and statue is not only impossible, but undesirable, since it would deaden the relationship between them.

1.3.5 Recycling

My last keyword, one that tangibly connects things, is *recycling*, a term that can overlap with those of restoration and resuscitation. Ariane Fennetaux, Amélie Junqua, and Sophie Vasset’s *The Afterlife of Used Things: Recycling in the Eighteenth Century* reminds readers that most eighteenth-century historians have emphasized innovations – the “‘industrial revolution,’ [the] ‘consumer revolution,’ [the] ‘new science,’ and the ‘new print culture’; however, to understand the era in less “piecemeal” ways, one must turn to another “fundamentally relevant operative process”: recycling.⁶² They see recycling as “central to consumption envisioned in its entirety” and as a “cyclical process of valuation, devaluation, and re-evaluation,” one that not only “asks economic questions but opens up social, aesthetic, political, and moral interrogations.”⁶³ Indeed, such “interrogations” shore up my claims, given that every object I contemplate is recycled, as when novels and tourist accounts repurpose the *Venus de’ Medici* into a sign of female modesty or *un cri de coeur* for liberty; or, when a diamond meant for revenge is re-intentioned into social and ecological atonement; and when artisans recycle Bernardin’s drowned Virginie into kaleidoscopic representations – statues, paintings, bedspreads, and fans.

⁶¹ Lake argues in *Artifacts* that “[w]e should reserve the term artifact, therefore, for naming those objects that either have a troubling tendency to keep changing their story or to stop talking at the moments when we need them to say more” (p. 6). I agree that no object can be thoroughly mined, but for my purposes, all things, not just artifacts, do share that “troubling tendency” to transform and withhold information.

⁶² “Introduction: The Many Lives of Recycling,” in *The Afterlife of Used Things*, ed. Fennetaux, Junqua, and Vasset (New York and London: Routledge, 2015), p. 1. Many of these essays analyze how things are literally recycled – for example, how ceramics were repaired.

⁶³ “Introduction: The Many Lives of Recycling,” pp. 2, 3, 4.

Recycling has further implications for *Embodied Experience*: For example, its positive capacity to save resources has analogous consequences for literary composition and for women's ability to thrive. Concerning the first, rewriting an earlier novel might be said to prevent waste, as recycling glass does, insofar as each time an author resuscitates *Paul et Virginie*, it prolongs its lifespan, and within the new literary context boosts readers to rethink a novel which has not "aged" well and no longer has the impact it did when first published. I extend this conceit as well to female lives, since as many authors contended, women should experience embodiment fully instead of regarding their bodies as warring with their spirits or their virtue battling with their sexuality – such militarized zones leave women useless and broken, entities that can never have a full life and that are then discarded. I reconnoiter how, in literature, recycling's ecology renews things and storylines as it tries to return an affirmative and restorative materiality to women that gender constructions have proscribed. Specifically, textual recyclings resist Bernardin's transformation of Virginie into "virtuous waste" when they let her virtuously live. This relates to Wollstonecraft's recycling metaphors, as when young women, considered "ephemeron triflers," are prized only for one use – their youthful, pleasing charms (*VRW*, pp. 36, 45). Accordingly, keeping women uneducated and passive demands tossing out resources necessary for the health of individuals, families, and nations. The recyclings of Bernardin's novel into something more hopeful contrasts to those *Frankenstein* performs, wherein Victor tears parts from other bodies to create something supposedly perfect. I suggest a feminist–environmentalist version of recycling that restores the alliance of the female body and mind and the coalition of the human and nonhuman.

Those who study material culture often begin with political aims, primarily environmental, as in our world we watch "stuff" accruing exponentially – and being discarded just as fast. Stacy Alaimo suggests that

imagining human corporeality as trans-corporeality, in which the human is always intermeshed with the more-than-human world, underlines the extent to which the substance of the human is ultimately inseparable from 'the environment.' . . . [B]y underscoring that *trans* indicates movement across different sites, trans-corporeality also opens up a mobile space that acknowledges the often unpredictable and unwanted actions of human bodies, nonhuman creatures, ecological systems, chemical agents, and other actors.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ *Bodily Natures*, p. 2.

Thing theorists abjure the inability or failure to pay attention to this crisis; they reject the insistent exploitation of the nonhuman existing at this catastrophe’s root. And though I espouse this viewpoint, if an outright environmental agenda seems opaque in this book or does not shimmer on its surface, that does not mean that it is not propelling my thoughts, for, really, our mistreatment of the nonhuman is the issue that thrust me into this project. Thus, as these literary texts disclose the penalties of overlooking things or treating them contemptuously, they compel readers to exercise the idea that we can learn from *belonging with* how to be better subjects: how better to respect the environment and the people around us, how better to inhabit the material world, how better to realign our thinking holistically.

I.4 Linking Thing Theory, History, and British and French Literature

Many conceptual and tangible rewards result from studying British and French literature in conjunction with human–nonhuman embodiment and *belonging with*. To begin, comparatism itself beneficially sets a “home tradition in a differential frame,” thereby “offering us the provisional freedom to imagine our world, and ourselves, differently.”⁶⁵ Comparatism additionally encourages opportunities to think about the wider topics of gender and politics outside of purely national concerns. For example, Margaret Higonnet’s *Borderwork* centers on “the meeting points of comparative literature and feminist criticism”; and as Catherine Brown argues, “[a]t a political level, the willingness to compare one thing or oneself with an other or others undermines absolutism,”⁶⁶ undermining, most specifically for my purposes, tyranny over objects and women. Further moving through this reticulation, I believe that comparatism and thing theory form a useful combination. Damrosch observes that “[a]lmost by definition, comparatists are people blessed, or afflicted, with double vision.”⁶⁷ This book implements not only the double sight of two nations, but also a third: a theory of materiality that develops the possibility of humans and nonhumans belonging together. These three, conjoined, reveal that each enhances the others; to offer one example, comparatism puts pressure on any tendency in thing theory to see such interactions only

⁶⁵ David Damrosch, *Comparing the Literatures: Literary Studies in a Global Age* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020), p. 341.

⁶⁶ Higonnet, p. 4; Brown, p. 86. ⁶⁷ Damrosch, p. 63.

within a nationalist or even a universalist grid.⁶⁸ Thus, as I advance a feminist comparatism, theories of thing–human relations become my fulcrum, one which lifts into a brighter vista the female characters who accept their own physicality, cooperate with material objects, and work with and in the material world, either through environmental restitution or creative assertions of human rights.⁶⁹

Thus, as I journey into both English and French texts and objects, I draw on historical context and employ varying kinds of philosophies of things as my vantage point, such as Spinoza's, in addition to those theories which the literary authors themselves devise. This allows me to link catastrophic splits between human and nonhuman in literary texts to their equally catastrophic historical backdrops, since politics, individuals, and social groups, stimulated by events between 1763 and 1814, all struggled with questions of embodiment. In rethinking relations among humans, nonhumans, and history, I join other recent scholars (Silver, Lake, Rabb, and Festa) of material culture,⁷⁰ and, like them, explore ways that objects unwrap and radiate social and political narratives. I do not rely on the same anchors as they do (Robert Hooke or Thomas Hobbes, for example), but instead first contextualize my analyses within the frameworks of events such as the Treaty of Paris, the French Revolution, and Napoleonic rule, and second in relation to the female characters from primarily women-authored texts. Along these historical lines, Spinoza, whose philosophy undergirds the radical enlightenment, has also stimulated my thinking. And though this is not a thoroughly integrated study

⁶⁸ As Higonnet argues, “many comparatists . . . weave together multiple disciplines in a reading practice that may be called *métissage*, a practice which recognizes that representation cuts across the boundaries of juridical, political, anthropological, and artistic discourses.” See “Introduction,” *Borderwork: Feminist Engagements with Comparative Literature*, ed. Higonnet (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), p. 2, and *Comparing the Literatures*: “the different strands of comparison that we find today have long been intertwined, including philologically based close reading, literary theory, colonial/postcolonial studies, and the study of world literature” (p. 337).

⁶⁹ Brown's “What Is ‘Comparative’ Literature?” discusses how such fulcrums in comparative work have long led to greater understanding; for example, Auerbach “uses *Ansatzpunkt* to denote a point of vantage from which different cultural objects may be simultaneously viewed” (p. 81).

⁷⁰ Silver will “do intellectual history through material history, and vice versa,” charting “the ways in which an idea might repeatedly turn up in an object, or an object (or range of objects) might repeatedly constitute an idea” (p. 18). Lake claims, “[t]hroughout the long eighteenth century, an artifact could vindicate or undercut a range of political claims, from those that asserted a sovereign's divine right to those that pleaded for radical democracy, because it could also corroborate competing theories of matter” (p. 5, 12). My work differs from Melinda Rabb's important *Miniature and the English Imagination: Literature, Cognition, and Small-Scale Culture, 1650–1765* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), in that she draws on “recent work in the interdisciplinary fields of cognitive cultural or cognitive literary studies” to “understand the evolving relationship between . . . the human mind and cultural artifacts” (p. 5). Rabb quotes Lisa Zunshine, ed., *Introduction to Cognitive Cultural Studies* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), p. 3.

of that philosopher and the literature I have chosen,⁷¹ I keep present his conviction that “the mind and the body are one and the same thing” (*Ethics*, IIIp2s). Readers will further see that his links among virtue (power), joy, action, and beneficence inspire my feminist ethics since *belonging with* involves all of these; thus, I draw from him that the strongest desires are those “which aris[e] from joy,” that joy arises from self-preservation, and that “the foundation of virtue is this very striving to preserve one’s being” (*Ethics*, IVp18; IVp18si).⁷² As Elizabeth Grosz eloquently explains: “For Spinoza, ethics is a movement oriented by encounters with others, other humans and human institutions, other living beings, and the non-living material order that constitutes the whole of nature, an ethics not based on autonomy and self-containment, . . . but through engagements that enhance or deplete one’s powers.”⁷³ The eco-social implications of Spinoza’s theories also impact my study, especially his sense that all beings “should strive together, as far as they can, to preserve their being; and that all, together, should seek for themselves the common advantage of all” (*Ethics*, IVp18siii). For Spinoza these are virtuous acts since “the more each one strives, and is able, . . . to preserve his being, the more he is endowed with virtue” (*Ethics*, IVp20). Thus, especially for women, such striving is a virtuous act, one motivating their life force and consequently their desire for happiness; women like Bernardin’s Virginie, who abandon this *élan vital* for hollow notions of “female virtue” choose death.

Of course, neither I nor these other scholars presume that a comprehensive knowledge of things and their histories can be gleaned. I take heed when Judith Pascoe claims that “romantic histories” themselves “dwell upon their own fragmentariness, on the impossibility of capturing an intact history.”⁷⁴ Nevertheless, using theories of materiality, I flesh out these literary objects (as much as possible) as beings with their own histories. These entities – “left in way of vestige,” by those authors of “*antique populations*”⁷⁵ (the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,

⁷¹ For example, see Marjorie Levinson’s *Thinking through Poetry: Field Reports on Romantic Lyric* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), which investigates Spinoza’s importance to Romantic studies (esp. chapter 5).

⁷² For essays on feminist theory and Spinoza’s writings, see the excellent volume, *Feminist Interpretations of Benedict Spinoza*, ed. Moira Gatens (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009).

⁷³ *The Incorporeal: Ontology, Ethics, and the Limits of Materialism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), p. 56.

⁷⁴ *The Hummingbird Cabinet: A Rare and Curious History of Romantic Collectors* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), p. 24. I am indebted to this exquisite scholarly work.

⁷⁵ Sobin, *Luminous*, p. 38.

that is) – create links between literary texts and cultural and historical events and personages. In doing so, they enter into startling relationships which revise our reading of literature. For example, when *Desmond* introduces a hat, circa 1763 and linked to the Treaty of Paris, as intertwined with the French events of 1792, the object demands some explanation for its presence. Because French and British literary texts embody, through things, both history's events and theories of materiality, these belong together.

All eras, no doubt, concern themselves with the question of embodiment, but 1789 and the post-revolutionary epoch provide an especially rich laboratory for trying to corporealize abstract issues such as human rights and the relationship between property and citizenship. That a revolution is not the only way to embody ideals goes without saying, but the fact that uprisings occurred in multiple European countries as well as in South America and the Caribbean between roughly 1750 and 1810 suggests that manifesting, not just speculating on, large-scale transformation enthralled many minds. Jonathan Israel contends that it was earthquakes, especially the Lisbon one in 1755 – matter cracking, rumbling, falling, firing, and destroying – that helped intensify debates concerning interlacings among nature, divine intervention, and science.⁷⁶ Indeed, he continues, materialist philosophies are the origin of and become the Revolution's cornerstone: "Basic human rights defined as individual liberty, equality, freedom of thought and expression and democracy were inextricably linked to radically monist philosophical positions during the Enlightenment era."⁷⁷ Conservatives, for example, spurned the *encyclopédistes* as *matérialistes* inspired by Spinoza, "who, attaching the faculty of thinking to all beings, plants and stones included, perceive little difference between men and animals and conflate body and mind into one."⁷⁸ These revolutionary emphases and Chaumeix's critique, sounding out their anticipation of contemporary thing theory, provide one way to understand the priority these literary texts I examine place on incarnating nonhuman and human rights. This is not to say, however, that these novelists and poets would have accepted the d'Holbachian exclusion of the

⁷⁶ *Democratic Enlightenment: Philosophy, Revolution, and Human Rights, 1750–1790* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 39–41. Voltaire famously addresses this topic in *Poème sur le désastre de Lisbonne*. See <https://gallica.bnf.fr/essentiels/anthologie/poeme-desastre-lisbonne>

⁷⁷ Israel, pp. 20–21.

⁷⁸ Israel, p. 76. Here Israel refers to the conservative Abraham-Joseph Chaumeix, *Préjugés légitimes et réfutation de l'Encyclopédie avec un examen critique du livre de l'esprit* ("Bruxelles," 1758–1759), vol. 1, pp. 200–202, 209.

transcendent, since their characters’ elastic movements toward matter offer radiant examples of how they connect to something larger than their individual selves – sometimes spiritual union, sometimes more secular deifications like nature or social alliances. Regardless of that larger something, however, this “uplift,” as I said earlier, remains anchored to the material. In [Section I.4](#), I gesture to this wide historical context to parse how my chosen texts examine the embodiment of rights and the right to belong.

I maintain that the political need to incarnate ideals and forge authentic bonds between theory and praxis overlaps subject-object explorations during this revolutionary era. In suggesting links between French and British literature and political questions of how principles and prerogatives find physical form, I begin and remain on very general grounds – I do not rehearse mind–body debates or the *philosophes*’ conversations and conflicts concerning materialist versus providential epistemologies. However, addressing both nations is crucial for my argument because such a reality-shifting event as the French Revolution leads both nations to inquire into abstractions and incarnations. Diderot links body and psyche, asserting that “*la révolution . . . s’est faite dans les esprits*” (“the revolution was realized in mind and soul”),⁷⁹ and as Israel shows, “[a]mong nations just as among individuals . . . [p]hysical needs and philosophical ideas are ultimately inseparable”: thus, “revolutionary social change must ultimately be viewed as inseparable parts of a single process,” since “*le peuple entraîne les philosophes, et les philosophes mènent le peuple*” (“the people inspire the philosophers, and the philosophers lead the people”).⁸⁰

Spinoza, whose ideas provided a spine for revolutionary movements and influenced British and French Romantic writers, also delivers one of the vertebrae that thing theories often claim: “in Nature there exists only one substance”; indeed, he states that “I do not know why matter would be unworthy of the divine nature” (*Ethics*, IP15s.vi), a strong argument indeed for a nondualist stance, and one particularly suitable for refuting that matter – and thus women – are inherently sullied.

⁷⁹ Quoted in Israel, *Democratic Enlightenment*, p. 943. He does not offer a citation for this source. My translation.

⁸⁰ Israel, p. 943. He cites Guillaume-Thomas Raynal, *Histoire philosophique et politique de établissements [sic] et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes*, 10 vols. (Geneva: Jean-Leonard Pellet, 1780), vol. 10, p. 437. My translations.

My concern here is with women's enactment of rights.⁸¹ Peter de Bolla outlines how this era varyingly conceived of and articulated (to use his central term) the "concept," of human rights, though he acknowledges a "play" between definitions. As he shows, most "eighteenth-century persons" would not have understood the "*rights of man*" as "designating universal human rights"; rather they would have thought of them as specifiable and concretely valid in individual instances.⁸² Indeed, de Bolla reasons against "the slippage" that arises when one assumes that "'rights of man' are identical to the period's sense of the rights of mankind."⁸³ His distinctions help me elucidate my own use of the word "rights." The specific texts I include and the specific instances of characters striving to secure "rights" for the nonhuman or justice for themselves via things concern themselves more with the first definition and less with the abstract concept of how "the claim to universality" had "its basis in the essence of the human," though many would have thought this correct, and certainly correct for more than just the "species."⁸⁴ I am not stipulating that women characters who seek out rights come to *possess* them, but rather that in approaching things and finding ways that those things help them enact those rights, they potentially enter a state of belonging with the nonhuman where they can manifest self-protection and embodiment.

For Jacques Rancière, "the Rights of Man are the rights of those who make something of" the visible, written "configuration" of them; these are the people "who decide not only to 'use' their rights but also to build . . . a case" for validating that "inscription."⁸⁵ Applying this idea, Festa argues that the art and literature she addresses "make humanity a performative enactment, constituted processually."⁸⁶ Likewise, I see the movement between humans and things toward each other as a process necessarily and continually reenacted. My more specific point asserts that in doing so, they thereby enjoy privileges that legal systems have either barred from them or authorized, but not delivered – and both are the case during this

⁸¹ Vis-à-vis more recent assessments of the Enlightenment movement, I agree that it was not just one thing and that though calling rights universal, it did not address the rights of all, as Siep Stuurman eloquently in *The Invention of Humanity: Equality and Cultural Difference in World History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017), especially see chapter 6, "Global Equality and Inequality in Enlightenment Thought."

⁸² *The Architecture of Concepts: The Historical Formation of Human Rights* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), p. 119; emphasis original.

⁸³ De Bolla, p. 208. ⁸⁴ De Bolla, p. 208.

⁸⁵ "Who Is the Subject of the Rights of Man?" *South Atlantic Quarterly* 103.2/3 (2004): 297–310, p. 303. I am grateful to Lynn Festa for alerting me to this article.

⁸⁶ *Fiction*, p. 33.

era for women and much of any population, including the nonhuman one. I show throughout *Embodied Experience* that women built into their lives justices they did not even have, rights written nowhere. As Rancière states eloquently, women “could demonstrate that they were deprived of the rights that they had, thanks to the Declaration of Rights. And they could demonstrate, through their public action, that they had the rights that the constitution denied to them, that they could enact those rights.”⁸⁷ Corporealizing these privileges may lead to a fleeting or inconsistent recompense (as *The Wanderer* evinces), and this activity may have to be physically enacted repeatedly, but in that spatial-temporal zone, women can achieve some liberty and agency. For example, as I explain in [Chapter 3](#), if diamonds and women belong together, the rights they exert promise that the gem avoids being abused and the woman circumvents being objectified; as long as the *Venus* keeps turning, she retains the privilege of experiencing multiplicity and vitality, thereby preventing viewers from limiting her to one “motivation”; conversely, when Corinne and Virginie stop coursing toward the nonhuman and their own materiality, they abdicate their personal prerogative to experience a joyful and abundant embodiment. Further, if humans exploit things, taking away their right to “be” and to belong, those things enter a state of harm, but so too, in the *long* run do the humans perpetuating this.

As Siep Stuurman identifies, inequality of all kinds arose out of Enlightenment notions of equality.⁸⁸ Thus, justice very often remained an abstraction for many categories of humans and nonhumans. Lynn Hunt shows that although most thinkers employing the axiom, “the rights of man,” articulated these “as if they were . . . self-evident,” they were not; for example, “[t]he French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen claimed to safeguard individual freedoms, but it did not prevent the emergence of a French government that repressed rights (known as the Terror).”⁸⁹ If liberties that were supposed to be clear and palpable remained ambiguous and intangible, who did they include, and how were they to be enacted? In other words, which humans, which nonhumans, and which rights *belonged* together? Hunt asserts that it was emotional righteousness itself that made those truths indisputable:

⁸⁷ “Who Is the Subject of the Rights of Man?” p. 304.

⁸⁸ Stuurman speaks of these as languages of “political economy,” “biopsychological theories of gender,” “racial classification,” and a “spaciotemporal matrix of more and less ‘advanced’ stages of human development,” pp. 259, 260.

⁸⁹ *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2007), pp. 25, 18.

Human rights are difficult to pin down because their definition, indeed their very existence, *depends* on emotions as much as on reason. . . . Moreover, we are most certain that a human right is at issue when we feel horrified by its violation. . . . The history of human rights shows that rights are best defended in the end by the feelings, convictions, and actions of multitudes of individuals, who demand responses that accord with their inner sense of outrage.⁹⁰

Although I agree that “emotion” helps secure the existence of human rights, my book contends that to be effectual, they must also “*depend*” upon embodiment⁹¹ and upon things themselves, which sometimes become surrogates when laws do not exist, as when a hat enables a woman to secure rights the legal system does not ensure. For example, in a story Aristotle recounts (one I will return to) King Mity’s statue commits homicide (though perhaps not suicide) by purposely falling on the person who had murdered the King himself, thereby attaining justice that apparently law could not.⁹² The statue, enacting justice physically, makes the King’s rights matter. Raymond Williams underscores this idea: He emphasizes how the changes before and during the Revolution were far from abstractions, given that they “were experienced, in these years, on the senses The pattern of change was not background, as we may now be inclined to study it; it was, rather, the mould in which general experience was cast.”⁹³ And following from the physical tremors of, for example, hunger, there were, certainly, concrete attempts to put into practice privileges that would rectify such injustices. And yet, as Israel says, “the partial successes of radical thought in the 1780s and 1790s” arose from “the almost total failure of the moderate Enlightenment to deliver reforms that much of . . . society had for decades been pressing for”⁹⁴ – that is, it arose from the failure to *embody* those reforms that remained ephemeral. After Robespierre’s death, Wordsworth writes in the 1805 *Prelude* that the now “eternal justice” is “thus / Made manifest,” and that his and his followers’ “madness is declared and visible.”⁹⁵ How necessary such an

⁹⁰ *Inventing Human Rights*, pp. 26, 213, emphasis added.

⁹¹ For example, in the US today a person may have a legal driving license and thus the right to drive, but, depending on their race, they may not be able to embody that right without being wrongfully arrested.

⁹² “On the Art of Poetry,” *Aristotle, Horace, Longinus: Classical Literary Criticism*, trans. T. S. Dorsch (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965), p. 45.

⁹³ *Culture and Society: 1780–1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), p. 31.

⁹⁴ *Democratic Enlightenment*, p. 14.

⁹⁵ *The Prelude 1799, 1805, 1850*, ed. Jonathan Wordsworth, M. H. Abrams, and Stephen Gill (New York and London: Norton Critical Edition, 1979), book 10, ll. 540–541, 550.

appeal to material embodiment – to justice “made manifest” and insanity made “visible” – must have been when ideals were not incarnated.

I bring together French and British literature and things to examine embodiment and abstraction specifically regarding women, who, alongside their male counterparts, sometimes willingly evacuate those rights, while others attempt, through a coupling with the nonhuman, to make those things and their own bodies fleshly “righteous,” so to speak. Gender definitions carve out the conflicts between women and materiality in high relief. The French Revolution initially fosters female emancipation, only to retract that; influenced by that nation’s radical reforms, some English women writers – most obviously Wollstonecraft – advocated for women developing both intellectual and physical strengths, but British cultural resistance to this empowerment led, as is a matter of record, to models forbidding women this privilege. Hunt, for example, charts how “the turning point in republican images of women” – occurring “between the suppression of women’s clubs in October 1793 and the Festival of the Supreme Being in June 1794” – allotted females to the domestic sphere and led them, “[w]hen represented publicly,” to be “increasingly relegated to distinctly motherly roles.”⁹⁶ A concentration on embodiment and dematerialization within this historical context reveals how pressing the incentives were for governments, communities, writers, and individuals who wanted to see these new claims corporealized, for these fractures between female spirit, body, and virtue echo the separation between revolutionary ideals and the embodiment of them.

In discovering where women’s rights incarnate in these literary texts, I engage in more than “*archaeological rhetoric*” (Sobin) by delving into a true “dig” as I explore how nonhuman things come to embody justice that remains missing or abstract. [Chapter 1](#) probes whether connoisseurs have the license to accuse the *Venus de’ Medici* of seducing them and whether she has the authority to elude their attempts to pigeonhole her identity and intentions. Exploring *Belinda’s* invocation of this statue, I show how it/she obliquely restores the right for Lady Delacour to protect her body and to invoke nonperfection and nonconformity as a just privilege. [Chapter 2](#) turns to some Roman monuments and statues that embody the prerogative to life and happiness Oswald denies himself. [Chapter 3](#), beginning with a *préambule* analyzing *Les Bijoux indiscrets*, emphasizes how conceptual ideas can transcend national borders, for in both Diderot’s and Edgeworth’s

⁹⁶ *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (New York and London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 153, 154.

novels the “mouths” of diamonds speak of women’s right to be human, that is, truthful, fragmented, joyful, and stained. Chapter 4 first demonstrates how a book, *Paul et Virginie*, offers the springboard for later books and art objects to investigate a woman’s entitlement to virtuous sexuality and, second, explains how *Bélinde, conte moral de Maria Edgeworth* (1802) – Octave Ségur’s translation of *Belinda* – pivots from its source novel by embracing *politesse* and excising the original’s link between nonhuman and women’s rights, and thus, from my perspective, dimming the radiance Edgeworth claims for women when they are permitted both to welcome physicality and remain honorable. Chapter 5 observes Burney embracing what could be called revolutionary hope while simultaneously chronicling what can transpire when rights are absent or remain abstractions.⁹⁷

I.5 Cross-Channel Connections

There are a few other central ways that these French and British texts and things have led me to believe that they belong together and belong with theories of materiality. Above all, they, themselves, participate in transnational fertilizations which they connect to women’s material relationships. The works I address are comparative in that at micro, and almost always at meta levels, each bespeaks conflicts and communications between the two nations. For instance, allusions to France and the language itself saturate *Belinda*,⁹⁸ providing a stimulating cosmopolitanism that fractures British insularism and creates a character in Lady Delacour that reflects a diversely infused identity, one thinking and living a life characterized by linguistic *métissage* (intermixing languages).⁹⁹ Chapter 1 elucidates how this character’s mental flexibility ultimately steers her toward a happiness one could perhaps call conventional, while also nurturing her formidable creativity, one decidedly heterodox. Her ability to

⁹⁷ I link Burney to Israel’s “package of basic human rights,” which comprised “equality, democracy, freedom of the individual, freedom of thought and expression, and a comprehensive religious toleration.” See *Democratic Enlightenment*, p. 12.

⁹⁸ Many French women writers influenced Edgeworth. See Christina Colvin, *Maria Edgeworth in France and Switzerland*, ed. Colvin (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979) and Isabelle Bour, “What Maria Learned: Maria Edgeworth and Continental Fiction,” *Women’s Writing* 18.1 (2011): 34–49. Of *Corinne*, Edgeworth reveals that “I am dazzled by the genius, provoked by the absurdities, and in admiration of the taste and critical judgment of Italian literature displayed through the whole work. . . . I almost broke my foolish heart over the end of the third volume.” *The Life and Letters of Maria Edgeworth*, ed. Augustus J. C. Hare (London: Edward Arnold, 1894), vol. 1, p. 165.

⁹⁹ *Belinda* incorporates over sixty-two references in French.

embrace this seeming paradox arises from transnational influence, for she often expresses her wit in French, and she has imbibed from that nation the intellectually commanding conversational powers of Paris’s most acclaimed salons.

Like *Belinda*, *Corinne* provokes friction between French and English cultures, and both novels simultaneously proffer pluralistic cultural energies by showing these nations’ mutual influences, though Staël complicates this mix by adding an Italian setting and half-Italian heroine. *Corinne* initially encapsulates – and nurtures in her lover, Oswald – the ability to notice, from a cosmopolitan perspective, local and international society, while not collapsing all national differences into one conglomerate. Such *belonging with* promises emotional and political health. Burney’s *The Wanderer* and *Evelina*, Chapter 5’s focal points, both interweave French fashions and political conflicts into British domestic life. In the former, Juliet’s body becomes an ever-fluctuating barometer gauging threats both from her supposed husband, a *commissaire* working for the Terror, and from the English who assume she is French. To survive these international hostilities, Juliet draws on hats for protection from both revolutionary and English alarm. *Evelina* includes the infamous Madame Duval, not to criticize the French, but instead to spotlight how that character cannot coexist with either nation – let alone both. She remains vulgar while trying to eschew her “vulgar” English origins and pretends to be French, while rejecting that nation’s emphasis on decorousness and “grace of expression” (*G*, p. 70).¹⁰⁰ And finally, the *Venus de’ Medici* is intimately connected to France, Italy, and England, for the statue becomes a political icon that speaks a cosmopolitan language, allied as she is to classical Greek and Roman culture, but also to the Florentine. The texts and their things also permit cross-channel connections since travel often propels their plots, vitalizing national and international networks. Transit between England and France and life in the latter country during the Revolution galvanize *Desmond*, and *The Wanderer* begins with its heroine’s escape from France to Britain; English values transferred to Scotland dominate *Corinne*’s plot, and Oswald and the heroine separately journey between these nations. Even the *Venus de’ Medici* treks from Florence to Palermo to Paris and then back to her “home” city, Florence. As Edgeworth says of the statue, anticipating its arrival in Paris, “she has been long upon the road.”¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ Staël urges the Germans to be more like the French by being “less irritable in little circumstances” and by learning “not to confound obstinacy with energy” (p. 89).

¹⁰¹ *Edgeworth in France and Switzerland*, pp. 50–51.

I further find contacts among theories of materiality and French and British literature compelling from the perspective of genre and gender. After the first flush of insurgency, France restricted women's participation in emancipation: In Staël's words, "ever since the Revolution men have deemed it politically and morally useful to reduce women to a state of the most absurd mediocrity."¹⁰² And the English, terrified of powerful French female revolutionaries, attempted to dematerialize even more intensely their British "fair." Women became the specimens on whom these gender binaries were tested, though the French texts, for multiple reasons (one is Rousseau's influential biases) present this conflict as more difficult to resolve. Dissimilarly, British novels, such as *Belinda*, have the convenient strategy of the marriage plot to settle this. However, as I argue throughout, these texts reveal that plot's vulnerability insofar as it, in fact, *depends* on embodiment of women (their realization as physical, intellectual, and virtuous beings) and on material things (statues, monuments, diamonds, character "recyclings," miniature paintings, and hats) to make those felicitous unions succeed. For example, *Belinda's* embrace of female embodiment prompts two happy marriages, while *Corinne* and *Paul et Virginie's* tragic separations arise partly because the characters, themselves, have chosen to dislodge from their own materiality, their own belonging with their bodies, and with other humans and nonhumans.

In closing, I note that in accord with my keywords, which all connote lively attentiveness, the book is organized in ways that mirror the movements toward connection. First, my chapters themselves intertwine. Indeed, inherent entanglements among texts and among their literary things have led me to explore how they belong together. For example, *Belinda* links itself to the *Venus de' Medici*, which [Chapter 2](#) then conjures when Corinne tours the Uffizi. [Chapter 3](#) reintroduces *Belinda*, now paired anew with Diderot, as both authors draw on diamonds to disable conventional gender expectations. [Chapter 4](#) considers *Paul et Virginie*, and then subsequently reinstates *Belinda*, now in company with Wordsworth's *The Ruined Cottage*, both of which recycle Bernardin's novel. Additionally, hats play roles in *Corinne*, in two Burney novels, and in Smith's *Desmond* ([Chapter 5](#)). In a second way, these texts' literary things perform energetically, making themselves known to characters and readers somatically – a sound, a breath, a touch, a light, a gesture, a paralysis. *Corinne* reveals that diamonds stop sparkling when a lover is unfaithful, and statues petrify viewers; in Bernardin's novel, a miniature

¹⁰² *De la littérature* (Paris: Flammarion, 1991), Part II, Ch. IV, p. 335.

portrait influences an unborn child’s appearance. Things rustle up recognition, disclosing pivotal information. In a third method, I follow these texts’ tendencies: While I am an active thing theorist attentive to what an object’s history might reveal about a culture or a novel, I have avidly listened to how literary works themselves create their own thing theories. Such a practicum has high stakes: preservation of life and liberty. Cognizant of these prehistories of twentieth- and twenty-first-century thing theories, I strive to upset binaries between the literary critic, the author, and the literary object of scrutiny.¹⁰³

Finally, as a way of reinforcing these intertwinings, I include brief introductions, or forwards, if you will, to each chapter, which I entitle *préambules*. This, the French word for “preamble,” carries, like the English, the connotation of movement. As I “amble” through these brief preludes, I occasionally introduce seemingly disparate literary works outside my principal texts’ time frame or national contours: For example, this introduction begins with Sobin, and an Elizabeth Bishop poem (1979) precedes [Chapter 5](#), which addresses eighteenth- and nineteenth-century hats. These inclusions, though sometimes anachronistic, interweave with my focal subjects, thereby suggesting wide-ranging connections and illuminating how such a *mélange* refreshes thinking about alliances among thing theory, feminism, and comparatism. Thus, I follow as these literary belongings amble between and among their temporal, national, and disciplinary borders, asking how they stimulate characters and authors, and how in this “neighborhood” – though it may involve different sorts of “traumatic proximity”¹⁰⁴ – British and French writers and their characters experience an embodied world of things.

¹⁰³ Mary Helen McMurrin, referring to the work of Bennett and of Coole and Frost, observes that “[t]he ‘new materialism’ has not always fully recognized the historical complexity of active materiality.” See “Introduction,” *Mind, Body, Motion, Matter: Eighteenth-Century British and French Literary Perspectives*, ed. McMurrin and Alison Conway (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), p. 17, note 17, and Evan Gottlieb: “Wordsworth’s early poetry and poetics anticipate . . . a recent philosophical movement: object-oriented philosophy.” See *Romantic Realities: Speculative Realism and British Romanticism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), p. 16.

¹⁰⁴ Kenneth Reinhard, “Kant with Sade, Lacan with Levinas,” *MLN* 110.4 (1995): 785–808, p. 804. My [Chapter 1](#) returns to this idea. Reinhard advocates for a “comparative literature otherwise than comparison . . . , a mode of reading logically and ethically prior to similitude, a reading in which texts are not so much grouped into ‘families’ defined by similarity and difference, as into ‘neighborhoods’ determined by accidental contiguity, genealogical isolation, and ethical encounter” (p. 785).

Moving Together
Restoring Imperfection in the *Venus de' Medici* and
Lady Delacour

Préambule

On July 2, 1777, *The Scots Magazine* reported that Lord Chief Justice Mansfield tried a case that was “the most extraordinary that, perhaps, ever happened in this country or any other country,” one “respecting the sex of the Chevalier d’Éon” formerly Ambassador from France to the Court of England (1728–1810).¹ Surprising, and always astonishing intellectually, d’Éon lived the first half of his life as male: Baptized, dressed, and educated as a boy, he later received his Doctor of Law, led a troop of Dragoons, was secretary to the Duc de Nivernais during the formation and signing of the Treaty of Paris, stayed in London under the title “Minister Plenipotentiary,” and worked as a French spy. The second half of d’Éon’s life was lived as a woman. As the historian Gary Kates puts it: “Sometime during the year 1770, rumors began to surface that the Chevalier d’Éon was actually a woman.”² By 1771, bets had been placed on their³ sex, and one such wager ended up in Lord Mansfield’s courtroom. Mr. Hayes, a surgeon, bought a £100 life insurance policy from a broker, Mr. Jacques, specifying that if the Chevalier was *une dame* then Jacques would owe Hayes £700.

Mr. Hayes won his bet since the jury ultimately decided that d’Éon was a woman, a decision that “served as a kind of legal declaration” of gender

¹ *The Scots Magazine*, 39 (Edinburgh, August 1777), p. 452. Many periodicals reported the trial.

² In French *chevalière* refers to a signet ring, not a female knight, but multiple scholars use the word to indicate when d’Éon identified as a woman. For d’Éon’s history, see Gary Kates, *Monsieur d’Éon Is a Woman: A Tale of Political Intrigue and Sexual Masquerade* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), p. 182. He quotes the *London Evening Post*, May 11–14, 1771.

³ Since d’Éon switched gender identity, I will use the gender neutral “their.” As pronouns are difficult to assign to d’Éon so too are they challenging to allocate to the *Venus*. Should the statue be termed “it” and “its” or “she” and “her?” Applicable here is Morton’s statement that “there is no pronoun entirely suitable to describe ecological beings. . . . If I call them ‘it,’ I don’t think they are people like me and I’m being blatantly anthropocentric.” *Humankind: Solidarity with Nonhuman People* (London and Brooklyn: Verso, 2017), pp. 3, 4. I refer to the *Venus* as “she” and “her.”

assignment.⁴ The verdict largely emerged from the testimony of a doctor, La Goux, who claimed to have examined “parts” that revealed *him* to be a *her*. Especially important was Charles Morande, whose unchallenged and, as it turned out, perjurious statements swore that this Chevalière had “display[ed] her Bosom” to him on the “3rd Day of July, 1774,” thereby making a “Disclosure of her Sex to the Witness” and that he had examined “her” wardrobe, which was filled with “Petticoats, and other Habiliments, calculated for Feminine Use.”⁵ Six weeks after the ruling that *legally* determined their sex, d’Éon left for France and, in men’s clothing, immediately met with Foreign Minister Vergennes, expecting another ambassadorial mission. Instead, the Minister, taking what d’Éon had formerly said as true – that they were a woman – and the English verdict as fact, ordered the “mademoiselle” to take on their purportedly biological identity and dress thereafter as a woman, which they did. Evidently, d’Éon had no right to belong with more than one externally prescribed identity, though contemporaries believed that the Chevalière was “born female and had assumed a male role in order to succeed in a patriarchal society.”⁶ Reactions to d’Éon’s body became, courtesy of gamblers, jurors, newspapers, acquaintances, and politicians, a widely publicized spectacle; d’Éon even “beseech[ed] each journalist, every hack writer, not to dress up my story in his own way”;⁷ in this they resembled how the *Venus de’ Medici* was discussed without her consent – observers varyingly defining her as modest, immodest, human, graceful, or something of a dominatrix.

Given this jointure between the statue and d’Éon, we should not be surprised that during the trial, Lord Mansfield explicitly invokes the

⁴ Kates, p. 249. ⁵ *Scots Magazine*, p. 452.

⁶ Stephen Brogan, “A ‘monster of metamorphosis’: Reassessing the Chevalier/Chevalière d’Éon’s Change of Gender.” See *The Chevalier d’Éon and His Worlds: Gender, Espionage, and Politics in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Simon Burrows, Jonathan Conlin, Russell Goulbourne, and Valerie Mainz (London and New York: Continuum, 2010), p. 81. Brogan hypothesizes that d’Éon perpetuated the rumors that they were a woman – a reflection that they had fears of “kidnap, incarceration in a French prison, and even assassination” (p. 83). As Kates explains, it was not until d’Éon’s death that the body “in reality proved to be the body of a male” (quoted in Kates, p. xix from an untitled newspaper obituary, May 23, 1810, Houghton Library, Harvard University, *fFC& Eo563 ZZX).

⁷ This quotation is found in a draft of a “Special Request by Mademoiselle d’Eon for a Small Favor from Readers, Authors and the Members of the Universal Republic of Letters.” See d’Éon’s *The Maiden of Tonnerre: The Vicissitudes of the Chevalier and the Chevalière d’Eon*, translated and edited by Roland Champagne, Nina Claire Ekstein, and Gary Kates (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), p. 136. Quoted in Marilyn Morris, “The Chevalière d’Eon, Transgender Autobiography and Identity,” *Gender & History* 31.1 (2019): 78–90, p. 84. Morris argues that their “story remains relevant to transgender history because it illustrates the fluidity of gender expression and the impact that language and culture have on what might seem possible in an individual’s life” (p. 78).

Medici *Venus* and the touristic ritual of measuring her proportions so as to reaffirm her female perfection. The judge recalls an earlier

dispute which once happened between two Persons, relative to the Dimensions of a Statue of the Venus de Medici. A Wager was proposed by one of the Parties. The other replied, "I will not say any thing; it would be unfair, for I have measured the Statue." The other answered, "Why, do you think I would be such a Fool as to propose a Bett, unless I had measured it also!"⁸

As I will discuss further, tourists "visiting" the Tribuna's *Venus de' Medici* (Figure 1.1) were emboldened by the Abbé, who showed the collection and distributed the statue's proportions, gleaned from physically measuring her parts. This earlier quarrel concerning whose calculations were correct, and the fact that Lord Mansfield remembered and quoted it during the trial, multifariously connects these two celebrity bodies, which were defined by the presence and size of their physical "parts" as well as other curves and bends of their frames. Morande's testimony describes d'Éon's breasts, and Joseph Spence's *Polymetis* depicts the size and "feel" of the *Venus*'s: They are "small, distinct and delicate . . . with an idea of softness . . . And yet with all that softness, they have a firmness too."⁹

The trials, one litigating the accuracy of a statue's dimensions and the other staking money on a person's gender, spectacularize how both bets compulsively measure the degree to which humans and things obey "real" gender expectations. Manifestly, Lord Mansfield's reliance on the *Venus* dispute as a precedent for ruling on the wager over d'Éon signifies something exceeding legal process, a "something" that undergirds the relationship between the two cases: the necessity and means not only of determining "sex," but also what relationships among sexual parts constitute not just "woman" but the "perfect" woman. Such a conjoining of the *Venus* and d'Éon further radicalizes discussions of the *Venus de' Medici*, the Queen of Love, since that other queen, Marie Antoinette, who "refused to conform to certain of the strictly imposed, gendered requirements of her station" became the patron of d'Éon, who "flouted the royal authorities'

⁸ *Scots Magazine*, p. 453. While I italicize the *Venus de' Medici*, not all travel accounts or scholars do. Many thanks to Deven Parker for alerting me to this trial.

⁹ Spence, *Polymetis: or, An Enquiry concerning the Agreement between the Works of the Roman Poets and the Remains of the Antient Artists* (London, 1755; 2nd corrected ed.), p. 66. Paintings of the "female" d'Éon emphasized breast size: For example, Kates offers an illustration of the so-called Twin portraits, which place the "male" and "female" d'Éons side by side, with one dressed as a dragoon, labeled "Dedicated to the French Dragoons," and the other outfitted in a low-cut dress emphasizing her cleavage, entitled "to the memory of French heroines" (image and quotation follow p. 228).



Figure 1.1 *Venus de' Medici*. First-century BCE copy of a fourth-century BCE statue. Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Italy. Credit: Cola Images / Alamy Stock Photo.

attempts definitively to establish his sex.”¹⁰ The evidence and rulings brought against this figure and the *Venus* all concerned measuring who and what is certified to belong and to express their embodiment as they wish.

The *Venus de' Medici* enters multiple and interleaved storylines that all relate to questions of belonging: First, what belongs in collections? My initial focus, on the Uffizi's Tribuna Gallery, clarifies what pieces were thought to undermine the room's nobility, and specifically to detract from the *Venus's* presence in the Tribuna. Second, how did audiences try to belong with the statue? As I show, her radiating vitality drew observers into her orbit, making them want to touch her marble flesh. Third, how does the eighteenth-century subject belong if gender models are not adhered to? Viewers observing the *Venus de' Medici* find bonds between the human and thing in their measurements of her and in their debates as to whether this perfect female form also perfectly fulfills their contemporary canons of modesty. That is, the statue became the touchstone for British female beauty, while simultaneously being judged on whether she achieved the highest standards of modesty that had been created for the English woman. Fourth, contrary to some scholars working on museum collections, I argue that once lodged in the Tribuna, the *Venus* was not exiled from history – though the room itself was arranged ahistorically – but instead she came to interconnect with the narrative of political liberty after having been exiled from Florence for safekeeping and then plundered by Napoleon. Surveying the Tribuna's environment, I scrutinize the collection's “ecology”: What body parts belong on a statue and in what configuration? For example, what if there are some missing? Accordingly, the Medici *Venus* manifests a history of artistic restoration given that while she was held in Paris, the Florentines, desiring to *repossess* her, commit statutory dismemberment by breaking off and replacing the *Belvedere Venus's* arms so that she might resemble their lost Goddess.¹¹

At the end of the chapter, I move toward *belonging with* in *Belinda*, which refers twice to the *Venus de' Medici*, inclusions that scholars have yet to discuss. Reenacting the real-life activity of tourists who judged the statue's modesty and virtue, Edgeworth's characters “measure” each other; *Belinda*, however, incorporates these debates to encourage liberation from

¹⁰ Carolyn Weber, *Queen of Fashion: What Marie Antoinette Wore to the Revolution* (New York: Picador, 2006), p. 156.

¹¹ Called both the *Belvedere Venus* and the *Venus Victrix*, this ancient copy of a fourth-century BCE statue should not be confused with Canova's later sculpture of the same name, the *Venus Victrix* (1804/1808) in the Museo Gipsoteca Antonio Canova.

calculating standards of perfection, ones that lead to negative consequences such as racism and gender stereotyping. Embedded in the novel, *la Vénus de Médicis* becomes a double of Lady Delacour as the novel splinters engrained perspectives on issues of artistic and moral restoration and on debates concerning perfection versus deformity. The alterations that the Chevalier-“Chevalière,” Lady Delacour, and the Medici *Venus* experience render them “mixed,” fragmented, and therefore irreducible to one fashion, construction, or fantasy of female or male ideality.

1.1 What Belongs in a Collection? The Tribuna’s Uneasy Neighborhood

If any eighteenth-century thing were to be considered radiant matter, it would have to be the *Venus de’ Medici*, which held court in the Tribuna from 1688 to 1800 and then again from 1815 to the present.¹² For over two hundred years, this chamber held Europe’s most famous art collection. “The Uffizi tribuna was begun in 1585 by Bernardo Buontalenti who succeeded Vasari (d. 1574) as architect of the Uffizi for Francesco de’ Medici”; the room was initially a private sanctuary that held Francesco’s exquisite art objects (Figure 1.2).¹³ Once open to the public, so renowned was this chamber that it was itself “collected”: From 1715 through 1793, at least seven great English houses had a “Tribuna,” and even more replicated its cupola.¹⁴ Those who sought to know, and feel, and *see* such sparklers found a small world where these splendors had their own agency and relationships. Certainly, this gallery became the room in which to linger, and its glorified *Venus* – manifesting the political, aesthetic, and spiritual – circulated, experiencing what Brown would call her “‘social life’ through diverse cultural fields.”¹⁵ She was visited by international travelers to Florence, ubiquitously copied, invited into conduct books as a spokeswoman for modesty, introduced into philosophical tracts as the premier

¹² The *Venus* is “a copy of a post-Praxitelean” work. See Hugh Honour, “Canova’s Statues of Venus,” *The Burlington Magazine* 114.835 (1972): 658–671, p. 668.

¹³ Sandra Millikin, “The Tribune in English Architecture,” *The Burlington Magazine* 112.808 (1970): 442–446, p. 445. Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny also trace the Tribuna’s history. See *Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture 1500–1900* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998). Also see Oliver Millar, *Zoffany and His Tribuna* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967), pp. 10–35.

¹⁴ For more detail, see Millikin’s essay. ¹⁵ *Other Things*, p. 221.



Figure 1.2 Bernardo Buontalenti, *The Tribuna* (1581–1583). The Wrestlers (deep left); Venus de' Medici (center); The Listening Slave (deep right). The Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Italy. Credit: dbtravel / Alamy Stock Photo.

example of proportion, taken on tours in travel guides as a standard of excellence, and insistently included in novels and poems.¹⁶

Tourists' reactions to the Medici *Venus* and to the *Tribuna* lead me to emphasize, as I do throughout *Embodied Experience*, the connections between and among things and humans. Much has been written on this statue and how it has been objectified, especially sexually: Caroline van Eck says, for example, that Edward Gibbon describes the *Venus* "as if she were a 'racehorse or cocotte.'"¹⁷ This section, however, spotlights the varying interactions – the ecstasy, the bewilderment, the disquiet – that the *Tribuna* and especially the *Venus* aroused in their viewers when they hoped for connection with her. There is no doubt that "the relation between a living being and its image . . . is an ambiguous, precarious relation, in which inanimate images turn out to possess the same agency

¹⁶ J. R. Hale tracks the statue's reception history. "Art and Audience: The Medici *Venus*, c.1750–c.1850," in *Italian Studies: An Annual Review*, ed. T. G. Griffith, C. Grayson, U. Limentaini, F. Haskell, and C. P. Brand (Leeds: Maney & Son, 1976), vol. 31, pp. 37–58.

¹⁷ *Art, Agency and Living Presence: From the Animated Image to the Excessive Object* (Berlin: Walder de Gruyter GmbH & Co KG, 2015), p. 103.

as the living beings they represent.”¹⁸ Wendy Steiner also theorizes human–thing interactions along these lines, though her topic is beauty, which she finds to be “an unstable property because it is not a property at all. It is the name of a particular interaction between two beings, a ‘self’ and an ‘Other.’”¹⁹ Writing about relationships with art in general, Steiner claims that

dominant as the perceiver may appear in the act of judgment, the aesthetic object turns out to be no shrinking violet. In the course of aesthetic experience, the perceiver may be overwhelmed by his “mere object” The experience of beauty involves an exchange of power, and as such, it is often disorienting, a mix of humility and exaltation, subjugation and liberation, awe and mystified pleasure.²⁰

While Steiner underscores the power relations between object and subject, I emphasize the perplexing “mix” of human–nonhuman engagements between the *Venus* and her perceivers – anger, ecstasy, or drunkenness – and between observers and the Tribuna, as they embrace certain pieces that they feel are singularly perfect and reject others that do not have the right to belong. These reactions arise from the coilings between witness and statue, from the persistent *need* to connect to *something* outside of the self. And rarely indeed are these experiences comfortable or observers complacent.

To understand reactions to the Tribuna and to the *Venus*, we must envision what the gallery looked like originally, since it has changed over time. In contrast to a modern museum’s typical sterility, the room was lavishly decorated and even the floor, resembling sacred spaces of the time and earlier,²¹ was gorgeously made of “polished polychrome marble” (Figure 1.2).²² James Wilson (1816) sees “an octagonal room, lighted by eight windows, immediately under the vaulted roof. . . . The crimson velvet of the walls is almost wholly concealed by pictures, and the choicest

¹⁸ Van Eck, pp. 47–48.

¹⁹ *Venus in Exile: The Rejection of Beauty in Twentieth-Century Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), pp. xxi, xxiii.

²⁰ *Venus in Exile*, p. xxi.

²¹ On sacred marble floors, see William Tronzo, “Justinian’s Hagia Sophia, Angels and Restlessness,” in *Radical Marble: Architectural Innovation from Antiquity to the Present*, ed. J. Nicholas Napoli, and Tronzo (New York: Routledge, 2018), pp. 23–42. He points to the belief that “marble in churches was like the Acheiropoietos,” something so astonishing it seems “not made by human hands” (p. 31). This assessment resembles those of the *Venus de’ Medici*.

²² Haskell and Penny, p. 54.

examples of sculpture form a magic interior circle round the saloon.”²³ During the eighteenth century, the paintings of over twenty artists – including Titian, Rubens, Leonardo, Holbein, Raphael, and Rembrandt – jam-packed the gallery.

The Tribuna, a hybrid collection, was arranged ahistorically and defined *belonging with* capaciously. Including things dating from the fifteenth through the eighteenth centuries and from cities all over Italy and Europe, it ignored the *disegno/colore paragone*, paired Renaissance and Baroque works, and included secular and religious topics. Added to this were six classical sculptures; furniture, such as a cabinet in the form of a tabernacle, Bergeret de Grancourt (1773) described as sumptuously decorated with “*rubis, topazes, saphirs, [et] émeraudes,*” and smaller items like minerals, goblets, and rock crystal vases, as well as numerous statuettes and miniatures in jasper.²⁴ The collection had become less varied by 1794, when Lord Palmerston, who had first seen the Tribuna in 1763, “found the Gallery much altered, the new director having changed y^c Situation of most of the Pictures upon an Idea of arranging them according to the Schools.”²⁵ What remains today are the “rich cornice of the room and the gold and mother-of-pearl arabesques on the blue lapis-lazuli of the cupola,” but many of the features that gave the room its disorienting magnificence have disappeared: The paintings are reduced in number and gone is “the skirting-board with the frieze, designed by Ligozzi, of birds, fish, shells, plants, and stones, and the shelf with drawers, which ran round the room supported on carved and gilded consoles.”²⁶ The chamber’s dense visual strata from floor to ceiling would have stimulated the eye but also fragmented attempts to view the gallery as a whole.

Perhaps because of this galvanizing diversity of art objects, what objects could coexist with each other in the Tribuna emerged as a combusive topic. For some tourists, the “ambiance” Leo Spitzer defines as “an anti-Cartesian desire to penetrate *‘les sombres tunnels de l’inexprimable’*”²⁷ simply embodied chaos; others saw there a neighborhood. To discuss this, I return to Kenneth Reinhard’s theoretical musings on comparative literature. As I said in the [Introduction](#), he coins the phrase “traumatic

²³ *A Journal of Two Successive Tours upon the Continent in the Years 1816, 1817, and 1818* (London: W. Blackwood, 1820), vol. 1, p. 432.

²⁴ *Voyage d’Italie, 1773–1774* (Paris: Editions Michel de Romilly, 1948), p. 128.

²⁵ Quoted in Millar, p. 34; he cites from manuscript. ²⁶ Millar, pp. 10–12.

²⁷ “Milieu and Ambiance: An Essay in Historical Semantics,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 3.1 (September 1942): 1–42, p. 1. He quotes from Karl Michaëlsson’s “Ambiance,” in *Studia neophilologica* XII (1939–1940): 91–119.

proximity,” which suggests a “comparative literature otherwise than comparison . . . , a mode of reading logically and ethically prior to similitude, a reading in which texts are not so much grouped into ‘families’ defined by similarity and difference, as into ‘neighborhoods’ determined by accidental contiguity, genealogical isolation, and ethical encounter.”²⁸ Here he energizes the discipline by rethinking how we might group varying texts. The Tribuna, I suggest, functions analogously: Though all representations of “high” Western art, each unique thing gives way to a surprisingly mixed “neighborhood.”²⁹

That these paratactically gathered items represented excellence but were intrinsically different, led – even after the room had been “cleaned up” – to Joseph Forsyth’s crisis, when he exclaims, “[w]hat a disparity of forms in a select cabinet! There every picture is a separate unit, and bears no relation to its neighbour”; and no “authority,” neither “Homer nor Virgil . . . nor Canova, nor the Venus which this Gallery has lost . . . can defend a mixture so barbarous.”³⁰ Distinguishing something more baroque than classical, Forsyth’s observation of “barbarousness” which succumbs to no “authority” recalls most positively matter’s own turbulence. When Diana Coole discusses Deleuze, Merleau-Ponty, and the baroque, she notes how “matter swirls and metamorphoses,” forming “tiny folds that sustain their internal integrity across a continuous fabric of folds within folds.”³¹ This is the animation that the room holds and that Forsyth resists: For him, it does not have the right to be “mixed.”

“A continuous fabric of folds within folds” in fact recalls the fantastic eclecticism found in Johann Zoffany’s *The Tribuna of the Uffizi* (Figure 1.3). Many have discussed this painting’s “indecorous” and problematic sexual politics;³² I introduce it here because it offers a kinesthetic

²⁸ “Kant with Sade, Lacan with Levinas,” p. 785.

²⁹ Of course, some tried to organize the room, claiming an underlying structure dependent on the fact that each art object was thought to be “the best of the best,” with everything in the room, as James Fenimore Cooper said, “a *chef-d’oeuvre* in its way.” See *Excursions in Italy* (London: Richard Bentley, 1838), vol. 1, p. 43.

³⁰ *Remarks on Antiquities, Arts and Letters, during an Excursion in Italy, in the Years 1802 and 1803*, 4th ed. (London: John Murray, 1835), pp. 39, 41. Because the French imprisoned Forsyth from 1803 to 1814, this was not published until 1814. Compare his reaction to Adolf Theodor Michaelis’s later response to Soane’s museum, where “[t]his labyrinth stuffed full of fragments is the most tasteless arrangement that can be seen.” See *Ancient Marbles in Great Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1882), p. 164.

³¹ “The Inertia of Matter and the Generativity of Flesh,” in Coole and Frost, p. 111.

³² Queen Charlotte commissioned this painting, but finding it “improper” would “not suffer the picture to be placed in any of her apartments.” See Joseph Farington, *Diary* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1924), vol. 3, p. 34. Quoted in Millar, p. 33. Pascoe discusses this painting in relationship to Queen Charlotte as a collector. See also Ann Bermingham, who argues that in this painting, “the



Figure 1.3 Johann Zoffany, *The Tribuna of the Uffizi* (1780). Courtesy of the Royal Collection Trust / © His Majesty King Charles III 2023.

composition that recreates some tourists' sense of being overwhelmed by the "folds within folds" as artistic styles and genres become close neighbors, and visiting connoisseurs crowd tightly in this aesthetic *cul-de-sac*. Millar interprets the painting as "a mixture of indefatigable industry, cupidity, self-seeking and imagination."³³ Rather than a literal depiction, Zoffany's *Tribuna* was, in Wolfgang Ernst's words, "a marvelous misreflection."³⁴ And yet *The Morning Chronicle* wrote in 1780 that "this

aestheticizing gaze of the connoisseur . . . both masks and unmasks the work of art's commodity status and its fetishistic meaning as a sign of power and prestige." See "Elegant Females and Gentlemen Connoisseurs: The Commerce in Culture and Self-Image in Eighteenth-Century England," in *The Consumption of Culture, 1600–1800: Image, Object, Text*, ed. Bermingham and John Brewer (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 508.

³³ Zoffany and His *Tribuna*, p. 34.

³⁴ "Frames at Work: Museological Imagination and Historical Discourse in Neoclassical Britain," *The Art Bulletin* 75.3 (1993): 481–498. For Ernst, Zoffany's *Tribuna* provides "a rewriting of museal space according to the contemporary museological discourse which was 'conversational' by definition" (p. 491).

accurate picture has the same effect on the spectator which the gallery itself has on first entering it; the multitude of excellencies contained in it, dissipate our ideas, and it requires some time to arrange them before we can coolly examine the merit of any individual piece.”³⁵ Conversely, how can one “restore” oneself after experiencing this room? Thrusting forth a shattering series of images, it forces our eyes to dart from one figure, painting, or sculpture to another, giving the modern viewer an inkling of what it was like to inhabit the eighteenth-century Tribuna.

Rather than registering chaos, some travel accounts saw the room offering neighborly, though often tense, relations. Contrasting to Forsyth’s discomfort, and in one sense more in accord with Zoffany’s hectically swarming humans and things, Edward Gibbon (1764) listens for encounters between community members. First characterizing the *Venus Victrix* [the *Belvedere Venus*] as a “large hussy” in contrast to the Medici *Venus*, he then notes paradoxically that although the *Venus d’Urania* “is smaller than the Venus de’ Medici,” she “supports” her “formidable neighborhood . . . far better than her Companion.”³⁶ When he wonders why Titian’s voluptuous *Venus of Urbino* (see painting at near center of Zoffany’s canvas in [Figure 1.3](#)) has not stirred the Medici *Venus* “to feel more [intensely] the movements that [the painting] inspires,”³⁷ he experiences frustration that there is not more exchange and consideration of embodiment in the neighborhood.

Hester Thrale Piozzi, in *Observations and Reflections Made in the Course of a Journey through France, Italy, and Germany* (1789), also thinks of the room as a vibrant neighborhood, but for her each occupant remains sensitive to the other:

Titian’s recumbent beauty, glowing with colour and animated by the warmest expression, and the Greek statue of symmetrical perfection and fineness of form inimitable . . . seem placed near each other at once to mock all human praise and defy all future imitation. The listening slave [Arrotino] appears disturbed by the blows of the wrestlers in the same room, and hearkens with an attentive impatience, such as one has often felt when unable to distinguish the words one wishes to repeat. You really then do not seem as if you were alone in this tribune, so animated is every figure, so full of life and soul.³⁸

³⁵ *The Morning Chronicle*, May 20, 1780. Quoted in Millar, who says that Zoffany “created a vivid impression of the original idea behind the creation of the room itself” (p. 34).

³⁶ *Gibbon’s Journey from Geneva to Rome*, ed. Georges A. Bonnard (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1961), p. 181. The *Journey* is written in French. My translations.

³⁷ *Gibbon’s Journey*, pp. 186–187. ³⁸ (London: A. Strahan, 1789), vol. 1, pp. 302–303.

Here, the statues broadcast their own agency as they interact: Political and physical difference unnerves the collection's residents, the wrestlers' passion and noise bully the Arrotino, and while the *Venus* and Titian's "beauty" engage in an apparent beauty "contest," still they band together to humble the humans visiting the room and taunt future artists. Piozzi's sense of these statues' agency anticipates *Corinne* when the narrator tells us that the Vatican holds "a collection of sculptured images of animals and reptiles, but, by chance, the statue of Tiberius is in the middle of this court. It was not a planned juxtaposition. These marble statues have arranged themselves around their master on their own" (C, p. 141). Piozzi and Staël, conscious of the rhythmic vitality in each of their respective rooms, both affirm the possibility that without any human intervention each neighbor responds to the vibrational pull of the other.

Highlighting each thing's sentience, Piozzi becomes an optimist in contrast to her future (and Futurist) opposite, F. T. Marinetti, who most dramatically claims, "[m]useums: cemeteries! . . . Identical, surely, in the sinister promiscuity of so many bodies unknown to one another. Museums: public dormitories where one lies forever beside hated or unknown beings."³⁹ Rather than experiencing the alienated and paralytic loathing Marinetti identifies between things, Piozzi sees beings whose existences pulse with intense, knowing engagement and longing for belonging.⁴⁰ Because the gallery's pastiche-like nature stimulates ethical encounters in the things' varying experiences, I suggest that her gaze does not displace these art works' agency; instead, Piozzi evidently feels – and values – each thing's force.

Others reject any neighborly *belonging with* by claiming that the *Venus de' Medici* is not so much a *part* of the social goings-on but rather the most compelling figure in this Tribuna, a view that drives the community into a state of "hyper-competition."⁴¹ De Grancourt sees six statues, but among them "*la Vénus de Médicis . . . surtout est le chef-d'œuvre de l'art*" ("the

³⁹ "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism," in *Let's Murder the Moonshine: Selected Writings*, ed. R. W. Flint and trans. Flint and Arthur A. Coppotelli (Los Angeles: Sun & Moon Classics, 1972, 1991), p. 50. Quoted in Calum Storrie, *The Delirious Museum: A Journey from the Louvre to Las Vegas* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris & Co., 2007), p. 13; ellipses original.

⁴⁰ In "Frames at Work," Ernst observes that Soane's museum is a "self-referential universe"; although he sees this as a unique occurrence, clearly many tourists to the Tribuna reacted similarly, and while I agree that Soane imploded "the museum frame" (p. 481), I think the Tribuna anticipated this.

⁴¹ See James H. Mittelman, *Hyper-conflict: Globalization and Insecurity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010) pp. 4, 13, who argues that hyperconflict, trying to ensure "security," actually renders global relations more insecure. I'm arguing that tourists, trying to organize and "secure" the room by rendering one thing dominant over others in fact generate more chaos and insecurity.

Venus de Medici, above all, is the masterpiece of art”).⁴² Thus, the *Arrotino*, the *Wrestlers*, the *Dancing Faun*, the *Venus Belvedere*, and the *Celestial Venus* become second-rate attractions in contrast to the celebrated goddess. Indeed, it comes to pass that she, and she alone, has the right to be there, an attitude that resists multiplicity, establishes hierarchical order, emphasizes possession over belonging, and causes a backlash against the Venuses that had originally lived in the neighborhood. In so doing, these Medici Venus worshippers often employ a taxonomy that defines the collection in terms of this one singular object, rendering her alone the thing that defined space and time in this chamber, even when she was absent from it, as she was between 1800 and 1815. So lauded was her unique power that she inadvertently effected a traumatic violence against her neighbors. For example, Joseph Addison (1703) remarks wryly that “[t]here is another Venus in that same Circle, that would make a good Figure any where else.”⁴³ Anna Riggs Miller (1777) notes that the *Urania* or the *Celestial Venus* “would appear to much greater advantage, had the Venus of Medici still remained undiscovered.”⁴⁴ And Arthur Young (1789) exclaims that “[i]n the same apartment there are other statues, but, in the presence of Venus, who is it that can regard them?”⁴⁵ This emphasis on her singularity over either baroque “chaos” or thematic sequentiality eventually led to forced emigration – a literal depopulation and de-diversification occurred by 1782 – when the Medici goddess exerted enough supremacy to exile the other two Venuses into other museum rooms.

Tourists themselves become the collection’s collectors when they “de-collect” the room by ignoring almost everything but the *Venus*. In doing so, they create another syntax, one defying the singular plural, wherein the statue dominates her environs, and her neighbors and her viewers become her minions. Gibbon himself spent a lot of time “at the feet of the Venus of Medicis”; Mary Shelley, in *Rambles in Germany and Italy in 1840, 1842, and 1843*, distinguishes the *Venus* as the “matchless statue of the Queen of Beauty [who] reigns over the whole.”⁴⁶ Given that in her *History of a Six*

⁴² *Voyage d'Italie*, p. 127.

⁴³ *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy, in the years 1701, 1702, and 1703*, 2nd ed. (London: J. Tonson, 1718), p. 279.

⁴⁴ *Letters from Italy* (London: Edward and Charles Dilly, 1777), vol. 1, p. 389.

⁴⁵ *Travels during the Years 1787, 1788, and 1789*, 2nd ed. (London: W. Richardson, 1794), vol. 1, p. 248.

⁴⁶ *The Autobiographies of Edward Gibbon*, ed. John Murray (John Murray: London, 1897), p. 267. Shelley, *Rambles* (London: E. Moxon, 1844), vol. 2, p. 152.

Weeks' Tour (1817) Shelley refers to Mont Blanc as the “queen of all,”⁴⁷ naming the *Venus* as such in her *Rambles* shows the power the author accords to this statue. Belongings that had belonged with each other now belonged apart, except in contention.

1.2 The Pleasure of Measuring the “Humanness” of the *Venus de' Medici*

Observers simultaneously idealize and humanize the *Venus* by seeing her as alive, a response I chart in [Chapter 2](#), where Corinne considers things as animate. This slippage is often seen as reductive: that confusing the two forgets a thing's representational status, or that such a response, flouting modernist doctrines of disinterest, merely reveals naiveté. Conversely, many scholars, myself included, locate complex and positive reasons for humans' desire to connect to the nonhuman. From the late seventeenth century, “anthropological and ultimately psychological theories [developed] about what makes . . . art works exercise [so much] agency or excessiveness that viewers [come to] believe they possess significant characteristics of life”; this shifts in the nineteenth century, when such magical thinking “became increasingly discredited and marginalized in aesthetics, art history and the museum setting.”⁴⁸ W. J. T. Mitchell explains that art's seemingly magical power leads to a “double consciousness,” for viewers “behave as if pictures were alive, as if works of art had minds of their own,” while they simultaneously discern that of course this cannot be true.⁴⁹ For the anthropologist Alfred Gell, the arts participate in a “vast . . . technical system” which he calls “the technology of enchantment”; here an observer's knowledge of artists' potency and the materials they use inspires awe.⁵⁰ Indeed, those seeing the Medici *Venus* wonder how the sculptor – an “occult technician”⁵¹ – could have rendered stone into breathing, pulsing matter.

I argue that it was the *Venus*'s life force that magnetized tourists. So, while agreeing with van Eck, Mitchell, and Gell that art's magically enchanting powers seduce, I am most drawn to Daniel N. Stern's ideas that, biologically, vitality arouses our attention; the “four daughters of movement,” to use his phrase, galvanize our responsiveness toward

⁴⁷ (London: T. Hookam, 1817), p. 94. ⁴⁸ Van Eck, pp. 17, 15. ⁴⁹ Mitchell, p. 7.

⁵⁰ “The Technology of Enchantment and the Enchantment of Technology,” *Anthropology, Art, and Aesthetics*, ed. Jeremy Coote and Anthony Shelton (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), pp. 43, 51.

⁵¹ Gell, p. 49.

dynamic mobility: The first “daughter” “unfolds in . . . time”; the second brings “with it the perception . . . of force(s) ‘behind’ or ‘within’ the movement”; this kinesis thirdly demarcates “a sense of ‘space’”; and the fourth daughter of movement “has directionality” and “intentionality” – it has somewhere to go; it is not inert.⁵² This theory of vitality as irresistible perhaps partially explains why the *Venus* thrilled so many observers, for in her composition, these “four daughters” present themselves: Her arms, legs, knee, and her head advance temporally since an action propels her; onlookers perceive the physical impetus – they notice the musculature and sense the blood flow that galvanizes her; and her command of the room establishes her in space. I would further add that among these visitors there seems to be a primal need to experience the *Venus*’s nonhuman life force, and to feel, even if momentarily, that they live with what is not human. To that end, I analyze ways tourists tried to achieve this inkling of companionship.

In *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*, Byron’s emphasis on the Medici *Venus*’s “blood” and “pulse” alerts us to her vitality. In fact, she metamorphoses before one’s eyes, becoming the nonhuman turning human as “she loves in stone” and we “inhale” her “ambrosial” breath.⁵³ He asks, as others had before him, how a viewer’s equilibrium can be restored when in her presence:

We gaze and turn away, and know not where,
Dazzled and drunk with beauty, till the heart
Reels with its fulness; there—for ever there—
Chained to the chariot of triumphal Art,
We stand as captives, and would not depart.
Away!—there need no words nor terms precise,
The paltry jargon of the marble mart,
Where Pedantry gulls Folly—we have eyes:
Blood, pulse, and breast confirm the Dardan Shepherd’s prize.⁵⁴

Under the statue’s enchantment, “captives” long to belong with – and would never “depart” from – this lively matter, for though enchained, they become more animated, her movement inspiring them: They look and

⁵² *Forms of Vitality: Exploring Dynamic Experience in Psychology, the Arts, Psychotherapy, and Development* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 4.

⁵³ *Poetical Works*, ed. Frederick Page and John Jump (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), Canto IV, XLIX, ll. 433, 434, 435. See Maureen McCue’s excellent discussion of Byron’s response to the *Venus de’ Medici* in *British Romanticism and the Reception of Italian Old Master Art, 1793–1840* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 112–115.

⁵⁴ Canto IV, L.

then look away, and their hearts “reel,” as if dancing. Movement ensues again with “Away!” as the narrator exiles the pedants and their static “paltry jargon,” but those with “eyes” feel the *Venus*’s heart pulsing beneath her marble complexion and, in response, their own blood beats faster.

Spectators wanted to interact with her skin – her marble – since it, resembling sunlight, evidently offered some living gift. Like a diamond’s sparkling quivers, this material is brightly luminous – in fact, as Michael Greenhalgh explains, in Greek “*marmairo*” means “to shine”; one is drawn to “its beauty, solidity, and longevity, its colours and polishes, and its ability to reflect light.”⁵⁵ Viewed in the round, the Medici *Venus*’s radiant Parian marble, semi-translucent and glowing, stimulated caressing, another means of breaking down this human–nonhuman binary and offering an *omnium-gatherum* of meanings. Its reflective material compelled spectators to agree that the sculptor, by giving the statue’s surface such shining brilliance, had fused the gap between marble and human. Here the emphasis was on *le sentiment de la chair*: “feeling” the statue’s responsive flesh, not simply by looking at it but by stroking it and, as I will discuss shortly, measuring its proportions.

Perhaps no one more strikingly portrayed the *Venus* as a biotic life force, an organic mélange among marble, human, and nature than Johann Joachim Winckelmann in his famous account from 1774, where she resembles

a rose which, after a lovely dawn, unfolds its leaves to the rising sun; resembles one who is passing from an age which is hard and somewhat harsh—like fruits before their perfect ripeness—into another, in which all the vessels of the animal system are beginning to dilate, and the breasts to enlarge, as her bosom indicates—which, in fact, is more developed than is usual in tender maidens.⁵⁶

For Winckelmann, the sculptor has created in the *Venus* a resonating microsystem of the evolution of life in the kingdoms of flora and fauna, one that fluidly slips into an almost medical assessment of a “tender maiden’s” form. The tourist Anna Miller evinces cognizance of the sculptor’s power when she writes that the *Venus*’s “flesh seems flexible, and the

⁵⁵ *Marble Past, Monumental Present: Building with Antiquities in the Mediaeval Mediterranean* (Leiden and Boston, MA: Brill, 2009), p. 7.

⁵⁶ *The History of Ancient Art among the Greeks*, trans. G. Henry Lodge (London: John Chapman, 1850), p. 123.

softness and tenderness, yet justness of the muscles, is truly admirable.”⁵⁷ Young senses that “the cold marble seems to acquire the warmth of nature, and promises to yield to the impression of one’s hand.”⁵⁸ Gibbon describes the act of looking at the *Venus* as “[c]’est la sensation la plus voluptueuse que mon oeil ait jamais éprouvée. Les contours les plus moelleux, les plus elegans, une rondeur douce et pleine, la molasse de la chair communiquée au marbre, et la fermeté qu’on desire encore dans cette chair exprimée sans dureté” (“the most voluptuous sensation that my eye has ever experienced. The softest, the most elegant contours, a sweet and full roundness, the softness of flesh communicated to marble and the firmness one still desires in this flesh expressed without hardness”).⁵⁹ These somatosensory observations about the *Venus*’s “vessels,” elegance, “flexible” flesh, “warmth,” “contours,” and soft, yet firm “roundness,” all communicated in marble, speak to how these viewers experience her as thrillingly *alive* and *vital*.⁶⁰

Her movements seemed so alive that the living wanted to imitate them. *The Elements of Dramatic Criticism* (1775) urges actors to study the *Venus* to acquire “all the assistances” they could “from art, compatible with the nature of [their] profession” since the *Venus* and other statues guide actors to “adopt” their “attitudes with ease, as well as to be acquainted with the justness and truth, of their principles.”⁶¹ Her *élan vital* explains why Erasmus Darwin (1796) claimed that she represented healthy womanhood: In lauding the “easy grace” of the *Venus de’ Medici* and suggesting her as an archetype for British women’s posture, one preferable to the “stiff erect attitude taught by some modern dancing masters,” he renders the statue’s vitality an exemplar of English and female national identity.⁶²

Viewing, however, was apparently insufficient. One wanted the right to touch her too, and the measuring of the *Venus*’s body parts, an activity that

⁵⁷ *Letters from Italy*, vol. 1, p. 388. ⁵⁸ *Travels during the Years 1787, 1788, and 1789*, pp. 247–248.

⁵⁹ *Geneva to Rome*, p. 179. Joseph Luzzi claims that here “Gibbon unsettles the kinds of divisions between art and experience painstakingly erected by Addison, . . . imply[ing] that a purely technical analysis of the work would cheat its riveting effect on the viewer’s imagination.” See *Romantic Europe and the Ghost of Italy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), p. 81.

⁶⁰ I will return on Section 1.3 to the topic of the *Venus* as sexually desirable. Drawing on Solomon-Godeau’s “The Other Side of Venus,” I suggest that French, post-1820 “production of engraved and lithographed nudes, pinups, images of demimondaines and other female celebrities” could be applied to reactions to the *Venus*, thereby pushing Solomon-Godeau’s timeline back to the eighteenth century. The *Venus* resembles these illustrations insofar as they “are the harbingers of a visual culture in which the notion of modernity and the manufacture of desire on which commodity culture depends are jointly secured by the linchpin of a femininity explicitly put on display” (“The Other Side of Venus: The Visual Economy of Feminine Display,” in de Grazia and Furlough, pp. 116, 116–117).

⁶¹ William Cooke (London: G. Kearsly and G. Robinson, 1775), pp. 199, 201.

⁶² *Zoonomia; or the Laws of Organic Life* (London: J. Johnson, 1796), vol. 2, p. 91.

affirmed her as a living woman they could intermingle pleasurably with, inspired that physical contact. This experience could be termed “haptic viewing.”⁶³ Thomas Watkins (1794) savors “the magic sweetness of her countenance: the proportion and delicacy of her limbs [and] . . . the softness and fleshy semblance of the marble.”⁶⁴ In rendering contiguous the *Venus*’s “flesh” and her delicate “proportion[s],” tourists recognized that measuring the statue was part of an interactive process that positioned beholders, paradoxically, in physical, intimate contact with “perfection.” Addison’s *Interesting Anecdotes* (1793) asserts that “the general cause of beauty . . . is a proportion, or an union and harmony, in all parts of the body”; and of course “[t]he finest example that can be seen . . . is the Venus of Medici.”⁶⁵ Speaking to the persistence of this statue’s “perfection,” Florence Courtenay (1922) included the *Venus*’s proportions (so women could check theirs against hers) and referred to her as the “Ideal Feminine Form.”⁶⁶ Thus, in belonging with the *Venus*, viewers might experience glorious excess: She has exceeded art and reality in her perfection, while being approachable enough to “yield to the impression of one’s hand,”⁶⁷ her flesh rousing familiarity and interdependence with the nonhuman; touching her, paradoxically, did not function as a “benchmark of cognitive reliability” or “enforc[e] ontological distinctions between the ‘true’ and the ‘true-to-life,’”⁶⁸ but made the *Venus* seem more life-like.

Because calculating her proportions requires touching her “parts,” this measuring exercise potentially inspired viewers to avoid binaries and let their senses and intellect work in enjoyable synchrony. Of course, given that the “flesh” was so lusciously appealing, measuring may have comprised a masking technique for agalmotophilia, experiencing a titillating attraction to the statue. I acknowledge that the *Venus*’s “pure harmony of proportion” could “safely neutraliz[e] [her] sensuality”⁶⁹ since such practice seems to reduce the statue to numbers, a phenomenon Gérard Audran’s engraving illustrates (Figure 1.4), where lines and statistics tattoo

⁶³ Verity Platt and Michael Squire, “Getting to Grips with Classical Art: Rethinking the Haptics of Graeco-Roman Visual Culture,” in *Touch and the Ancient Senses*, ed. Alex Purves (London and New York: Routledge, 2018), p. 97, emphasis original. The authors note, however, that art historians generally use this phrase to describe only “a visual awareness of material properties such as volume, density, space and texture” (p. 97).

⁶⁴ *Travels through Switzerland, Italy, Sicily*, 2nd ed. (London: J. Owen, 1794), vol. 1, p. 304.

⁶⁵ (London, 1797), p. 41.

⁶⁶ *Physical Beauty: How to Develop and Preserve It* (New York: Social Culture Publications, 1922), p. 6.

⁶⁷ Young, *Travels during the Years 1787, 1788, and 1789*, vol. 1, p. 248. ⁶⁸ Platt and Squire, p. 93.

⁶⁹ Barrell, “The Dangerous Goddess: Masculinity, Prestige, and the Aesthetic in Early Eighteenth-Century Britain,” *Cultural Critique* 12 (Spring 1989): 101–131, p. 128.

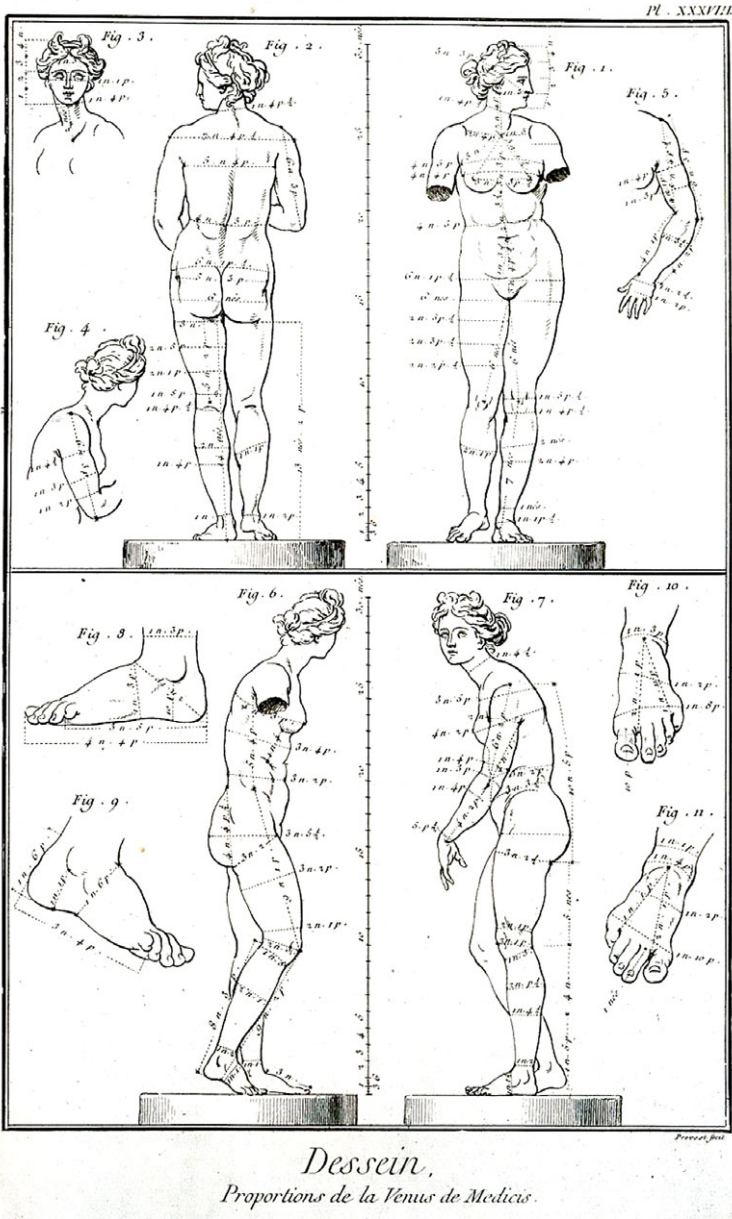


Figure 1.4 Gérard Audran, *The Venus de' Medici* (c. 1690). Engraving.
Courtesy of the Wellcome Collection.

her body. And yet, as Audran shows, these were measurements done in the round and so minutely apportioned that one could linger on the *Venus's* most private parts. Moreover, the detachment allegedly fueling this exercise paradoxically sanctioned gallery-goers to touch the thing that seemed already so touchable as it literally brought viewers' fingers into intimate convergence with the *Venus's* beautiful "skin," a practice which augmented the sensory quality of vision. I emphasize, though, that any of these reactions were possible (as well as many more) since there was not only one kind of tourist – a randy heterosexual male, who, in handling the *Venus*, sexually exploited her; after all, women participated in this pleasuring as well. For example, Miller, measuring the statue, efficiently reports that she turns from the "top of her hair to her heel," and then gauges the *Venus's* other parts, such as the ankles, wrists, waist, breast, and throat.⁷⁰ In other words, there were many ways to coexperience her vitality.

Because measurers were engaging in a thing-theory practice with the *Venus*, it makes sense that they often came up with varying calculations as to her proportions (hence the trial's subject this chapter's *préambule* discusses). These deviations provide evidence that computing the "private" parts of anyone or anything might agitate or distract the measurer, who faces concrete questions about what those proportions might mean for them and for the matter they touch. Measurement can be construed as a "meeting of the 'natural' and the 'social,' . . . a potent moment in the construction of scientific knowledge – . . . an instance where matter and meaning meet in a very literal sense."⁷¹ Of course, the "natural" here in the *Tribuna* already constitutes the "social," but in these "experiments," wherein differing measurements arise, collaborations between statue and measurer demonstrate how "the world" is not "populated with individual things with their own independent sets of determinate properties."⁷² Thus these differences and these varying reactions to the statue underscore the drive to escape from one's tiny human orbit and approach the nonhuman.

Measuring and pleasuring; sex and spirit. Doubtless, when oglers attributed nefarious, sexually manipulative intentions lurking beneath the *Venus's* perfect proportions, they offered, to anticipate *Corinne*, a more

⁷⁰ *Letters from Italy*, vol. 1, p. 387. Marian Hobson superbly speculates on this interest in measuring and recording one's results, asking if it constituted some kind of "intellectual graffiti" that marked "I too was here"? Or is there some kind of anxiety about the source of the variation? And about variation in the actual measures used? – less than twenty years later, France will adopt unified decimal measures." See "Measuring Statues, or, Special Neutrality," *Paragraph* 27.1 (2004): 33–49, pp. 36–37.

⁷¹ Barad, p. 67. ⁷² Barad, p. 19.

“modern” perspective of alienation and dualism wherein form and content and sexuality and virtue battle. Conversely, humans interlacing with this statue could have sparked a way of measuring and interacting with vitality of another kind – the divine sort, given that classical architecture linked perfect proportions to the cosmic order.⁷³ And while one cannot easily measure a *building* designed according to such laws, running hands over a human-sized statue allows one to read, braille-like, heavenly proportions. Measuring the *Venus*, then, offered a potential benefit: harmonizing with her balanced ratios, which echo the equilibrium of the universe. The cult-like context of viewing and measuring this statue in fact recalls how in ancient Greece, “the ritual act of touching statues of the gods . . . provided an opportunity to make tactile contact with the divine, reinforcing an understanding of the statue as divinity.”⁷⁴ One of the goals of *Embodied Experience* is to study how authors connect or disconnect sexuality and virtue, so here I suggest that these two impulses – one spiritual and one sensuous – belonging with each other and *felt* simultaneously could have generated compound pleasure.

Section 1.3 of this chapter scrutinizes responses to the statue’s sexuality and gender as I examine how the *Venus* was interpreted as having intentionality – that fourth daughter of movement – as having motivations that for some fulfilled (and for others betrayed) expectations of that specifically female, and paradoxical, human performance known as modesty.

1.3 Something in the Way She Moves: The *Venus de’ Medici’s* Gendered History

As I have explored, observers do more than merely project their desires and fears onto the *Venus de’ Medici* – they engage in thing-theory practice when they express a need to belong with her: They ask what she “means” to say; they want to know the source of her vitality (the marble, the sculptor, her movement, her own volition); they want to touch her flesh and embrace her body; and they want to feel the balance of the universe beneath her – and consequently their own – skin. Here, and in *Embodied*

⁷³ For Vitruvius, nature is designed such “that its members are duly proportioned to the frame as a whole, . . . [so] that in perfect buildings, the different members must be in exact symmetrical relations to the whole general scheme,” *The Ten Books of Architecture*, trans. Morris Hicky Morgan (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: Humphrey Milford; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1914), book 1, chapter 2, para. 4. Also see Vernon Minor, *Art History’s History* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1994), p. 37.

⁷⁴ Platt and Squire, p. 85.

Experience as a whole, I elucidate how hoping and trying to bridge the human and nonhuman is a good thing, though viewers could never know how the statue feels about them or what her discomfiting and thrilling discoveries might be. Wanting matter to matter functions as a prerequisite for eighteenth-century debates about whether the *Venus* conformed to female gender ideals. In contemplating *why* she spins the way she does, her head turning to the left and her body to the right in a chiasmic rhythm, beholders also queried her “morality.” Indeed, very few statues’ gestures or expressions have been scrutinized as thoroughly as the *Venus*’s for their intentions, as onlookers asked, “is she modest?” or “is she coy?” Assigning such agency and self-referentiality to the statue places her within the perspectives of eighteenth-century British and French fashions in gender taxonomy. At least two factors influenced the dispute: her perfect body measurements and her movement in space.

On the one hand, her perfect proportions – the origin of her “perfect beauty,” as Reynolds makes clear – evidently guarantee her morality, since, given the *Venus*’s classical origins, her physical form reflects her essence.⁷⁵ This complies with classical theories of proportion and symmetry. As Vitruvius writes (about architecture) eurythmy (visual harmony) arises from “beauty and fitness in the adjustments of the members.”⁷⁶ On the other hand, something in the way she moves catapults discord as spectators respond to her. For James Beattie (1783) her visual vocabulary offers universal knowledge of morality, since her “bending, shrinking form” expresses “conscious beauty united with modesty”; such doubling arises because “our knowledge of the influence of human thoughts upon the human body . . . enables us to discern these meanings in [her] attitudes.”⁷⁷ Edmund Burke, among others, offers full accolades for her morals, which

⁷⁵ *Sir Joshua Reynolds’s Discourses*, ed. Edward Gilpin Johnson (Chicago: A. C. McClurg, 1891), p. 242. Polykleitos’ *Kanon*, a treatise on perfect proportions in sculpture, illustrated his theory of proportion in his statue of the *Doryphoros* (c. 440 BCE), which combines “physical and spiritual beauty” achieved through a “harmony of movement and between the individual bodily members” using “a carefully thought-out system of mathematical calculations.” See Dimitris Damaskos, “Free-standing and Relief Sculpture,” in *A Companion to Greek Art*, vol. 1, ed. Tyler Jo Smith and Dimitris Plantzos (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), p. 116.

⁷⁶ *Ten Books of Architecture*, book 1, chapter 2, para. 3. He continues: Proportion

is found when the members of a work are of a height suited to their breadth, of a breadth suited to their length, and, in a word, when they all correspond symmetrically. Symmetry is a proper agreement between the members of the work itself, and relation between the different parts and the whole general scheme . . . Thus in the human body there is a kind of symmetrical harmony between forearm, foot, palm, finger, and other small parts.

⁷⁷ *Dissertations Moral and Critical* (London: W. Strahan, 1783), p. 123.

he finds her body embodies: “[T]his roundness, this delicacy of attitude and motion” in which “all the magic of grace consists, and what is called its *je ne sais quoi* . . . will be obvious to any observer who considers attentively the Venus de Medici.”⁷⁸ Conversely, the Earl Bishop of Bristol and Derry condemned the statue in 1794 as “*détestable – l’attitude d’une Coquette ou d’une Putain*,” a prostitute, no less.⁷⁹

While it is not precisely “obvious” what the Venus’s movement represents, it is her spiraling – the moment when she tries to move out of her kinesphere, shifting her weight by lifting her foot – that stimulates perceivers to interact with her.⁸⁰ In order to demonstrate her refractive energies and to explore the ways her mobility in space led observers to examine her moral intentions, I begin by responding to Barrell’s “The Dangerous Goddess,” which contends that “the extraordinary fascination the Venus de’ Medici exerted over eighteenth-century” viewers arises from the “absence of a narrative context” associated with her; this places her in contrast to the Venus Victrix/Belvedere, who holds an apple “to indicate in what contest she had been victorious”⁸¹ – she is easily deciphered since she has won Paris’s beauty “pageant” and the golden apple. But since the Medici Venus lacks “visible signs or tokens,” to quote from Aristotle, she could not be “recognized” within a specific context.⁸² For Barrell, absent emblems left her vulnerable to the connoisseur’s own story-crafting powers. So, while sculpture “resist[s] . . . narrative,”⁸³ a “standard” account was concocted: In this, the Venus’s dynamism itself confirms her seductive intentions toward the (male) gazer, she fails to obey canons of female modesty, and instead she concretizes the gender stereotype of the manipulative vamp, the Earl Bishop’s “*putain*.” This story inevitably ends with the Venus’s victory “over the civic spectator” – since the statue has “conquered his reason.”⁸⁴ He quotes from Joseph Spence’s *Polymetis* to delineate the typical narrative (the italicized lines are those Barrell omits):

At your first approaching her . . . you see aversion or denial in her look; move on but a step or two farther, and she has compliance in it: and one

⁷⁸ *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, ed. Adam Phillips (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 109.

⁷⁹ “From the Earl Bishop of Bristol and Derry to Canova, Turin 25th March 1794.” Quoted in Honour, p. 668.

⁸⁰ I agree with Lake that some objects seem “capable of speaking and giving evidence for themselves, but few could agree about what they said and evinced” (*Artifacts*, p. 17), and though she would not consider the Venus an artifact, the statue indeed inspires multiple and conflicting storylines.

⁸¹ pp. 121, 120. In historically tracking how a British “man” should respond to an erotically beautiful statue, Barrell’s essay charts eighteenth-century changes in viewing the fine arts.

⁸² *On the Art of Poetry*, p. 53. ⁸³ Barrell, p. 122. ⁸⁴ Barrell, p. 130.

step more to the right . . . turns it into a little insidious and insulting smile; such as any lady has, when she plainly tells you by her face, that she has made a sure conquest of you. *The moral of this may be very true and natural: but I think it is not justified by the statue itself:* for tho' I have paid, perhaps a hundred visits to the Venus de Medici in person; and have often considered her, in this very view; I could never find out the malicious sort of smile, which your antiquarians talk so much of.⁸⁵

While agreeing with Barrell that Spence ridicules this storyline, I add that the latter's judgment can only arise because of the ways she moves and because, by willingly rotating around her, he willingly practices thing theory. That is, in carefully gazing at the *Venus* and trying to belong with her, he debates with other connoisseurs' reactions to construe his own reflections and feelings. Thus, his line, "[h]aving considered her, in this very view," refers not only to the antiquarian's view, to the view in which she allegedly seems most seductive – but in relation to other visual perspectives of her body.

This passage reveals Spence experiencing a “haptic twist, the grounding of language in embodiment.”⁸⁶ In other words, this “*Venus-in-motion*” – her radiance unfolding in time and space and her movement expressing force and directionality⁸⁷ – incites variegated responses, which means that no one narrative could ever culminate in just one way or always end “in a conquest.”⁸⁸ Further, in addition to questioning that prevailing account, Spence converses with the *Venus*, herself: His statement that this conquest plot “is not justified by the statue itself” suggests a dialogue with her. That is, the “statue itself” has something to say in this matter. So, although I agree that the “conquering” narrative does feature prominently in male responses to the *Venus*, I argue that this thing's movement in space provokes numerous and contradictory storylines to materialize, and that even these accounts run with each other and sometimes collide. I am not, of course, alleging that Barrell claims that the standard version he identifies is the only plot, but I will spotlight just how many there are and how, even when tourists repeat each other's observations, subtleties abound.

The *Venus*'s movement asserts the right to prismatic interpretations since gazing at her arouses stereotypes and shatters them. For example, James Thomson's description of the *Venus* changes so many directions that it recreates her shimmering movements through poetic space, and, as with

⁸⁵ *Polymetis*, p. 68; emphasis added. ⁸⁶ Silver, p. 11.

⁸⁷ These are Stern's “four daughters of movement” (p. 4).

⁸⁸ Barrell, p. 130.

Spence, the statue triggers Thomson to dispute the conquest story.⁸⁹ In *Liberty* (1735), the poet's vignette might seem initially to repeat a hackneyed scenario of seductive calculations, but when he ponders what constitutes the *Venus's* intentions, the poet punctures this storyline.⁹⁰ In presenting the Medici *Venus* as uncommonly lively – it bends, looks aside, turns, smiles, and swells – and as literally impressing herself upon the viewer's body and psyche, Thomson limns “the dangerous moment,” the “moment of animation”:⁹¹

Bashful she bends, her well-taught look aside
Turns in enchanting guise, where dubious mix
Vain conscious beauty, a dissembled sense
Of modest shame, and slippery looks of love.
The gazer grows enamoured, and the stone,
As if exalting in its conquest, smiles.
So turn'd each limb, so smiles swell'd with fostering art
That the deluded eye the marble *doubts*.⁹²

The speaker finds himself caught in the agon between his own reaction to the statue and those he has been “taught” to hold. Thus, rather than describing merely a falsehearted marble who has been “well-taught” to flirt with and then subdue men, the compound adjective carries a double, dissenting meaning insofar as connoisseurs, too, have been “well-taught” to duplicate previous observers' sensations and accounts. This is especially pertinent given how challenging tourists find *seeing* once they become familiar with the travel descriptions preceding them.

The statue impresses her energy on his. In doing so, the narrator, “dangerously godlike,” becomes both “the sculpting agent” in poetically forming the Medici *Venus* by deciding what she is thinking, as well as the “sculpting object,” since the statue and the “mainstream” account of her also form him – ultimately steering him from the “well-taught” view.⁹³ We see him being “sculpted” when he first presents the statue's vanity and

⁸⁹ Barrell emphasizes that in Thomson's description, “the narrative is as unstable as is the statue itself” (p. 130).

⁹⁰ Barrell argues that when Thomson substitutes the *Venus* for “Public Virtue,” he “feminize[s]” virtue; in “fail[ing] . . . to deliver up the official civic doctrine,” the poet intimates that his poem, “whose entire subject is . . . civic freedom, has also been appropriated by a debased and effeminate discourse on the fine arts” (pp. 113, 114). I argue that Thomson challenges this narrative that the *Venus* represents an “effeminate” victory over aesthetic discourse.

⁹¹ Mitchell, p. 246.

⁹² *The Works of James Thomson* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1908), Part IV: ll. 177–184; emphasis added.

⁹³ The terms are Mitchell's, p. 246. He doesn't discuss Thomson.

affectation as unquestionable, but then, in the phrase “*As if*,” he questions whether the stone actually does subjugate the beholder. These two words refer to a predictable dialogue – “Is it/she really alive? Does it/she really have feelings?” “No of course not” – while they simultaneously question whether this *Venus* obdurately triumphs and gloats.

The statue continues to resculpt the narrator’s seemingly predictable view by confusing and refining his attitude, as is evident when he declares that the statue seems to him so human that “the deluded eye the marble *doubts*.” While this familiarly reiterates how artistic skill renders marble flesh human-like, the syntax also suggests that the observer doubts that the statue does subjugate her male ogler. Further, the grammar can also imply that the marble – the *Venus*, herself – is thinking, is “doubting.” Perhaps she fires up misgivings, causing him to wonder if she judges his eye as “deluded,” one tempted to exploit her as a pornographic image.⁹⁴ Accordingly, her gaze transforms him into the subject of her thoughts about his or the stock narrative’s tendency toward sexual power mongering.⁹⁵ This “doubting” invites us to reread the earlier lines: Since it is “dubious” whether she mixes “Vain conscious beauty, a dissembled sense/ Of modest shame, and slippery looks of love,” the narrator thus tests whether or not she dissimulates in order to conquer. Further suggestive, the word “mix” intimates her “mixed” – that is, complicated – character, one with prismatically propelled intentions. Readers, then, should remain “dubious” as to whether Thomson’s lines respond predictably to the *Venus*’s supposedly bewitching powers. The poet’s description, rendered in rapidly fluctuating “slippery” tones, provides a thing theory that defends this nonhuman thing – this statue – as an entity with the right to move toward *belonging with*, rather than surrendering to the separation endemic in the “conquest” narrative.⁹⁶

The common storyline, as I have been suggesting, seems applicable only to a male scopophilic; thus, what impressions might emerge when the

⁹⁴ On this pornographic “use” of the Medici *Venus*, see Olivia Ferguson’s “Venus in Chains: Slavery, Connoisseurship, and Masculinity in *The Monk*,” *Gothic Studies* 20.1 (2018): 29–43, p. 35.

⁹⁵ Barrell points out that Thomson’s *Liberty* presents the *Venus* as “anarchic and unstable,” so much so that “she seems not a woman turned to stone but a stone turning into a woman” (p. 128).

⁹⁶ The Medici *Venus* becomes, in her ambiguity, similar to what Bermingham terms the “accomplished woman,” one dependent “less on notions of publicity and consumption and more on ideas of interiority and private self-expressions”; the accomplished woman “continued to problematize ideas of individuality and subjectivity,” doing so, however, “within the domestic space of the home, one “reserved for the exercise of privacy and individual authenticity.” Some viewers did respond to the statue as if *she* were the “accomplished woman,” and some even brought her into their private homes (“Elegant Females and Gentlemen Connoisseurs,” p. 491).

observer is someone else entirely, or when, for example, the observer connects emotionally to the statue's flight? For example, Jane Waldie crusades against dishonoring the *Venus* and wants, in the face of the standard narrative, to restore her to nobility. In disputing "that this modest-looking creature represents the shameless Phryne, who, at the celebration of the Eleusinian Games, exhibited herself coming out of the bath to the eyes of all Athens," Waldie fiercely upholds the statue's decency, exclaiming that she "can never have patience" with such a "conjecture."⁹⁷ Inherent in Waldie's defense and in that of others is the ability to belong with the statue, such that one slips from art degradation to the need to secure justice for the nonhuman.

I propose then that a second plot – a "Susanna and the Elders" chronicle – devolves that recognizes the statue's rights. Here beholders interpret the Medici *Venus* as having been spied rising from the water by an unknown and/or dangerous intruder and hopes to cover herself with her own hands. Keats, alluding to such a threat, depicts the *Venus* as "looking sideways in alarm."⁹⁸ William Gilpin (1798) finds the "Susanna" narrative most plausible. Conveying what he imagines as originally causing her pose, he writes, "'shrunk from herself, / With fancy blushing,'—she received the shot of the prophane eye that surprised her, as our modern heroes in dueling receive a bullet, by instantly drawing her body into a profile. In both cases nature teaches the easiest and most commodious posture."⁹⁹ Here the leering "eye," not the Medici *Venus*, is profane; and her movement, protective rather than coquettish, is one *conatus* – that is, striving to preserve one's life force – galvanizes.¹⁰⁰ Simultaneously vulnerable and powerful, she uses her hands to armor her body, a modification we will see paralleled in Chapter 5, when women employ hats to disguise their faces. Thus, even the Goddess of Love – even a *putain* – should be able to assert her right to privacy, should be able to refuse male notice, should be able to exercise the virtue of survival.

Maximilien Misson's *Nouveau Voyage* (1691) offers a storyline about the intentions behind her twists and turns that anticipates Waldie's and

⁹⁷ *Sketches Descriptive of Italy in the Years 1816 and 1817* (London: John Murray, 1820), vol. 4, p. 33.

⁹⁸ "I stood tip-toe upon a little hill," in *The Poems of John Keats*, ed. Miriam Allott (London and New York: Longman and Norton, 1970), p. 96, l. 220.

⁹⁹ *Observations on the Western Parts of England* (London: T. Cadell, 1808), p. 20. Gilpin here responds to a *Venus de' Medici* copy housed at Northrup House in western England.

¹⁰⁰ Gilles Deleuze defines *conatus* as "an effort or tendency. Not a tendency to pass into existence, but to maintain and affirm existence." In *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. Robert Hurley (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1988), p. 99.

Gilpin's perspectives, only to end with a third, one focusing on the disjunction between her hands and her naked body. *The Venus de' Medici* "places her right hand in front of her breast, but at some distance; with her other hand, she covers [her *parties génitales*] but without touching them; she softly leans down, and moves her right knee a bit forward, as if to hide herself, if that were possible."¹⁰¹ Here Misson acknowledges her modest attempts to shield her defenseless body, but then finds such efforts erotically fascinating, given that she shifts her knee only "a bit forward" and distances her hand from her breasts, observations leading him to conclude that she will fail, for to conceal herself is not "possible": Ironically, her attempts render her even more a casualty of his gaze. How can we read her knee and hands' inability to cover those private parts? Insightfully evoking the *Venus's* – or any object's – vulnerability to human domination, Barrell underscores how this gap "enabled her to be seen, engraved, and painted, from angles which frustrated her attempt to conceal her sexual parts."¹⁰² Given the emphasis I place on her motility, I would add that her hands do not completely cover her intimate "parts" because she herself is in motion, her velocity preventing her arms from rigidly attaching to anything, while her swirling intensifies the instantaneous "alarm" she experiences.

Gilpin recognizes that the statue and the viewers' twisting and turning impact how one interprets her morality. Apparently trying to assert justice for the statue, he offers another narrative, that scrutinizing her from the "wrong" point of view sparks accusations of immodesty:

I have sometimes heard her *attitude* called in question. Instead of that modest demeanor, which is commonly ascribed to her, I have known her reproached for prudery, and theatrical affectation. We can, in truth, say but little for her moral character. Her *attitude*, however, I think may be defended. The sculptor, I suppose, meant her to be viewed with her face towards you. In that position she makes the most elegant figure.¹⁰³

In other words, the statue's "morality" is relative to the examiner's station as he or she appraises the *Venus's* "attitude" – since from the frontal angle she is "chaste" while from the others she apparently throws out not an alarmed response, but a tantalizingly erotic invitation. For Gilpin, then, the responsibility falls on the spectator to observe her from the most "virtuous" angle, rather than the one showing body parts that she cannot

¹⁰¹ (Holland: Henry van Bulderen, Marchand Libraire, 1702), vol. 2, p. 334. Misson expresses the bracketed material euphemistically and in Italian. My translation.

¹⁰² "The Dangerous Goddess," p. 121. ¹⁰³ *Observations on the Western Parts of England*, p. 20.

cover. And yet this advice suggests that any woman/thing viewed in the round, from varying angles, will never *look* completely virtuous.¹⁰⁴

To summarize these narratives, the *Venus*, by whirling in space, stimulates audiences' self-exploration; vanquishes them; reveals her modesty; is innocently encroached upon; and titillates with "modesty." Interpreting her kinesis, these tourists historicize the *Venus* by writing meta-narratives about gender conformity and emancipation from orthodox expectations. Assorted reactions to her reveal that viewing things is an act as unstable and volatile as things themselves. As I consider in Section 1.4, the Medici *Venus*'s Greek origins, Roman incarnation, and Italian arms and hands (seventeenth-century restorations) destabilize her in further ways: She embodies each period's fashionable gender styles, and, as I will unearth in Section 1.4, fashionable politics, for it will take a revolution and then an empire to render her an *heroic* icon.

1.4 History in the Collection: The *Venus* as Heroic

What validity do collections have? Can they themselves and their belongings be justified? How might their things' presence – albeit it in an artificial space – remind visitors to connect radiantly with the nonhuman? Susan Stewart argues that "self-enclosure" and ahistoricism characterize the collection, which "replaces history with *classification*, with order beyond the realm of temporality."¹⁰⁵ The museum's design, Gillen D'Arcy Wood asserts, is partly to blame: "With its open spaces and blank walls, [it] isolates ancient artefacts from their social and geographical origin, creating the ... loss Schiller diagnosed in the modern subject's perception of antiquity."¹⁰⁶ Though applicable to some galleries, these attributions

¹⁰⁴ Commentary from the mid-nineteenth century, however, ignores her movement and her apparent alarm. As McCue explains, the Medici *Venus* "had fallen out of favour by 1830" though "it was acceptable, if only out of habit, to briefly mention the statue" (*British Romanticism and the Reception of Italian Old Master Art*, p. 151). Bruce Haley discusses Hazlitt's summation of the *Venus* as "an exquisite marble doll." See *Living Forms: Romantics and the Monumental Figure* (Albany: SUNY University Press, 2003), pp. 104–105; and *The Complete Works* [of Hazlitt], ed. P. P. Howe, 21 vols. (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1930–1934), vol. 10, p. 222. For George Stillman Hillard (1853) she is a courteous hostess, who apparently "extend[s] a gracious welcome to all who enter." See *Six Months in Italy*, 21st ed. (Boston, MA: Riverside Press, 1881), p. 73. More recently Martin Robertson has disdained the *Venus* as "among the most charmless remnants of antiquity." See *A History of Greek Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), vol. 1, p. 549.

¹⁰⁵ *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), p. 151; emphasis original.

¹⁰⁶ *The Shock of the Real: Romanticism and Visual Culture, 1760–1860* (New York and London: Palgrave, 2001), p. 131.

pertain neither to the Tribuna nor to how viewers field their ripostes to its art objects. First, as I discussed in Section 1.1, the room's diversity eclipses a definition like the one Susan Pearce offers: "[C]ollections are essentially composed of objects which bear an intrinsic relationship to each other in a sequential or representative sense, rather than each being valued for its own qualities."¹⁰⁷ "Collection objects," she continues, have a "quality of separateness . . . They are *wrenched* out of their own true contexts and become dead to their living time and space in order that they may be given an immortality within the collection."¹⁰⁸ The Tribuna's sculpture had indeed been "wrenched" from its Greek and then Roman origins, but in its afterlife, it was never separate or alienated from eighteenth- and nineteenth-century history.

This gallery and its objects show how a collection can "concretize" and render more material our historical awareness. Certainly, Napoleon anachronistically and accidentally contradicts Stewart's claim that "[a]ll collected objects are . . . *objets de lux*, objects abstracted from use value and materiality within a magic cycle of self-referential exchange,"¹⁰⁹ for, when he first saw – and coveted – the *Venus de' Medici* in 1796, he further incarnated her into the temporal and thus into history as a fully material and useful being. Tommaso Puccini, the gallery's director, knew that the future Emperor lusted after the *Venus*; anticipating the French conquest of Tuscany, he had her transported to Palermo for safekeeping, though by 1802 she was surrendered to the French and sent on a journey to Paris.¹¹⁰ Launched by historical events, her traveling left her pedestal in the Tribuna gaping empty until 1815, altering the Uffizi and art history. What did it mean to see the room vacant of her beauty? Conversely what did it mean to see her once again illuminating the Tribuna after Waterloo? For Jean

¹⁰⁷ *On Collecting: An Investigation into Collecting in the European Tradition* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 20.

¹⁰⁸ Pearce, p. 24; emphasis added. In contrast, Emma Peacocke makes a strong case for the inherent historicity of museums: She admirably demonstrates how "[f]rom their inception, public museums were implicated within a broader set of national, political, and cultural struggles." See *Romanticism and the Museum* (New York: Palgrave, 2015), p. 7. Sophie Thomas crucially observes that museums were "active agents in expanding fields of inquiry, shaping as well as shaped by emerging bodies of knowledge in the nineteenth century. . . . [M]useums reflect the state of the nation, and more pointedly, the nation's knowledge." See "Introduction – A Tour, a Text, a Body, a Building, a Model: Some (Fore-)words for the Nineteenth-Century Museum," in *Recollecting the Nineteenth-Century Museum*, ed. Thomas, *Romanticism on the Net* 70 (2018): 1–6, p. 3. Silver shows how "[t]he standard account of the rise of the museum tells the story of [how] . . . small, intensely personal and idiosyncratic spaces, filled with the quirky, the odd, and the wonderful, gave way to professionalized, organized, and organizing endeavors" (*The Mind*, p. 6).

¹⁰⁹ Stewart, p. 165. ¹¹⁰ Honour, p. 658.

Baudrillard, “even though objects may on occasion lead into the realm of social discourse, it must be acknowledged that *it is usually not an object’s presence but far more often its absence that clears the way for social intercourse.*”¹¹¹ This applies trenchantly to the *Venus*, whose absence defines a new historical moment for her and for her gallery. Her presence in and then absence from her home reminds us that “the ways that people dwell in spaces and spaces respond to people” renders them “habitable to one another.”¹¹² Though this nonhuman thing is not a “person,” people treated her as such.

The sense that the *Venus de’ Medici* belonged with the Tribuna and embodied the museum and Florence is borne out in the ways that perceivers felt her presence as intensely – or more – once she was removed from the gallery as they had when she lodged there. John Chetwode Eustace, traveling to Italy in 1802, claims that the “temple” which once held the *Venus* is now “abandoned by its celestial inhabitant,” and the gallery, “stripped of its principal ornaments,” displayed “so many vacant frames and unoccupied pedestals, that we found ourselves more disposed to regret its absent than to admire its present beauties.”¹¹³ For him, the gallery, having experienced violence, now becomes a spiritual shrine to a revenant – the “celestial” goddess – whose absence renders it impossible for sightseers to enjoy what *is* there. By 1805, Napoleon’s plunders had left the collection, like a battlefield, a skeleton with empty spaces and spectral images, words which reinforce the need to reunify art objects in their original location, not to unify Europe under Napoleon. And though he did not particularly admire the statue, Kotzebue nevertheless directs our gaze to the “pedestal on which the Medicean Venus stood”: It is “empty; and it is supposed that it can never be *occupied* again.”¹¹⁴ Duplicating Kotzebue’s verb, the tourist James Wilson (1816) notes that Canova’s *Venus* had “*occupied* the place of the *Venus de’ Medici* in the Tribuna, while she was in *captivity* at Paris.”¹¹⁵ Here, the “*social intercourse*”¹¹⁶ that such absence inspires is emphatically political, as the war-imbued words “*occupied*” and “*captivity*” resonate with the capture of Florence, the *Venus*’s

¹¹¹ *The System of Objects*, trans. James Benedict (New York: Verso, 2005), p. 113; emphasis original.

¹¹² Silver, p. 17.

¹¹³ *A Classical Tour through Italy*, 6th ed. (Paris: Baudry’s European Library, 1837), vol. 2, pp. 172, 170.

¹¹⁴ August von Kotzebue, *Travels through Italy in the Years 1804 and 1805* (London: T. Gillet, 1806), vol. 1, p. 160; emphasis added.

¹¹⁵ *A Journal of Two Successive Tours*, p. 392; emphasis added.

¹¹⁶ Baudrillard, *The System of Objects*, p. 113.

incarceration, and the imperialist ambition to conquer the civilization by emptying the museum. In the face of cultural warfare, the *Venus* anticipates Eugène Delacroix's *The 28th of July: Liberty Leading the People* (1830) as an embodiment of hope.¹¹⁷

To grasp the *Venus de' Medici's* new historical role as incarnating emancipation it helps to contrast this symbolic status to an earlier one. J. R. Hale suggests that Robert Merry's *Laurel of Liberty: A Poem* (1790), dedicated to the National Assembly of France, makes the *Venus* "the symbol of Florence":¹¹⁸

O sweet Firenze! What are all thy stores,
Thy Parian Venus which the world adores,
What are thy treasured gems, thy tow'ring domes,
Whilst in thy halls the spectre Slav'ry roams?¹¹⁹

Written when the *Venus* was still residing in Florence, Merry can feel that while slavery exists, her power means very little, for injustice against humans vacates the significance of these "treasured gems." By the time she lives in Paris, however, a sense of her as an embodiment of Florence and freedom renders her a being who needs to be in residence: She *is something*, for now she represents emancipation. Forsyth also touches on the *Venus* as embodying national liberty when he invites us to contemplate her possible owners. As he bemoans the lost "treasures of the Tribuna" he catalogues the multiple claims to ownership of the statue.

The Florentines murmured at the detention of objects so dear to them. Ferdinand claimed them in right of his family; Lewis, in right of his crown; and the King of Naples detained them till the stronger claim should prevail. Thus was this precious deposit disputed by two princes, in the hands of a

¹¹⁷ Just because women are implemented to represent liberty does not mean that they themselves are free. For Lynn Hunt, "the proliferation of the female allegory was made possible, in fact, by the exclusion of women from public affairs. Women could be representative of abstract qualities and collective dreams because women were not about to vote or govern." See "The Political Psychology of Revolutionary Caricatures," in James Cuno, ed., *French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789–1799* (Los Angeles: Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts, Wight Art Gallery, UCLA, 1988), p. 39. Also see Joan B. Landes, "Representing the Body Politic: The Paradox of Gender in the Graphic Politics of the French Revolution," in Sara E. Melzer and Leslie W. Rabine, eds., *Rebel Daughters: Women and the French Revolution*, University of California Humanities Research Center (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), see pp. 15–37 and p. 39.

¹¹⁸ "Art and Audience," p. 42; emphasis original.

¹¹⁹ (London: John Bell, 1790), p. 15. *Venus* as embodying republican Florence contrasts to earlier English attitudes toward the city and its treasures. Rosemary Sweet explains that the British took only a "muted interest in Florence's history as a republic," a posture distinct from their "widespread interest" in Venice's history. See "British Perceptions of Florence in the Long Eighteenth Century," *The Historical Journal* 50.4 (2007): 837–859, p. 852 and note 71.

third, and at the disposal of a fourth power, though it rightfully belonged to none of them; for Leopold, as if presaging some contention of the kind, had solemnly declared the gallery to be the property of the nation.¹²⁰

Who possesses this thing is as unstable as what it signifies since each ruler avows the *right* to own her. Only Leopold, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, recognizes the *Venus* as a belonging, for he wants her to be multiply shared – by the nation that is. How could the *Venus* be other than a possession if claimed by such abstractions as a “family” or a “crown” or even an institution holding onto this thing until some “stronger claim should prevail”? Carol Duncan writes that “art museums constitute one of those sites in which politically organized and socially institutionalized power most avidly seeks to realize its desire to appear as beautiful, natural, and legitimate.”¹²¹ Certainly these princes’ claims on the *Venus* as their property, as well as Napoleon’s plundering, truly legitimize the “naturalness” of the statue’s presence in the collection and in the “nation,” since her removal comes to embody the spectacularly “unnatural.” But to invert Duncan’s point, the Emperor’s ransacking made him – and not the museum – the entity that institutionalizes power.

The Medici goddess’s unoccupied foundation reminds travelers of what “institutionalized power” really is when it enhances interest in one particular sculptural grouping that was still present: the *Niobe* statues (c. 330 BCE–c. 250 BCE). New appreciation for that grieving mother and her fourteen dead children rendered touristic acclaim a patriotic performance, as this parent’s agony came to exemplify the conflict Napoleon propagated; preferring her became a protest against French taste, which found “fault” with the *Niobe* group, placing it “on the whole much lower in the scale of excellency” than other works of art.¹²² Additionally, in 1802, *Niobe* was a statue onlookers could identify with since she offered to them, as she does to Corinne, “dignity despite extreme grief” (*C*, p. 355). Finally, these observers could connect to this mythological figure, assaulted by “the vengeance of heaven and not [by] passions born in the human heart” (*C*, p. 140), given that a God-like force – Napoleon – was also levying destruction on them.

¹²⁰ *Remarks on Antiquities*, pp. 430, 430–431. Forsyth was in Italy during the Peace of Amiens; the *Venus* was in Palermo in 1800 and in France in 1802, placed in the Musée Central des Arts (1793–1803), later renamed the Musée Napoléon (1803–1815). See Andrew Roberts, *Napoleon: A Life* (New York: Viking, 2014), pp. 87–88.

¹²¹ *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 6.

¹²² Eustace, p. 172.

The *Venus de' Medici's* absence from the gallery stimulated historical recall of political and aesthetic liberty – recall of their own rights. And yet, remembrance was insufficient. The Florentines required an embodied Medici *Venus* – they desired the thing – and in her absence, they sought to restore it in two ways, both of which propel the statue and her constituents into art history's history. First, they put another statue, the *Venus Victrix / Belvedere*, who had already been subject to several centuries of “plastic surgeons,” back on the table to make her resemble the *Venus de' Medici*.¹²³ In Kotzebue's words, they broke off “the two arms of this Venus,” which once held an apple, and “substitut[ed] two new ones with the bend of the Medicean. It now makes a droll appearance.”¹²⁴ Changes that were “droll” to Kotzebue seem in retrospect mutilating attempts to resuscitate what was lost. For D'Arcy Wood, the arrival of the Elgin Marbles in London “interrupt[s]” the “Georgian sentimentalization of Ancient Greece”;¹²⁵ however, at least for travelers to Italy, I suggest that that process started much earlier as tourists, from the eighteenth century onward, viewed the fragments of and alterations to both Venuses' bodies, reconstructions that made visible relationships between the histories of fashion and politics. Not only do the Medicean arms mar the *Venus Victrix / Belvedere*, but her immobility (no whirling or twisting here) speaks of the despair that liberty will not be restored. Simultaneously, resembling the statue of King Mitys' mighty power to right wrongs – by falling on and killing the King's murderer – the *Venus de' Medici* manifests the potency to mobilize change and restore justice. These restorations could be said to constitute what Bal has represented as a traumatic event “reenacted as drama rather than synthetically narrated by the memorizing agent who ‘masters’ them,”¹²⁶ since in a vain attempt to soothe the human psyche they perform a violent drama against things, disfiguring the statue in their hope that, in its metamorphosed state, it could heal, a point I return to explore further in Chapter 2.

There was another way in which the Florentines tried to belong with the exiled *Venus*, a move that further grounded her historically. They hoped to fill “*la dolente Perdita*” of the statue's absence for the sake of the homeland when, in 1803, Giovanni degli Alessandri, president of the Florentine

¹²³ Arnold Nesselrath discusses these restorations in “The Venus Belvedere: An Episode in Restoration,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 50 (1987): 205–214.

¹²⁴ Kotzebue, p. 159. ¹²⁵ *The Shock of the Real*, p. 132.

¹²⁶ “Introduction,” in *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present*, ed. Bal, Jonathan Crewe, and Leo Spitzer (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1999), p. viii.

Accademia delle Belle Arti, asked Canova to copy the *Venus de' Medici*.¹²⁷ Significantly Alessandri requested a simulacra, albeit one that was “corrected,” that is, lacking the “excessively long”¹²⁸ Baroque arms and fingers the seventeenth-century sculptor Ercole Ferrata had added to the statue (a restoration I examine also in Section 1.5). Ultimately Canova did not send a reproduction to the Uffizi, but a sculpture of his own “*invenzione*,”¹²⁹ the *Venere Italica*. Further, he refused to position his sculpture on the Medici *Venus*'s plinth, which he wanted to remain empty. As a testimony to the necessity of having a *Venus de' Medici*, if not the real one, in the Uffizi, the public cheered the 1812 *Venere Italica*'s arrival in Florence, and poems were written in its honor, evidence of a civic enthusiasm which suggests it functioned metonymically as a sign that the Florentines might at some point reoccupy their own city.¹³⁰ However, Canova's “replacement” diverges so stylistically from the original that it testifies to a point I make in Chapter 4 about how adaptation redistributes the *élan vital* of any object recreated, restored, recycled, or revised.

Once the purloined original was returned to its home (1815), and Canova's *Venere Italica* was transferred to the Pitti Palace, viewers must have seen the *Venus de' Medici* with new eyes, given her travels to Palermo, her Parisian incarceration, and her victorious return to Florence. What might it mean that Napoleon touched her, potentially contaminating her with his measuring hands (since he surely did measure her), rendering her a scrap of herself? Or instead, did she seem more complete, having survived and returned from her Parisian internment? Stuart Semmel has suggestively argued that post-Waterloo tourism offered a more “tangibl[e],” a less “mediat[ed]” understanding of history, since “[v]isiting sites and handling objects that had been inscribed by Napoleon now appeared to offer a means of communing with the fallen ruler, or of understanding the recent war and its terrible slaughter.”¹³¹ Given this, how *could* she have been seen as “the same”? Simultaneously evoking a Grecian and then Roman past, a Medician moment, a Baroque refurbishment, a French displacement, and a present Florentine existence, her salmagundi of lives unfolds in historical time. The *Venus* does not become “dead to [its] living time and space in

¹²⁷ See Honour for quotations and for a detailed history of this commission (pp. 658–659).

¹²⁸ Jonathan Richardson, *An Account of Some of the Statues, Bas-Reliefs, Drawings, and Pictures in Italy*, 2nd ed. (London: D. Browne, 1754), p. 55.

¹²⁹ Quoted in Honour, p. 662.

¹³⁰ Ironically, it was Napoleon himself who paid Canova. See Honour, p. 665 and note 44.

¹³¹ “Reading the Tangible Past: British Tourism, Collecting, and Memory after Waterloo,” *Representations* 69 (2000): 9–37, p. 10.

order that [it] may be given an immortality within the collection";¹³² instead, her position in and out of the Tribuna intensifies her impact on and place in history.

In Section 1.5, I turn to Edgeworth's *Belinda*, which draws on the *Venus de' Medici*'s histories – her human–nonhuman dynamism; her restorations; and her gendered “behavior,” including claims of her positive and nefarious intentions – to present the statue in another historical role: the feminist work of liberating female characters from ideals of perfection and conformity.

1.5 Lady Delacour and the *Venus de' Medici*'s Beautiful Mixtures

The *Venus de' Medici*'s celebrity status indicates Edgeworth's own interest when, in *Belinda*, she invokes the statue twice, both times in relation to Lady Delacour. Deborah Steiner explains that a statue referred to in a literary work “imports into the text all the powers, properties, and associations that it possesses in the lives of the audience.”¹³³ The *Venus* “imports” such material tidings into *Belinda*, and via its characters explores the statue's many narratives as well as the real-life activity of tourists who judged *Venus*'s modesty, recalculated her perfect measurements, and assessed her brokenness and restorations, those injuries just on and under her body's surface.

Eighteenth-century and Romantic-era culture seek out quantitative benchmarks by which to calculate behavior as appropriate and seemly, as authentic and reliable, a point I return to in Chapter 3, where I assay *Belinda*'s repeated references to measuring diamonds. We see this echoed in the ways that the *Venus*'s presence introduces the classical canon into the novel, as when Hervey is called “a connoisseur in female grace and beauty,” and when Belinda's match-making aunt offers a “course of documenting,” one instructing young women in how to be favorably measured according to standards of behavior and financial worth (*B*, pp. 8, 10). The measuring of the *Venus* reflects ways that during the late eighteenth century, “sculpture bec[ame] a kind of model . . . for man as species.”¹³⁴ Petras Camper, an influential eighteenth-century

¹³² Pearce, p. 24.

¹³³ Deborah Tarn Steiner, *Images in Mind: Statues in Archaic and Classical Greek Literature and Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), p. xiv.

¹³⁴ Hobson, p. 33.

scientist-aesthete, claiming that Greek sculpture represented a touchstone for beauty because its proportions were perfect, calculated a geometric value for determining nationality, race, and, of course, beauty. He found it “amusing to contemplate an arrangement of [skulls], placed in a regular succession” that demonstrated the supposedly progressive teleology of perfection from an ape to the African to the Chinese to the European to the Greek (represented in sculpture).¹³⁵

Given the *Venus*'s reception history and the novel's varying stances toward proportion, I suggest that in *Belinda*, beauty as perfect ratio reveals its own contradictions in questions of measuring and measurements. Hobson observes that “[t]he importance of ancient sculpture as a cultural value in the late eighteenth century is not news. What is perhaps more novel is its relation to the practice of measurement, and to a search for standards of measurement.”¹³⁶ *Belinda* introduces the practice of measuring in kaleidoscopic ways: in regard to emotional strain, when characters are “provok[ed] . . . beyond measure” (*B*, p. 67); when weighing moral issues – “the most moral ladies . . . do not expect men to be as moral as themselves—so we may suit the measure of our external indignation to our real feelings” (*B*, p. 149); and when reinforcing Lady Delacour's own witty embrace of imbalance: She is, she reports, “beyond measure astonished that any thing relative to lord Delacour could so far have interested her attention” and she claims that Lady Anne “is kind, beyond measure, to Helena . . . to provoke me” (*B*, pp. 189, 120). The activity arises also in instances of objective measurement, as when Hervey cuts Belinda's hair to test whether it compares to Madame de Grignan's (*B*, p. 76), or when Belinda devises an experiment with phosphorous to help Juba see that his belief that “the figure of an old woman, all in flames,” which appeared to him every night is incommensurable with reality. And even when the word “measure” itself does not appear, *Belinda* incorporates the concept in its exploration of “standards” of skin color, nationality, and of gendered formations of virtue and modesty.

Certainly, what constitutes appropriate measure also impacted this novel's revisions. Edgeworth must have been made to feel she had gone “beyond measure,” since, when told to do so, she excised from *Belinda*'s later editions the biracial marriage and the heroine's engagement to

¹³⁵ *The Works of the Late Professor Camper* (London: printed for C. Dilly, 1794), p. 50. Hobson discusses Camper, as does Paul Youngquist's *Monstrosities: Bodies and British Romanticism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).

¹³⁶ Hobson, p. 43.

Mr. Vincent, a Creole gambler. In cutting the latter, Edgeworth expunged any indication that her eponymous heroine has flaws – or that she has the right to make mistakes. And that flaw was that Belinda had split feeling from reason to commit herself to Vincent: Her hyper-rational decision to marry him without love lacks proportion and thus goes “beyond measure.” In letting Belinda choose the wrong suitor and listen to the wrong mentor (Lady Anne) – in short to make mistakes – and in offering her a second chance to marry, the early edition reiterates the call for an “ideal” character that is mixed and fragmented, one resembling the *Lady Delacour-Venus de' Medici* double. *Belinda's* revised edition discards as refuse what is imperfect. Mark Canuel demonstrates that when theoreticians of beauty emphasize symmetry and proportion in their definitions, they delimit the beautiful to the normative, “restrict[ing] membership to those who symmetrically replicate and share the same heritage, looks, or attitudes.”¹³⁷ As will become clear, I find that *Belinda* makes a similar argument, insofar as it criticizes definitions of beauty and reason dependent on sterile, rigid notions of *symmetria* when they are used to support gender conformity.

In a conversation alluding to the *Venus de' Medici*, the characters discuss measurement and its relation to gender, obliquely exploring how or if the classical canon establishing a statue's proportions could or should be applied to evaluate future wives. Clarence Hervey, delivering a bracelet to Belinda that she has left behind at her aunt's house, says,

“Mrs. Stanhope promised me, that if I delivered it safely, I should be rewarded by the honour of putting it on the owner's fair arm.” A conversation now took place on the nature of ladies' promises—on fashionable bracelets—on the size of the arm of the *Venus de' Medici's*—on lady Delacour's, and miss Portman's—on the thick legs of ancient statues—and on the various defects and absurdities of Mrs. Luttridge and her wig. (*B*, p. 14)

The bracelet works as a go-between to introduce the hero and heroine and to forecast their future marriage, as Hervey places it, like a gigantic ring, on Belinda's arm. The bangle also then ties the *Venus's* arms to standards of proportion and then to female virtue. As tourists did when they observed and judged the statue, here the characters interrogate a thing's morality, trustworthiness, and artful style, or lack thereof. Their exchange indicates that the proportions of classical statues offered a common conversational topic and a way to adjudicate female beauty. Addison, claiming that “from

¹³⁷ *Justice, Dissent, and the Sublime* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), p. 28.

the Bigness of any one Part” of the *Venus de’ Medici*, “it is easy to guess at all the rest, in a Figure of such nice Proportions,”¹³⁸ reveals how an arm’s individual segments could be seen to calculate as a whole a body’s physical percentages, especially in cultures where clothes covered so much of the physique. In this passage, the characters and the *Venus* share the same nouns, and literary muscle and tissue belong with marble, rendering contiguous the boundaries between measuring the arms, ankles, and virtues of three women and one ancient statue.

Even the apparently comic reference to the “defects and absurdities of Mrs. Luttridge’s wig,” which in this context implies that it lacks a proportional relationship to her body, links physical ratio and measurement to serious assessments of women and statues.¹³⁹ In this way, *Belinda* satirizes contemporary perspectives urging women to emulate these touchstones. John Bennett’s *Letters to a Young Lady* (1795) advises his audience to “examine authors of all different persuasions, as the Grecian artist did women, when he wished to paint his Venus of Medici. He selected from every one he saw, the *particular* limb or feature, in which they *separately* excelled” so as to form “a perfect whole.”¹⁴⁰ *Belinda’s Venus* mocks Bennett’s young ladies, those who go to school with the sculptor to learn how to “[c]ollect . . . distinct charms, and work them up in the crucible of [their] heart, till they produce ‘the very beauty of holiness’ in their life and conversation.”¹⁴¹ Bennett’s emphasis on collecting parts anticipates Victor Frankenstein, who creates a monster by rendering “his limbs . . . in proportion” and selecting his “features as beautiful.”¹⁴² Indeed, the company, while replicating touristic fashions, reminds us, from a feminist viewpoint, that women viewed the *Venus* as well as men, and that they forged a likeness between themselves and the statue, though not only according the standard narrative of it as an erotic tease.

Belinda connects the human and nonhuman by bringing the *Venus* “home,” so to speak. Engendering a complex fantasy, Clarence associates Lady Delacour with the *Venus*, a bond fashioned when he had first seen the statue in the Tribuna, also the occasion on which he and Dr. X first met. The doctor, however, finding that Hervey still admires Lady

¹³⁸ *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy*, pp. 323–324.

¹³⁹ Conversely, Ferguson finds this merely a “frivolous conversation” (p. 34).

¹⁴⁰ John Bennett, *Letters to a Young Lady; on a Variety of Useful and Interesting Subjects*, 6th American ed. (Vermont, Brattleboro: William Fessenden, 1811), p. 50; emphasis original.

¹⁴¹ *Letters to a Young Lady*, p. 50.

¹⁴² Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* (1818) (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview, 2012), p. 83.

Delacour years later, ascertains disproportion in the object itself and in this infatuation's longevity, valuations he finds that go "beyond measure":

"Lady Delacour!—not the same lady Delacour whom four years ago, when we met at Florence, you compared to the Venus de Medicis—no, no, it cannot be the same, a goddess of four years standing! Incredible!"

"Incredible as it seems," said Clarence, "it is true—I admire her ladyship more than ever I did."

"Like a true connoisseur," said Dr X—, "you admire a fine picture, the older it grows—I hear that her ladyship's face is really one of the finest pieces of painting extant." (*B*, p. 95)

No doubt Clarence and the doctor *measured* the *Venus* when together they visited her in the Tribuna, and this is an act the doctor pursues anew, though he now twists to a painting metaphor so as to make a moral measurement – she wears too much make-up. Hervey, imperfectly seeing Lady Delacour's body, compares it to the classical statue as perfect; unbeknownst to him, however, the appraisal is apropos, given that both the art object and the character have been wounded and broken into pieces. Here Dr. X, taking on the connoisseur's and the moralist's roles, negatively binds Lady Delacour and the *Venus* by judging the ethics of both and by denying the former the right to age and yet remain beloved. As the novel interlaces perfect proportion and questions of modesty with the restoration of Lady Delacour's character, it has a rich source to draw on: the "questionable" modesty and the restorations of the Medici *Venus* herself.

Belinda's characters, to requote Gilpin, "call" Lady Delacour's "*attitude* into question" – assessing her "pose" and the angles from which she should be viewed when Clarence, unbeknownst to Lady Delacour, spurs the doctor to "count" her pulse: "Look through the door at the shadow of queen Elizabeth's ruff—observe how it vibrates; the motion as well as the figure is magnified in the shadow. Cannot you count every pulsation distinctly?" (*B*, p. 115). To reuse Gilpin's phrase, I suggest that in this action, Dr. X "measures" the fictional character with a "shot of the prophane eye."¹⁴³ Viewed from the "wrong angle," she is "shot" again, this time by eyes, rather than the butt of a gun. The act is "prophane" because the scientific method of medical diagnosis is wholly secular but also because it sacrilegiously violates her right to privacy. Yet medical practice here collides with aesthetic viewing. Reinforcing the interlacing

¹⁴³ *Observations on the Western Parts of England*, p. 20.

between Lady Delacour and the *Venus*, Dr. X and his company's experimentation parallels a fashionable eighteenth-century viewing practice: gazing at statuary by torchlight, a method Winckelmann inspired, one which "isolated each part of each figure by turn" and whetted visitors' "alertness to minute particulars," as when he expressed "fastidious anxiety about the depth of the *Venus de' Medici's* navel."¹⁴⁴ These overlapping aesthetic and therapeutic diagnostics recall the Susanna and the Elders' plotline we saw affixed to the *Venus*, since they render Lady Delacour vulnerable to the doctor's sharp watchfulness, a critique which, if she were to observe, would no doubt cause her to turn away and try to protect herself with her hands, as the *Venus* does.

In measuring Lady Delacour's blood flow as he gazes at her pulse throbbing on the wall, Dr. X reminds us that the character and statue belong together: The former's hectic palpitations remind us that she faces the literal threat of anatomical dissection in her anticipated mastectomy and that the latter comingles "[b]lood, pulse, and breast"¹⁴⁵ with dismemberments and "corrections." As I said previously in this section, it was commonplace when viewing the *Venus* to lament not only her physical ruptures, but even more so, the restorations she had undergone throughout history. These responses often veered toward sentimentality or a pretense toward connoisseurship, which included a rote critique of her arms and fingers, which Ferrata had added. Jonathan Richardson (1722) found her fingers to be "excessively long, and taper,"¹⁴⁶ rendering them as prostheses rather than organic restitutions. In *Belinda*, the *Venus's* presence – smashed and refurbished – triggers thoughts about what kinds of restorations might be organic enough to preserve both the statue's and Lady Delacour's *zèle*.

Belinda links reclaiming Lady Delacour's modesty with the rebuilding of her body from illness to health and of her ethics from apparent rake to beloved wife – one who belongs within a circle of authentic friends. The novel maps out these alterations by registering her change in "attitude" or position: how she "places" herself in relation to her husband and daughter and her willingness to rely on Dr. X's restoration of her health. As we gaze at the *Venus* resting one hand over her breast, we also see Lady Delacour covering her own wounded breast. In a *mise en abyme* effect, the fictional character, her body mangled from the face to the waist, gothically embodies the statue's pose when she "bar[es] one half of her bosom, . . .

¹⁴⁴ Haskell and Penny, p. 102. ¹⁴⁵ Byron, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Canto IV, l. 450.

¹⁴⁶ *An Account of Some of the Statues, Bas-Reliefs, Drawings, and Pictures in Italy*, p. 55.

reveal[ing] a hideous spectacle" (B, pp. 32). Here Lady Delacour, appearing disjointed physically, belongs with the fractured statue's demonstrable "wounds."

Though written later, Nathaniel Hawthorne's 1838 description of the *Venus* seems to do double duty for the mayhem both the statue and Lady Delacour have endured: Recording that she has "suffered terribly," her arms having been "severed," her waist "broken," and her head "snapped off," he still asserts that "all these injuries do not . . . impair the effect, even when you see where the dissevered fragments have been re-united. . . . I am glad to have seen this Venus and to have found her so tender and so chaste."¹⁴⁷ Hawthorne wants readers and bystanders to "enter into" the statue's life,¹⁴⁸ to feel how "terribly" she has "suffered" in being ruptured into more than forty-two pieces, his verbs – "severed" and "snapped" – palpably recreating the movements that maimed her. For Hawthorne and for *Belinda* both the *Venus* and Lady Delacour turn out to be "chaste," and while the fictional character's restoration evidently makes her happier, as it does her friends and family, the novel never suggests that she has been rendered perfectly proportioned, that she succumbs to a regulating norm for beauty, or that such a standard is in fact relevant for women. Similarly, neither the *Venus* nor Lady Delacour operates as a "fantasized specular image of corporeal completeness";¹⁴⁹ rather, their "perfection" and splintering belong together.

The debates about the statue's modesty and motivations that I canvassed in Section 1.3 and the novel's endorsement of two flawed heroines disassemble the illusion that a woman should be as perfectly proportioned as a statue or that the *Venus de' Medici* represents an ideal woman – or is in fact one. The statue, functioning as Lady Delacour's doppelgänger, makes much "realer," so to speak, both of their damaged bodies. And while the perfect, marble breast contrasts to Lady Delacour's wounded one, the *Venus* – as Hawthorne reveals – is not "perfect" after all. The statue's seams and scars thus double back to italicize the fictional character's lesions. And yet, as Hawthorne says, "all these injuries do

¹⁴⁷ *Passages from the French and Italian Note-Books* (Boston, MA: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1883), pp. 291–292.

¹⁴⁸ Étienne Bonnot de Condillac, *Treatise on the Sensations*, trans. Geraldine Carr (Los Angeles: University of Southern California Press, 1930), p. xxxvii.

¹⁴⁹ Susan E. Gustafson, *Absent Mothers and Orphaned Fathers: Narcissism and Abjection in Lessing's Aesthetic and Dramatic Production* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995), p. 73. Gustafson, referring to Lessing's assessment of *The Laocoön*, argues that "[j]ust at the edge of the fantasy of wholeness" he finds in the statuary group, there "lies the annihilation of this ideal" (p. 105).

not . . . impair the effect, even when you see where the dissevered fragments have been re-united.”¹⁵⁰

Restoring Lady Delacour, an act undertaken by Belinda, a female “sculptor,” Clarence, a male connoisseur, and Dr. X, a scientist, is quite successful. But I would also highlight how *Belinda* pierces “the plane of representation through to the thing itself,”¹⁵¹ insofar as the novel, via Lady Delacour’s broken body, illuminates how the actual statue’s restorations *show* – that is, the novel helps us discover the “joinings”¹⁵² holding them together. Resembling the seams on the *Venus*’s arms, revealing where the classical ends and Ferrata’s baroque begins, Lady Delacour, though now “restored,” still “shows” her original state – her scintillating wit, intelligence, and fearless irony; and these qualities now present even more radiantly, given that they contrast to her new restorations: the domestic persona she so self-consciously takes on. My reading of Lady Delacour thus contrasts with that of one contemporary review, which negatively appraises the restored heroine, whom they see in her reformed state as one who no longer “interests” or even “commands some respect,” but as a “comparatively flat and vapid creature.”¹⁵³ Instead, I claim that, as the later restorations to the *Venus* do not transform her entirely into a baroque artwork, neither do Lady Delacour’s restorations force her into someone entirely predictable and “vapid,” a “pattern women,” the type she most despises (*B*, p. 121). As she says, I am “*won*, not *tamed!*” (*B*, p. 314; emphasis original). With her keenness intact, Lady Delacour retains her right to remain mixed and to preserve her “French” wit, theatrical charisma, and intellectual powers – what we could call her “sculptural” skills. Refusing to conform passively like Lady Anne, Lady Delacour models her own ending, assembling marriages and families, when she physically choreographs the characters and “blocks” their movements on “stage”: “Captain Sunderland—kneeling with Virginia, if you please, sir, at her father’s feet. You in the act of giving them your blessing, Mr Hartley, Mrs Ormond clasps her hands with joy . . . Clarence, you have a right to Belinda’s hand, and may kiss it too” (*B*, p. 478). To shift back to sculpture, Lady Delacour becomes a Praxiteles, sculpting the other characters, while

¹⁵⁰ Hawthorne, p. 292.

¹⁵¹ Barbara Johnson, “Ode on a Public Thing,” in *Field Work: Sites in Literary and Cultural Studies*, ed. Marjorie Garber, Paul B. Franklin, and Rebecca L. Walkowitz (New York and London: Routledge, 1996), p. 141.

¹⁵² Anna Riggs Miller’s word, p. 388.

¹⁵³ Anon., *The Monthly Review; Or, Literary Journal Enlarged*, ed. Ralph Griffiths (London: A. Strahan, 1802), vol. 37, article IV, pp. 368–369.

presiding with stature, like the King Mitys statue who decrees justice. She knows who belongs together.¹⁵⁴

If the human “is both the sculpted object and the sculpting agent,” and if “[i]mage-making, like thinking for yourself, is a dangerously godlike activity,”¹⁵⁵ Lady Delacour’s “godlike activity” as sculptor, as well as her embodiment of the perfectly fragmented statue, recall how in ancient Greece, “no sculpture was erected without a function to perform. Whether apotropaic, talismanic, monitory, consolatory, votive, or commemorative in intent, statues were first and foremost regarded not as representational or aesthetic objects”; their beauty was crucial, but most important were their roles as “performative and efficacious agents, able to interact in a variety of ways with those who commissioned, venerated, and even on occasion defaced them.”¹⁵⁶ Vested to act through her own creative powers, Lady Delacour functions in monitory and apotropaic ways, warding off an inappropriate marriage between Virginia and Hervey and directing these individuals into happy couples and family groupings, mirrored by their proper “attitudes.” *Belinda*, in two turns, sculpts a monument of Lady Delacour and then brings her fully into life, making the ordinary extraordinary and the extraordinary unstable. The character’s victory – and no doubt also the *Venus de' Medici*’s – is twofold: The former rearranges the wreckages on courtship’s “battlefield” into attitudes of her and their own pleasing, rather than leaving the job to a “prophane” eye, and both the fictional character and the statue expose the “flaw” latent in definitions of female ideality.

Lady Delacour, however, destabilizes the perfect symmetry her sculptural grouping apparently embodies. She does this first when, after forming her friends’ positions and movements, she adds a line that haunts the novel as well as the viewing of the Medici *Venus*: “What signifies being happy,

¹⁵⁴ Jeanne M. Britton instead interprets Virginia’s plot as “resolved in a theatrical farce that underlines the illusory nature not only of her own satisfied desires but also of the marriage plot’s collapse of individual desire into bourgeois morality.” See “Theorizing Character in Maria Edgeworth’s *Belinda*,” *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 67.4 (2013): 433–456, p. 447. For another perspective, see Sharon Smith’s “Juba’s ‘Black Face’ / Lady Delacour’s ‘Mask’: Plotting Domesticity in Maria Edgeworth’s *Belinda*,” *The Eighteenth Century* 54.1 (2013): 71–90, p. 86: If “Edgeworth explores the positive potential inherent in [Lady Delacour’s] mastery, she also configures it as a source of anxiety,” since this move “simultaneously threatens to disrupt the relations upon which the existing social order depends.” Closer to my argument, Marie McAllister finds a “creative and potentially destabilizing tension between *Belinda*’s praise of domesticity and its delight in excess.” See “Ungovernable Propensities: *Belinda* and the Idea of Addiction,” *The Age of Johnson* 23 (2015): 301–331, p. 331.

¹⁵⁵ Mitchell, p. 246. ¹⁵⁶ Deborah Steiner, p. xii.

unless we appear so?" (*B*, p. 478).¹⁵⁷ Her statement uncannily echoes Gilpin's brutal truth that moral measurement often arises from how one is viewed or how one positions oneself. Second, she deranges readers and characters by refusing to divide the human and nonhuman when she turns a human into an image by presenting a portrait of Captain Paul Sunderland: Seeing her lover embodied in this form causes Rachel-Virginia¹⁵⁸ to faint. But then Lady Delacour turns an image back into a human when Paul materializes as an "animated picture" – that is, as a man – in front of Virginia; this metamorphosis "accomplishe[s]" all "the fond wishes of [Virginia's] waking fancy" (*B*, p. 476). That is, it gives this young woman the right to choose. And yet Lady Delacour alone has not arranged the unlikely union between the characters Paul and Virginia. What some would call another disproportion occurs because nonhuman *things*, *themselves*, have precipitated this romantic alliance, for the couple's marriage will follow a "courtship" constituted by the interactions between a man and a telescope and a woman and a miniature. Virginia has been sensuously and ritualistically connecting to her Paul – a topic I return to in [Chapter 4](#) – by gazing at a miniature of him and reading "their" storyline in *Paul et Virginie*, and he has fallen in love with Rachel-Virginia while watching her, "the fair woodnymph" (*B*, p. 475), through his spyglass.¹⁵⁹ This, then, is not one of the shoddy recognition scenes that Aristotle bemoans, wherein a "discovery" occurs "in relation to inanimate and trifling objects,"¹⁶⁰ but one of the surprising and satisfying recognitions that arise in a world where the human and nonhuman connect and are, indeed, interdependent.

The desire to possess the *Venus* inspires Napoleon to transform the statue into a symbol of his excellence and of French triumph, and it stimulates the Florentines to undertake statuary mutilation and incongruous acts of replacement to embody tangibly their hope for emancipation. An apt metonymy of these failed attempts can be seen in another object: a

¹⁵⁷ Here my interpretation of Lady Delacour's asymmetry, one allowing for ideological questioning, differs from Michael Gamer's; for him, *Belinda* is "heavily didactic," and that "it is impossible even for a few pages to misread the ideological and moral burden it inculcates." See "Maria Edgeworth and the Romance of Real Life," *Novel* 34.2 (2001): 232–266, p. 250.

¹⁵⁸ Hervey takes possession of Rachel Hartley, the young woman he discovers living in a remote cottage, renaming her Virginia St. Pierre, after Virginie and Bernardin de St. Pierre.

¹⁵⁹ Conversely, Susan C. Greenfield "ominously" sees in their marriage that "Virginia will serve as 'payment' of her 'father's debt of gratitude to Sunderland'" (*B*, p. 476). See "Abroad and at Home": Sexual Ambiguity, Miscegenation, and Colonial Boundaries in Edgeworth's *Belinda*," *PMLA* 112.2 (1997): 214–228, p. 222.

¹⁶⁰ *On the Art of Poetry*, p. 46.

medal Napoleon commissioned with his image on one side and the *Venus de' Medici's* on the opposite.¹⁶¹ Like the attempts to seize the statue, this medal reveals that once one gives up *belonging with* and instead embraces possession, human and thing are placed such that they can never gaze on, touch, or connect with each other. The *Venus*, her empty pedestal, and *Belinda* turn the coin's two opposing faces – one of oppression and one of liberty – back toward each other so they can engage in mutual contemplation. Pressures between an endorsement of and challenge to what might constitute a cultural “normal” and an attraction-repulsion toward the Romantic pressure to disentangle beauty from faultless proportion so as to find it in the mixed and fragmentary emerge throughout *Belinda* and in *Corinne ou l'Italie*, the subject of my [next chapter](#).

¹⁶¹ See John C. Laskey, *A Description of the Series of Medals Struck at the National Medal Mint by Order of Napoleon Bonaparte* (London: H. R. Young, 1818).

A Resuscitating Thing Theory
Gender and Embodied Cosmopolitanism in *Corinne ou l'Italie*'s Monuments

Préambule

As a powerful contrast to the prismatic movements toward *belonging with* that I elucidated in [Chapter 1](#), I begin this *préambule* with a scene from *Corinne ou l'Italie* (1807), where the destructive disconnection between human and nonhuman offers a foil to the novel's own resuscitating thing theory. A preacher (*prédicateur*), attacking "the period's irreligion,"

threw his cap into the centre of the pulpit and gave it the task of representing Jean-Jacques. In that role he harangued it, saying: *Well, Genevan philosopher, what have you to say against my arguments?* Then he would be silent for a few moments, as if waiting for an answer, and as the cap would say nothing in reply, he would put it back on his head and would finish the conversation with the words: *Now that you are convinced, let us say no more about it.* (C, p. 170; emphasis original)

Though he does not hear the apostate-cap speak, does that mean it did not reply? This secular transubstantiation demands that the congregants, contemplating Monsieur Rousseau, rehearse in their minds whatever might be known about him, for on the devotional table, the cap speaks, albeit silently, of Julie, inequality, passionate love, social contracts and states of nature, and a not dissimilar sort of *Confessions* from those the Church demands. After briefly waiting for Rousseau's response, the preacher, putting Jean-Jacques back on his head, de-auraticizes "*le bonnet*," letting us see it afresh as we recognize its new power – we must feel collaterally the vellication it generates, the philosopher's vitality circulating under it, as "Rousseau" presses against the preacher's forehead, breathing on him. To recall Yeats's "Leda and the Swan," did *le*

prédicateur “put on” Rousseau’s “knowledge with his power”?¹ If so, he cannot acknowledge it.

Evidently, repelling the nonhuman is a widespread malady: Not just this ecclesiastic, but “the run of preachers” (*C*, p. 170) throughout the country resuscitate things and invoke them to speak, only to suppress their breath by insisting that these objects remain inertly obedient. Yet, contradictions abound, for the preacher renders his hat contiguous with the sacred by placing it on the pulpit while simultaneously profaning it by using it to beckon Rousseau. Further, while denying the human–nonhuman connection between his hat and the philosopher, he forgets that he likewise summons Christ as he “kisses” his crucifix and “presses it to his heart” (*C*, p. 170). He resists and embraces human–nonhuman belonging when he denies the idea that this “square cap” can “speak,” but then, simply by invoking his cap as Rousseau, he creates the *possibility* that his flock could appreciate that the “voice” of this thing has the capacity to embody abstractions, to undermine an authoritarian position, to bridge and trouble relations between the human and nonhuman, and to do what the preacher will not do, but which *Corinne* and other texts I analyze will. He liberates his cap, only to try to reimprison it. The novel reveals that if austere paternalistic figures – like the preacher, like both the junior and senior Lord Nelvils, and like other characters I study throughout – could, in good faith, listen to the nonhuman’s heartbeat, they could resuscitate the connection between the body and mind. This breathing together could, potentially, unleash the senses and the imagination and link the material to female virtue and to physical and noetic potential.²

2.1 Virtue, Love, and Survival

Chapter 1 interpreted the radiance of marble flesh, showing how it illuminated intersections among gender, materiality, and vitality. While there I focused on a single being – the *Venus de’ Medici* – and here I turn to the plurality of things *Corinne* and Oswald discover in Italy, this chapter pursues similar interweavings as statues and characters interact. For example, as the *Venus* initiated a conversation concerning how humans and things can belong *with* each other, so does this chapter address

¹ William Butler Yeats, “Leda and the Swan”: “Being so caught up, / So mastered by the brute blood of the air, / Did she put on his knowledge with his power . . .” See *The Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats* (London: Macmillan, 1933; rpt. 1973), ll. 12–15, p. 241.

² The conceit of breath as linked to women’s freedom runs through *On Germany* as well: in small towns, one is “less able . . . to breathe” (pp. 101–102).

whether a woman or statue's sumptuous materiality – her thinginess – can belong *with* virtue, defined according to the classical prototype rather than the antifeminist one so current in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.³ Here Spinoza aptly argues that “the foundation of virtue is [the] very striving to preserve one's own being” (*Ethics*, IVP18si). With his philosophy in mind, I ask, must Corinne die? Does her own materiality have to be broken like the arms on the *Venus Belvedere* for her to achieve “virtue”? Or rather, can female imperfection coexist with love and creative striving, as we saw with the *Venus* and in *Belinda*? Can nationalities exuberantly cohabitate like objects do in the Tribuna, flourishing as both individuals and neighbors, or must they be rigorously sequestered? As the *Venus* embodies the storyline of political and female oppression and freedom, so do things in *Corinne* come to incarnate the chronicle of women's right to ethical and material liberty.

Through roughly sixteen out of *Corinne*'s twenty books, the heroine's every action – from her calling as an *improvisatrice* to her exchanges with her environment, art, and friends – provides a theory of and model for how to practice human–nonhuman connection. As I illuminate in Section 2.3, the novel conceives of *belonging with* as both energizing and healing, as well as providing an antidote to the urge to possess. For example, Corinne, exercising her right to connect with things, also sustains her *élan vital*, for to her, things radiate intelligibility. In line with tourists' sense that they have a relationship with the *Venus*, the heroine interprets Rome as a broad-ranging consciousness, describing it as a “living being,” its buildings and ruins as “friends,” and as a city wherein “the intimate union of the soul with external objects” revives “enthusiasm” (*C*, p. 277). This quotation introduces her thing theory's central core, one which starkly diverges from the preacher's described in this chapter's *préambule*: She believes that thought and love are contiguous with, not opposed to, sensuous attention to nonhuman dynamism. Thus, “Rome's marvelous charm lies not only in the actual beauty of its monuments but also in the interest they arouse by stimulating thought, and this kind of interest increases daily with each new piece of research” (*C*, pp. 83–84). The more one belongs with these monuments – via the “soul” and in “new” studies – the more one is liberated to love the human and nonhuman and the healthier is the

³ For example, Plato's four cardinal virtues are temperance, justice, wisdom, and courage. Other, more specific subcategories emerge throughout history: creativity, open-mindedness, persistence, integrity, altruistic love, forgiveness, gratitude, hope, and generosity. In contrast, Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* throughout critiques the false female “virtues” of passivity, pleasing, ignorance, and innocence levied on women.

political environment. As Lori Marso explains, “in arguing that love is political and [that] the first important quality of a good *citizen* is to have knowledge of how to love,” Staël advocates for “*interdependence, rather than autonomy*” and “for *moral engagement* as opposed to detachment as the model for political interaction.”⁴ As the *Venus* helps tourists explore the contours of gender and materiality, so too does Corinne guide her lover, Oswald, to interrogate these intimate and political relationships, awakening him to the way things move and have the capacity to move the human.

2.2 Oswald's Antimaterialism

The heroine believes that Nelvil's physical-emotional-intellectual engagement with Italy's pulsating materials will cure his antimaterialism by drawing him magnetically toward the life force of things and impel him to disown the self-loathing that possesses him, one that insists he embrace his father's – and the British patriarchy's – declamatory proscriptions: fidelity to an obstinate nationalism which smothers women. According to this reasoning, if Corinne and Oswald were to marry, she would have to be his possession, rather than sharing a relationship of *belonging with*, since this “run of” men, like the *préambule's* “run of preachers” (C, p. 170) invokes things (and women) only to squelch them. As his father writes, “[a] man born in our fortunate native land must, above all, be English. He must fulfil his duties as a citizen . . . and in a country where political institutions give men honourable opportunities for action and public appearances, women must stay in the shade” (C, p. 318). Such an insistence on dematerializing women and disenfranchising them from the right to agency, is both a French and English problem. As Vallois states, “[t]he Civil Code and Napoleonic Code (1805), with all their institutional force, mark the end of the revolution for women and finalize the splitting of public space along sexual lines, thus formalizing the dichotomy between masculine public and feminine private space.”⁵ The elder Nelvil's call to arms maintains that if Oswald were to marry Corinne, “he would certainly

⁴ “The Loving Citizen: Germaine de Staël's *Delphine*,” *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 5 (1997): 109–131, pp. 121, 122; emphasis original. *Considerations on the Principal Events of the French Revolution* (LF ed.) (Liberty Fund, 2008), part II, ch. xviii, p. 259. <https://oll.libertyfund.org/title/craiutu-considerations-on-the-principal-events-of-the-french-revolution-lf-ed>

⁵ “Exotic Femininity and the Rights of Man: *Paul et Virginie* and *Atala*, or the Revolution in Stasis,” in Meltzer and Rabine, p. 183.

love her greatly, for no one could be more attractive [*“séduisante”*],⁶ and then, to please her, he would try to introduce foreign ways into his house. Soon he would lose the national spirit, the prejudices, if you like, which unite us and our nation” (*C*, p. 318).⁷ Such dogmas beget what Katherine Binhammer identifies as “The Sex Panic of the 1790s,” in which the need develops

to police and control the sexual practices of women. British national honor is at stake in the battle against licentiousness, profligacy, immorality, and debauchery, and the nation's women need to be mobilized for the cause. . . . The hysterical discourses around the French Revolution produced the consensus that female sexuality – since it influenced the political state of a nation – was a matter of national security. In linking sexuality to the health of the nation . . . , social commentators claim that the state of the nation can be judged . . . through the manners of its women.⁸

Lord Nelvil Senior's fears push each of these buttons, especially the notion that his son would become the “unhealthy” vassal of the “licentious” Corinne, and that, under her command, they would invert gender roles, with him becoming a passive husband. Nelvil's father agonizes that Corinne's “excessive” independence, beauty, and seductive charms will put England's “national security” at risk. Nationalism was on the rise when *Corinne* appeared, and John Isbell notes that the first use of the French word *nationalité* appears in the novel (*C*, “Introduction,” p. xii). When Oswald reveals that loving Corinne would lead to “the disapproval of England” (*C*, p. 107), he abdicates his own right to choose. In doing so, he succumbs to abstractions and anticipates Nancy's understanding that as soon as love is represented as “foreign” or “hostile” to another entity – “the city and to religion” – it becomes subject to the “procedures of control.”⁹

⁶ I capitalize on the fact that “*séduisante*” can mean that she is “attractive” (as Raphael translates it), but it may also imply that she is an active seducer: “*Si mon fils épousait miss Edgermond, il l'aimerait sûrement beaucoup, car il est impossible d'être plus séduisante*” (Balayé, p. 467).

⁷ Avriel H. Goldberger explains that Staël uses “four words which all seem to mean ‘country,’” but which are “not precisely synonymous. . . . *Corinne* is . . . an attack on patriarchy; thus the Latin derivation of *patrie*, with its connotation ‘land of the father,’ can hardly be ignored.” “Germaine de Staël's *Corinne*: Challenges to the Translator in the 1980s,” *The French Review* 63.5 (1990): 800–809, p. 803.

⁸ *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 6.3 (1996): 409–434, pp. 417–418.

⁹ *The Inoperative Community*, ed. Peter Connor and trans. Peter Connor, Lisa Garbus, Michael Holland, and Simona Sawhney, *Theory and History of Literature*, vol. 76 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), p. 93.

2.3 Corinne's Thing Theory

Like all the writers I explore, Staël develops a theory and practicum for relational models between the human and nonhuman, though *Corinne's* is the most explicitly developed. This novel contends that a state of *belonging with* generates healing – especially of a mind held fast to abstractions and alienated from the body. How might stimulating the somatosensory system to achieve an intimacy with things, the narrative asks, lead to more salubrious communities and repaired political systems, and how might it rebalance women's lives by offering them the right to enfold matter positively? In short, the heroine develops a theory of things to help Oswald join the fluid and material world and to help him take on what Spinoza would call virtuous striving – the striving to exist – which would, of course, allow him to love Corinne and forgive himself.

Abstractions and generalizing ideologies, Corinne recognizes, more completely bewitch Oswald than material energies, or indeed women themselves.¹⁰ She sees that, for him, these have become irresistible par-amours: “Habits, memories, and circumstances create some kind of an embrace [*enlacement*] around us that even passionate love cannot destroy” (C, p. 137; Balayé, p. 213). The French helps us understand the paradox she strives for, since *enlacement* at once accentuates the tight hold but also the intertwining and sensuous embrace of these habits and memories. This explains why Corinne believes that practicing thing attentiveness will offer moral and ethical alternatives to Oswald's paternalism and nationalism, why she emphasizes how things, generally debased and associated with the feminine, could in fact inspire Nelvil's mind and spirit, and why she urges him to forego trying to possess her as if she were his property. Such epiphanies would then lead to an awareness that both characters have the right to self-expression.¹¹ As surely as she integrates women into public life and the life of the mind, so does she strive holistically to integrate corporeality and thought; we see this when, in resuscitating the full-bodied object for Oswald, she brings a feminist

¹⁰ For Toril Moi, “*Corinne* issues a challenge to its readers, asking us whether we are capable of acknowledging a woman as a human being without converting her into an abstraction.” See “A Woman's Desire to Be Known: Expressivity and Silence in *Corinne*,” *Bucknell Review* 45.2 (2002): 143–175, p. 158.

¹¹ In arguing that “*Corinne* can and should be read as a novel advocating life as art,” Madelyn Gutwirth claims that Staël “strives to heal . . . the traditional split in the female image” and that her “conception of art does not split our intimate world from the objective one but, in Romanticism's way, strives to harmonize the two” (*Madame de Staël, Novelist: The Emergence of the Artist as Woman* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978) pp. 243, 242).

perspective to materiality. Her longing to appease his strident nationalism and the death wish that accompanies it, and her longing to help him belong with Italy's glowing materiality and women's mobile freedom is simultaneously a longing for him to belong with her, since Italy embodies almost all that makes Corinne, Corinne.

If he could practice connecting to the nonhuman and taking on prismatic thinking, she espouses, he could "reflect, decompose, and recombine" the universe's "wonders" (C, p. 29). Such actions would inspire a sense of *belonging with*, one that advances an ethical alternative to his stubborn faith in abstractions, specifically his nationalism and its compulsory gender constrictions. April Alliston persuasively demonstrates that, by the novel's end, "the heroine's transformation into a ghost . . . completes Staël's Gothic reinscription of female desire into the patrimonial plot."¹² I would add that the novel addresses not just the problem of Corinne as apparition, but abstract thinking's own ghost-like nature, given that its absence of sensuous, prismatic contact with the material bars access to a specificity that inspires belonging with others, one that helps characters think less dualistically and hierarchically, given that "the chief problem with dualistic thinking is . . . its enmeshment with *relations of domination and exclusion*."¹³ *Corinne* affirms, then, that because human–nonhuman belonging evades possession, abstraction, and dualism, it enables one to assert personal rights. Clearly, Corinne has her work cut out for her. In the following sections, I outline Corinne's thing-theory methods.

2.3.1 *Encouraging the Human and Nonhuman to Imprint on Each Other*

Teaching her thing-theory practicum to Oswald, Corinne first adopts a non-binarizing, desubjectivizing outlook in which he would, ideally, strive to experience others, other things, and other eras "from their center," an experience wherein art, tourism, history, and love imprint energy upon each other. This practice follows from Schlegel's notion that one should "block out . . . personal predilections and blind habits in order to transpose [oneself] into the singularities of other peoples and ages, and to experience

¹² *Virtue's Faults: Correspondences in Eighteenth-Century British and French Women's Fiction* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 208.

¹³ Caroline Braunmühl, "Beyond Hierarchical Oppositions: A Feminist Critique of Karen Barad's Agential Realism," *Feminist Theory* 19.2 (2018): 223–240, p. 227; emphasis original. She does not discuss *Corinne*.

them from their center as it were.”¹⁴ If humans resuscitate their interest in things as belongings, the things themselves give back, imprinting a rich, educational impact, a sensory infusion that surpasses merely reading history: “[A]fter seeing the Roman ruins, we believe in the ancient Romans as if we had lived in their day. Intellectual memories are acquired by study. Memories of the imagination stem from a more immediate, more profound *impression*, which gives life to our thoughts and makes us, as it were, witnesses of what we have learned” (*C*, p. 64; emphasis added). Physical objects literally “*impress*” – physically imprint – knowledge that incarnates our ideas, rendering us witnesses to history. Such faith in materiality’s generative work anticipates Bill Brown’s suggestion that New Materialist critics should attempt to “contribute to a materialist phenomenology that does not bracket history, but asks . . . how . . . human subjects and nonhuman objects constitute one another.”¹⁵ This concept affirms that mutual imprinting between the human and nonhuman is possible and necessary and that, as Staël later articulates in *l’Allemagne*, “[u]nderstanding is a combination of the knowledge of men and things [“*choses*”]; and society, in which men act without object [“*but*”], and yet with interest, is precisely that which best develops the most opposite faculties” (*G*, p. 34). Thus, attempting to develop and sustain antinomies in fact nourishes human–nonhuman connection.

The novel puts into action this theory that things and humans can reciprocally *impress* each other when characters’ interactions radiate from the “center,” as Schlegel describes, rather than from only one pole, as dualistic or possessive models proffer. For example, Corinne’s friend, Castel-Forte, says that she has imprinted her vitality onto her things and that they have received and retained that liveliness. In the books, the places, and the pictures she has shared with him “there is a spark of her life. If I had to exist far away from her, I should at least want to surround myself with them in the certainty that nowhere else would I find again that trace of fire, . . . that trace of herself, which she has left on them” (*C*, p. 26). Castel-Forte exemplifies *belonging with*, for he experiences

¹⁴ Quoted in Rodolphe Gasché, *The Honor of Thinking: Critique, Theory, Philosophy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), p. 181. See August Wilhelm Schlegel, *Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Literatur* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1966), vol. 1, pp. 19, 18. I don’t use the verb “melded,” as Gayle Levy does (since I avoid symbiosis), but admire her suggestion that “*Corinne* emblemizes both a new kind of genius . . . and at the same time a new kind of society, a utopian society in which Italian emotion and passion are melded with English government” (p. 251). See “A Genius for the Modern Era: Madame de Staël’s *Corinne*,” *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 30.3–4 (2002): 243–254.

¹⁵ *Other Things*, p. 57.

things and humans as permeable enough to absorb and refract each other's energy. Corinne herself offers another example: She intuits that things, themselves, sensing and thinking, can register ranges between human nobility and corruption. As the hero and heroine follow "the sacred way or the triumphal way," she says to Oswald that "[t]he ancient dust must have been amazed to bear such a chariot. But since the Roman Republic, the footprints of so much wickedness have been left on this road that the respectful feeling it used to inspire is greatly reduced" (C, p. 62).¹⁶ Here the dust – the earth – *feels* and registers contact with what is ethical. Some contemporary thing-theory critics would suggest that this is a merely anthropomorphic and thus necessarily exploitative move on the novel's part, one wherein humans project their own ideas onto the supposedly inanimate so as to dominate it. Conversely, Corinne recognizes that the dust and the chariot impress and imprint their thoughts and sensations on each other; and throughout, she strives to liberate Oswald from his own narrow projections by working to resuscitate his relationship with the material world, such that he will not need to possess her in order to breathe; as he says, "if, near you, I can breathe, [but] what will become of me when I must go back to my fate?" (C, p. 52) – that is, when he renounces *belonging with* for *separation from*. The text's theoretical logic relies on the premise that encouraging the nonhuman to imprint the human and vice versa can spark a reciprocal giving of the gift of life.

2.3.2 Defamiliarizing and Loving the Nonhuman

In a second way, the novel emphasizes an interconnected thing-theory practice that promotes alliances between nonhuman and human communities. Part of this process – whether it comes first or second is indeterminable – defamiliarizes our ways of looking, so we can gaze with a "keener eye" (C, p. 82) at things we generally disregard. As Corinne and Oswald gaze on Vesuvius, a mountain exploding a bright red "river of fire," the narrator emphasizes that ideas or symbols, if wedded to material grounding, can stimulate transformation, but first we must seek them out and then actually notice them: "The phenomenon of Vesuvius makes the heart really beat. Usually we are so *familiar* with external objects that we barely notice their existence, and we hardly ever have a new emotion about them in our prosaic countries" (C, pp. 193–194; emphasis added). A viewer who connects to Vesuvius, who sees and listens to it, who feels

¹⁶ She refers to the chariot which escorted her to the Capitol.

the volcano make her heart beat, comes to *belong with* it. As the narrator says, this is rare, since we generally do not notice much of anything, but when we do, “the amazement which the universe ought to arouse is renewed . . . and our whole being is moved by nature’s power, from which society’s arrangements have so long distracted us” (*C*, pp. 193–194). This moment of transcendence from subjectivity and from custom is inextricably connected to love, since affection and respect for the nonhuman – neighborly respect and companionability – is predicated on listening vigilantly to material objects.¹⁷ *Corinne's* thing theory works, momentarily, since Oswald, moving up the mountain on horseback, halfway to Vesuvius’s summit, feels that “the more his heart was filled with the generous thoughts aroused by nature and history, the more he adored *Corinne*” (*C*, p. 200). In effect, kinesthesia and a keener eye exhort him to love.

Staël champions the idea that love rouses us to a “beloved object” as well as to works of genius (*G*, p. 172). Winckelmann, she says, offered a standard for this:

No one before him had united such exact and profound observation with admiration so animated; it is thus only that we can comprehend the fine arts. The attention they excite must be awakened by love; and we must discover in the *chefs d'oeuvre* of genius, as we do in the features of a beloved object, a thousand charms, which are revealed to us by the sentiments they inspire. (*G*, p. 172)

Corinne consistently highlights how material attentiveness reinforces a loving companionship with the nonhuman:

The most beautiful artistic monuments, the most wonderful statues, have been thrown into the Tiber and are hidden beneath its waters. Who knows if someone will not divert it from its bed one day to look for them? But when you think that the masterpieces of human genius are perhaps there in front of us, and that a keener eye would see them through the waters, you experience an indescribable emotion which, in many guises, is continually revived in Rome and makes your thoughts find *companionship* in physical objects which everywhere else are dumb.¹⁸ (*C*, pp. 81–82; emphasis added)

¹⁷ Winifried Wehle fittingly calls the volcano “*une kinesthésie de l'éruptif*,” which breaks the “spell” (*envoûtement*) of culture and conventionality. See “Trauma et éruption : La littérature comme mise en scène de l'inconscient: Réflexions sur *Corinne ou l'Italie* de Madame de Staël,” *Revue d'Histoire littéraire de la France* 110.1 (2010): 35–64, p. 55.

¹⁸ “*l'on éprouve je ne sais quelle émotion qui renait à Rome sans cesse sous diverses formes, et fait trouver une société pour la pensée dans les objets physiques, muets par-tout ailleurs*” (Balayé, pp. 135–136).

That “physical objects” can make thoughts “find companionship” (*société*) with them when “a keener eye” – one that can see even “through the waters” – sees and listens, that connection links personal intimacy and social organization. When love rouses attentiveness toward physical objects, it ripens that excessive radiance inherent in *belonging with*.

This practice of finding “companionship with things” – of loving the thing – is a topic I will explore throughout *Embodied Experience* and that I asked in [Chapter 1](#): How can viewers belong with the *Venus de' Medici*, rather than attempting to possess or feel conquered by her? And, as I discuss in [Chapter 3](#), how can one choose a diamond or wife without exploiting it or her on the market for the highest price? How can one, in searching for a companion, avoid treating her, as Hervey treats Rachel-Virginia, as an *objet d'art*, as living property he seeks to sculpt into something that suits him? These questions apply to *Corinne*, as well, given that the third practice the heroine urges him to resist is trying to take custody of anyone or anything. This is to say that Corinne's viewpoint on belonging, longing, and property shares the same positive aspects as the other texts I examine, though hers differs from Oswald's, since he prefers possessing. Accordingly, the heroine advocates for the kind of *belonging with* that Edgeworth, and, as we shall see, Wordsworth and Burney also support.

2.3.3 *Belonging With, Rather Than Possessing*

Spurning property-mongering in her philosophies about materiality and artistic creation, Corinne says that improvisations are “for me . . . like a lively conversation. I don't let myself be bound by any particular subject” (*C*, p. 45–46);¹⁹ because of this, they provide a template for interconnections between human–nonhuman relationships. Here Melissa Ianetta's point is apt: In not writing out Corinne's improvisations, Staël “submerg[es] the notions of originality in an intuitive, audience-oriented invention process”; further, the heroine's improvisations “sprin[g] not from her own desires” but from the audience's “collective will.”²⁰ At this stage, Corinne expands her being by connecting to the human and nonhuman, a process which defuses self-involved emotions such as shame, possessiveness, and

¹⁹ Angela Esterhammer offers an indispensable and sustained study of *Corinne* and improvisation in *Romanticism and Improvisation, 1750–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

²⁰ “She Must Be a Rare One”: Aspasia, *Corinne*, and the Improvisatrice Tradition,” *PMLA* 123.1 (2008): 92–108, p. 106.

hopeless sorrow, partly because it reminds her that each *thing* has a separate life while remaining linked to others. Extending this idea to ecology and preservation, the text reads that “[i]n our day could there be places sacred enough not to be laid waste by greed? (C, p. 86). I will discuss this topic further in relation to Wordsworth’s *The Ruined Cottage*, where such *belonging with* also has ecological implications. *Corinne*’s philosophy anticipates Nancy’s assertion that “*meaning is itself the sharing of Being*” (BSP, p. 2; emphasis original) when she more lyrically says “that people become dearer to each other when, together, they admire monuments whose true greatness speaks to the soul”; responding, Oswald can only repeat that he “need[s] no other marvels” except her (C, p. 56). *Corinne*, trying to open his mind to *belonging with*, asserts that “I must know if there is anything other than you in the world . . . and if the feeling you arouse in me is to absorb every other interest and every other thought,” but Oswald counters: “Do you want to stop loving me then?” (C, p. 89) – a suffocating turn toward possession and, in fact, an amorous version of colonialism.

2.3.4 *Embracing Art That Heals*

In a fourth exercise, *Corinne* suggests that if Oswald could connect to certain kinds of art, he could shift from a state of fragmentation to one of *belonging with*.²¹ Given that the novel never separates the individual from the community or art from politics, I investigate the links binding nationalism, tyranny, and what the novel calls “modern” art (post early modern), which licenses the singular over the singular plural and lionizes grief as its noblest emotion. She posits instead, as I will show, that the healing power of classical sculpture and the political regime that gave birth to it could provide a tonic for Oswald. To dramatize these two aesthetic sensibilities (the ancient and the modern), *Corinne* makes ekphrastic use of sculpture, for the statues behave as characters themselves and in this process the novel summons the double conceit of stone changing into human flesh and human flesh petrifying into stone so as to connect nationalism to “modern” art’s inability to appease suffering. The novel further embodies this conceit in *Corinne*’s creative paralysis, figured as a calcifying into marble; but unlike the *Venus de’ Medici*, she cannot move, an inertness ending with the character’s virtual suicide.

²¹ I make this claim for this novel, but not for all of Staël’s works.

2.3.5 *Embodied Cosmopolitanism*

As a fifth exercise for *belonging with*, the novel advises performing what I call “embodied cosmopolitanism.” This helps one to achieve the right to personal and political expression, a fitting substitute for Oswald’s nationalism, since by connecting to Roman things, he could practice becoming less politically unbending, less severe in his proscriptions for women’s roles, and less proprietary in love. Embodied cosmopolitanism spotlights each country’s domestic particularities while simultaneously encouraging a sympathetic interaction with the beings of other nations. Inspiring a *belonging with* between Oswald and Italian monuments, she hopes he will embrace both the universal and the local and express allegiance to particularity, rather than employing only abstract ideologies as his guide.²² Such practice could help cleanse toxic national affiliation and implement an “internationalist ethics of the everyday,” as Bruce Robbins writes.²³ This personal and political cosmopolitanism requires an affective commitment to objects rather than to abstractions and entails pledging oneself to *belonging with*. Even Oswald, having heard Corinne’s improvisation at the Capitol, intuits this when he wonders “how would it be, then, if he could simultaneously find memories of his native land, and through the imagination, receive a new life, [with Corinne] if he could be reborn for the future without breaking with the past!” (C, p. 35). A daily focus on the material thus helps viewers practice cosmopolitanism that could be transferred to the wider political domain. As Robbins reminds us, noticing the everyday stimulates “the habit of transnational connection” a practice which can be “rooted in routine duties and pleasures as well as in once-in-a-lifetime renunciations, made part of ordinary culture.”²⁴ Corinne’s goals foresee Robbins’s advice, for eschewing nationalist prejudices becomes an exercise that requires recognizing – as far as humans can – the power and integrity of particular things themselves. The cosmopolitan

²² Béatrice Didier explores cosmopolitanism from the perspective of language: “The beginning of *Corinne* is illuminated by a dream of transparency, stemming from the cosmopolitanism of the Enlightenment and that of Madame de Staël Yet, while the cosmopolitan Enlightenment adopted French as a universal language, in *Corinne* the diversity of languages is recognized and magnified: it does not constitute an obstacle to communication.” See “Paroles et silences dans *Corinne ou l’Italie*,” *Op. cit.* 13.11 (1999): 161–166, p. 162, and Esther Wohlgenut, who argues that Corinne is a “dissonant figur[e]” who “challenge[s] romantic fantasies of national union advanced in the nineteenth-century national tale.” See *Romantic Cosmopolitanism* (New York and London: Palgrave, 2009), pp. 8–9, 121–124.

²³ *Feeling Global: Internationalism in Distress* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), p. 23.

²⁴ *Feeling Global*, p. 23.

point of view sees with a “keener eye” (C, p. 82), one helping render the intellect and emotions more agile.

A workshop in embodied cosmopolitanism could thereby prompt Nelvil to exchange a nationalism unmoored from things for a cosmopolitanism rich in material textures. Corinne thus deploys her own thing theory to provide a foundation for achieving two revolutionary hopes: greater agency for women and political liberty.²⁵ The cosmopolitan options the novel intimates – though never set forth systematically – find their foundation in learning how to focus on the concrete. Additionally, cosmopolitan embodiment helps open any perspective that concentrates solely on one theory. Corinne, recalling her study of English literature, observes that it “was my destiny to have particular advantages because of the unusual circumstances of my dual education, and if I may put it that way, two different nationalities” (C, p. 256). Her “advantages” open her mind to a pluralistic outlook, which, among other traits, “priz[es] association over division.”²⁶ For this reason, the novel never endorses embodied cosmopolitanism as symbiosis; in fact, Staël realizes that if countries merged, “the vanquished would in time modify the victors, and in the end both would be losers” (G, p. 18). A country, then, should draw inspiration from, but not imitate or appropriate, another nation’s “things.” Neither does she posit this political practice as a fantasy of total openness but advocates for ways it could liberate a contracted patriotism. She draws a parallel between Oswald’s “love affair” with English nationalism and the French tendency, as Staël sees it, to withdraw rigidly into their own rules and expel artistic influences from without – “[w]e need not . . . encircle the frontiers of literary France with the great wall of China, to prevent all exterior ideas from penetrating within” (G, p. 24). In doing so, she unexpectedly associates Oswald, the ultimate British ambassador, with France, since, like that country, he resists learning from anyone or anything outside of his respective border. In *Delphine's* preface (1802), Staël reasons that, for the French, a true national literature is only possible “when we read the writing of a nation whose outlook and feelings are very different from [ours]”; then “our mind is excited by new comparisons, our imagination is enlivened as

²⁵ For Gutwirth, the “Corinne Myth” rendered *Corinne* “revolutionary,” enabling Staël “to posit a counter-patriarchal, feminine cult of transcendence through art.” See “Seeing *Corinne* Afresh,” in *The Novel's Seductions: Staël's Corinne in Critical Inquiry*, ed. Karyna Szmurlo (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1999), p. 31.

²⁶ Jon Klancher, “Discriminations, or Romantic Cosmopolitanisms in London,” in *Romantic Metropolis: The Urban Scene of British Culture, 1780–1840*, ed. James Chandler and Kevin Gilmartin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 66.

much by the audacities it condemns as by those it approves.”²⁷ As Benjamin Barber proposes – and this seems very close to *Corinne* – to “bypass our particular neighborhood . . . is to risk ending up nowhere” except in mere “abstraction and disembodiment.”²⁸ Likewise, the novel’s tourists can only practice embodied cosmopolitanism by engaging with a country’s people and their distinctive artistic works.

Envisioning regional particularity and worldwide influence breathing together, Staël imagines a community which can hold in equipoise a simultaneous comingling of an “ethnocentric nationalism and particularistic multiculturalism.”²⁹ Accordingly, I interpret the correlations between the individual words in the novel’s title, *Corinne ou l’Italie*, along these lines, wherein the relationship’s dynamism can comprise the individual and the larger community. Thus, *Corinne*’s cosmopolitanism does not become “a paranoid fantasy of ubiquity and omniscience,” but one that indicates a “more general sense of ‘belonging’ to parts of the world other than one’s nation. . . . Instead of renouncing cosmopolitanism as a false universal, one can embrace it as an impulse to knowledge that is shared with others.”³⁰ In turn, this “impulse” toward sharing knowledge mirrors the need for men to share independence with women.

In Section 2.4, I explore how the heroine takes on this loving labor as she puts her thing theories into practice. Rather than suggesting a union or a melding among humans and nations, Corinne embraces a holistic, nonbinary outlook.³¹ This is a kind of individuation that requires connecting, resisting possession, honoring the nonhuman, and turning toward healing art and embodied cosmopolitanism. This is, in fact, the lesson Rome itself teaches: “In Rome, that vast caravanserai, everything is foreign, even the Romans, who seem to live there not like owners, but like pilgrims

²⁷ trans. Avriel H. Goldberger (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1995), p. 6.

²⁸ “Constitutional Faith,” in *For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism*, Martha C. Nussbaum with respondents, ed. Joshua Cohen (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1996), p. 34.

²⁹ Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen, “Introduction: Conceiving Cosmopolitanism,” in *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism: Theory, Context, and Practice*, ed. Vertovec and Cohen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 1. The editors define cosmopolitanism as “a vision of global democracy and world citizenship”; a way of “shaping new transnational frameworks for making links between social movements”; and a system for “advocat[ing] a non-communitarian, post-identity politics of overlapping interests and heterogeneous or hybrid publics in order to challenge conventional notions of belonging, identity, and citizenship” (p. 1).

³⁰ Robbins, “Comparative Cosmopolitanism,” *Social Text* 31/32 (1992): 169–186, pp. 183, 173, 181; also see pp. 173–181.

³¹ James Harriman-Smith suggests instead that *Corinne* hopes to meld England and Italy, arguing that *Romeo and Juliet*’s inclusion offers “an emblem of the possible union between the two countries and their inhabitants in terms of imagination and feeling.” See “Une tragédie possible: *Corinne, ou l’Italie et Roméo et Juliette*,” *Études françaises* 51.1 (2015): 125–140, p. 129.

resting beside the ruins” (C, p. 20). “Resting beside,” *Corinne’s* thing theory advocates, could help create the conditions that would allow the heroine and her lover – and collaterally Italy, France, and England – to *belong with*.

2.4 Practicing Thing Theory with Oswald: Visiting the Pantheon, St. Peters, and Classical Sculpture

Mary Jacobus suggests that we should try to “think through things”; to this I would add that we should *move toward* things.³² *Corinne* offers this dual challenge to Oswald as they visit Roman sites, not so that he can employ art appreciation or aesthetic judgment, but so that she can teach him to exercise sensual responses to matter, ones correcting his abstract ideas and melancholy affect. That is, although *Corinne* includes elements of aesthetic theory, the last thing the heroine wants is Oswald philosophizing about what constitutes aesthetic judgment or taste. Thus, while the preacher only throws his cap “into the centre of the pulpit and [gives] it the task of representing Jean-Jacques” (C, p. 170), the heroine activates a kinesthetic interaction with objects, of which there are many – so many, in fact, that until the close of the nineteenth century the *Bibliothèque Nationale* classified *Corinne* under the category “travel guide.”³³ Though some readers criticize the surfeit of sites and things to see, most agree that these advance both plot and characterization.³⁴ Serge Serodes explains that Staël’s own travel notebooks, the source from which *Corinne* partially springs, become a “laboratory where . . . lived experience is converted, almost on the spot, into romantic virtuality.”³⁵ Likewise, I suggest that when characters breathe with these art objects, they enter a “laboratory” where they transport themselves toward affective energies.³⁶

The *Venus de’ Medici* electrified viewers and writers because she mobilized their textual and physical bodies; *Corinne* understands the wisdom of

³² *Romantic Things*, p. 4.

³³ Vallois, “Old Idols, New Subject: Germaine de Staël and Romanticism,” in *Germaine de Staël: Crossing the Borders*, ed. Madelyn Gutwirth, Ariele Goldberger, and Karyna Szmurlo (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1991), p. 87. See Simone Balayé’s *Les Carnets de voyage de Madame de Staël* (Geneva: Droz, 1971), p. 16.

³⁴ For example, see Balayé, “Politique et société dans l’œuvre staëlienne: l’exemple de *Corinne*,” *Cahiers de l’Association internationale des études françaises* 46 (1994): 53–67, p. 54.

³⁵ “Madame de Staël entre voyage et roman: *Corinne ou l’Italie*,” in *The Documentary Impulse in French Literature*, ed. Buford Norman and Marja Warehime (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2001), pp. 41–42.

³⁶ Nanette Le Coat similarly observes that *Corinne* “show[s] Oswald the sights/sites of Italy, for in doing so, she hopes to bind him to the place” (emphasis original). See “Places of Memory: History Writing in Staël’s *Corinne*,” in Szmurlo, p. 142.

such kinesis, for its protagonists move toward and among things which vivify, teach, and unhinge them. Their travels through Rome and its outskirts, which require physical effort – walking, looking, craning the neck, and twisting the body, actions that in sculpture *contrapposto* instantiates – recall how tourism, because it intensifies one's participation with an environment, increases intellectual and somatic suppleness. Relocating among things which vivify, baffle, and teach him, Oswald will breathe deeply, rather than sit suffocating in constrained rooms. And this exercise and breath, resetting his engrained fixations, will remind him that he has the right to love Corinne.³⁷ Further, the specific things he sees are crucial, and it is crucial that readers know them; thus, while Mariella Bonifacio's, "Venezia e il tempo sospeso in *Corinne ou l'Italie*," argues that Staël's "geographical theme – her insertion of learned *exposés* about Rome, Naples, and Venice – is there to create a diversion from the love story,"³⁸ I claim that *Corinne* so tightly interweaves the geographical and the architectural with the hero and heroine's growing affection that these accounts cannot be disjointed from the plot's many turns, or from the emphasis on loving things.

2.4.1 *The Pantheon*

To counterbalance Oswald's faith in nationalism and patriarchal antagonism, Corinne first escorts him to the Pantheon (Figure 2.1), an apt place for beginning recovery from rigidly obeying his father and fatherland since architecturally it provides an eidolon in its spaciousness for new, less

³⁷ Nancy Rogers analyzes how book I, chapter 1, which describes Oswald, "contains not a single concrete adjective, not even one of color, leaving Oswald in the gray, sad mists of vagueness" (p. 41); it further lacks "vivid adverbs," an absence which "contributes to the colorless nature of the portraiture. Verbs as well, are essentially dull, and in the opening chapter are most often either static, *faire, dire, savoir*, etc., or variations of the copula (*être*);" conversely, book II, chapter 1, describing Corinne, "displays a more vivid verbal and adverbial field . . . and includes "an important cluster of verbs" pertaining "to the senses – *voir, apercevoir, entendre, remarquer*, etc." (p. 43). While Rogers is not discussing materiality's significance in *Corinne*, her insightful findings reinforce my argument that Staël uses material means – here diction and prose style – to emphasize Oswald's "colorless," abstract state, one Corinne strives to revivify with action and sensuous detail. See "Undermining and Overloading: Presentational Style in *Corinne*," in Szmurlo.

³⁸ *Quaderni veneti* 35 (2002): 9–27, pp. 21–22. My translations. Jean-Marie Roulin also maintains that "in scrutinizing the past to establish a present," *Corinne* renders the journey narrative an "inventory of the material and spiritual goods of Italy in an attempt to index the scattered members of what could be a body or, better, a nation." From my view, the novel neither catalogues the material nor does it advocate viewing to encourage national identity. "*Corinne*. Roman et souci patrimonial," in *Madame de Staël, Corinne ou l'Italie: L'âme se mêle à tout*, ed. José-Luis Diaz (Paris: SEDES, 1999), p. 172.



Figure 2.1 Giovanni Paolo Panini, *The Interior of the Pantheon, Rome* (c. 1734). Courtesy of The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

constraining thoughts, for living vitally with death, and for experiencing redemption via movement. "Thinking ecologically" because she is "taking the whole network in view,"³⁹ Corinne places Oswald in an ecosystem which she hopes will mirror his internal experience. For example, the heroine highlights how the monument, in existing simultaneously as a tomb and as a radiant, open sphere, could offer a healing place for him. Its varying historical deposits – Catholic, Classical Roman, and Classical Greek – establish it as free from nationalism or one dominating religion, for though called *Santa Maria Rotonda*, Agrippa "dedicate[d] it to all the gods of Olympus to replace the earthly god, power" (C, p. 54). Its historical and religious syncretism speak in it as a model of cosmopolitanism.

The Pantheon, embodying plurality, becomes an illuminating model for healthy individuals, relationships, and political systems. As Charlotte Hogsett writes, the novel shows that when a dictating love smothers individuality, it mimics political tyranny.⁴⁰ In contrast, Corinne, wanting to resuscitate Oswald's ability to love the material world – wanting him to breathe – moves him toward and around a place where air circulates freely: "At first you will think it is less vast than it is. The illusion which is so favourable . . . comes, I am told, from the greater space between the columns and the free passage of air around them" (C, p. 53). By visually and palpably recreating the potential for spontaneous movement in a stable milieu, this architectural organism instantiates an alternative to Nelvil Senior's nationalistic archetype and gender controls – an alternative the characters physically perform as they amble through this cosmos. The temple's liberating energies also arise from light – "open to the sky" it materializes as a constantly flowing space, since sunshine, blazing through the oculus dances through the building during the day's course, as we see in Panini's painting, where the sphere of sunlight radiates from the dome's eye, and the air flow lifts the women's dresses, inspires some to move, and others to kneel to divinity (Figure 2.1). Shining light, moving across the dome, animates human buoyancy, for "the sun's rays . . . cast light upon prayer. What serenity! What a festive air pervades this building!" (C, pp. 53, 54). And though a tomb housing the dead, it forges a homeostasis with light and cheer, breaking the binary between life and death.

³⁹ Silver, p. 17.

⁴⁰ *The Literary Existence of Germaine de Staël* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987), p. 106.

Because such “magnificence” reduces the “contrast between the nothingness of death and the splendours of life” (C, p. 55), Corinne hopes it will unhinge Nelvil’s commitment to a living fatality and redirect him to “festive” life, festive because it neither represses nor dwells on death. But Oswald, resisting such a paradox, as well as love and joy in art, wants “sadness to surround death”; for him, Italian light and celebration badger one “to forget and enjoy life. I am not sure if I would like your beautiful sky to do me that kind of good” (C, p. 61). William Tronzo, contrasting the Pantheon to Hagia Sophia’s Byzantine “agitation,” points out that the former “visualizes belief as a calming truth that informs the structure of the universe”;⁴¹ and when Corinne claims the building projects “serenity,” she tries imprinting on Oswald that another’s death can ultimately be restorative to the one grieving, that it could be “festive,” and that death and life can belong with each other (C, p. 55). Simply put, the Pantheon could teach Oswald that he could love both his dead father and the living Corinne simultaneously.

The heroine trusts that both the Pantheon and her admiration for “the man who . . . is not afraid to think a long time ahead about his death” (C, p. 56) interlace death into life, fostering more intense vitality. A similar idea emerges in Michel Serres’s work, which, like *Corinne*, turns toward solid structures, in his case statues – defined capaciously as tombs, monuments, etc. – to explicate the ways such things can reconnect a disconnected subject–object relation: those unnecessary binaries created between life and death and between the statue and the human. Serres imagines two foundations. The first, the statue, which “puts the subject in relation with death,” embodies “stable authority,” a static “inert block set there, silent, tumular, funerary, crudely or exquisitely worked.”⁴² Serres then invites the spectator to journey into the statue, into the second foundation, which “ensues from [the first] or deepens it”; this second, however, “puts death in relation” to *both* the subject and object, an act which “unites what lies below, what ‘here lies’ and what lies in front.”⁴³ In doing so, one plunges into what Serres calls a “new” nonlinear time, a pre-linguistic mode in which we can move randomly and dynamically between and among the ancient and the modern. New time, Serres contends, could help displace historical temporality, which in its trajectory forward, disremembers the

⁴¹ Tronzo, p. 37.

⁴² *Statues: The Second Book of Foundations*, trans. Randolph Burks (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2015), p. 23.

⁴³ Serres, pp. 22–23, 23.

past, only to repeat it. Corinne evidently pictures Oswald as remaining at the level of only this first foundation, one static and inert. Accordingly, hoping he will feel these things' sumptuous imprint, she invokes something like Serres's "pre-linguistic" mode where Oswald can journey into the tomb – the Pantheon – to experience what she calls the "festive": the life force in death and the death in the life force. Thus, in these apparently rock-solid objects, Serres and Corinne discover generative and exuberant force.

2.4.2 *St. Peters*

Having found a touchstone for Oswald in the Pantheon, Corinne now turns to shock therapy when they visit St. Peter's, saying: "You do not reach the sublime by degrees; the distance between it and the merely beautiful is infinite"; this is the way, she says, to "inspire a deep, keen admiration" that "reveals, as it were, a new realm of ideas, and so makes you better able to love and judge everything" (C, p. 57). And although he has so far defied the Pantheon to imprint on him any new sensations – as Balayé briskly summarizes, Oswald "lends his attention to no external object"⁴⁴ – the basilica stimulates a turn, for "when they reached the front of Saint Peter's," this "was the first time a work of man had affected him like a work of nature" (C, p. 57). Pleased by his amazement, she invites him to listen to his body as it resuscitates: "Does not your heart beat as you approach the sanctuary?" (C, p. 58). Hearing the heart is feeling it and the breath that makes it pulse.

In a further series of rhythmic beats, Oswald takes after the *préambule's* preacher, curving toward things, only to withdraw again from material vitality (a topic I will discuss in Section 2.6 in relation to sculpture). As they enter the doors of St. Peters – then covered by a leather drape which one pushed to move through its portal – his thing-intransigence returns. "Corinne herself raised the curtain and held it to let Lord Nevil pass," and so "graceful" was her "attitude" that his "first glance was to look at her" and "for some moments he took pleasure in looking *only* at her" (C, p. 58; emphasis added). Even in this sublime space, his possessive eyes seek only Corinne. Once past the threshold, the heroine's sublime "therapy" momentarily works. As he sees the Basilica's vastness, Oswald feels for an instant as if "the feeling of love [for Corinne] no longer sufficed to fill his heart" (C, p. 58); that is, he longs for belonging with the world at large

⁴⁴ "Plotting with Music and Sound in *Corinne*," in Szmurlo, p. 70.

rather than just for possession of his lover. Reinforcing his response, the heroine reminds him that Italian Catholicism “appeals to the imagination through external objects” (C, p. 59). To dislodge him from abstraction and reconnect him to the physical thing itself – St. Peter’s – she reminds him that the church “has its own seasons, its perpetual springtime, which the external atmosphere never alters” (C, p. 60). And in telling him that the basilica’s stones have their own memory banks – they “know more than we do about past ages” (C, p. 60) – she reminds him that his own is foreshortened and that these things have their own existences, which, according to her thing theory, enlighten the mind.

Oswald’s national prejudices prevail, however, as he again automatically reverts to political abstractions.⁴⁵ He retreats from expansion to contraction as he exclaims, “here the arts have the greatness, the imagination, of genius. But the dignity of man himself, how is it defended here? What institutions, what weakness, in most Italian governments! And although they are so weak, how they enslave minds!” (C, p. 59). As Corinne later remarks to Nelvil, not only do his national partialities blind him to Italy, to art, and to “an indescribable divine intention for man” (C, p. 139), those chauvinisms also prevent him from hearing the banalities his politics declaim: “What you say about the Italians is what all foreigners say, what must strike them at first sight. But you must probe more deeply to judge this country” (C, p. 99). He can repeat threadbare prejudices because he has not grasped the often-catastrophic consequences that emerge when one lives with those assumptions – when they are made flesh. For example, on an abstract level he thinks that a wife who “stays in the shade” is a pretty thought, until he is married to one. *Corinne* interfuses love, cosmopolitanism, and an intimacy with matter to try to resuscitate a man who seems bent on dying rather than loving.

2.4.3 Ancient Greek Sculpture

Corinne links practicing a brighter material attentiveness to the amelioration of Nelvil’s embrace of a nationalism rife with misogyny and possessiveness.⁴⁶ Intimacy with materiality, thus, can vitalize the

⁴⁵ For Margaret Cohen, Oswald, in his “melancholic repetition,” wants to reproduce “the social order of the father.” See “Melancholia, Mania, and the Reproduction of the Dead Father,” in Szmurlo, pp. 113, 105.

⁴⁶ Noreen J. Swallow and Madelyn Gutwirth were among the first feminist scholars to appreciate Staël as more than a writer of “hysterical retaliation and posturing self-pity”; one who, if she were taken seriously at all, becomes the “exceptional” woman and artist, an attitude that, “disregard[s] . . .

community's political and cultural life force while also exposing the ways that nationalism dismembers a woman's ability to function as a whole being. Corinne's thinking–feeling response to things also has repercussions for melancholy's relationship to what Staël calls “modern art.” The Romantic-era fascination with melancholy and its potential for artistic stimulus has been well documented, even by Staël herself.⁴⁷ However, through Nelvil, the novel judges a melancholy that asphyxiates change and inhibits creativity. *Corinne* explains that “[i]n works of genius, what is deeply moving is not misfortune itself but the power of the soul over this misfortune” (C, p. 355). Her faith that belonging with matter can be educationally and politically ameliorative finds echoes in *De l'Allemagne*, where she claims that the best kind of education emphasizes action and links itself to a cosmopolitan sensibility – she urges “spontaneous activity” and thinking that “in a lively manner excite[s]” and “awakens” the mind, rendering memory “flexible”; this, she says, will prevent a child from being “all his life confined to the [narrow] circle of his own nation” (G, p. 122). Believing that he could, through this therapeutic practice, awaken his dormant sensibility and intellect, she endeavors to swerve Oswald's attention from mourning and national biases toward the breathing, sensuous world.

After they tour the Pantheon and St. Peters, she introduces Oswald to classical sculpture,⁴⁸ which for her provides the primary embodiment of a medicinal art form and a standard for happiness that arises from good government. They visit the Vatican museums to contemplate the “likenesses of the gods and heroes . . . assembled, where the most perfect

Staël's concerned interest in problems common to all women.” See Swallow's “Portraits: A Feminist Appraisal of Mme de Staël's *Delphine*,” *Atlantis* 7.1 (1981): 65–76, pp. 65, 66; her “The Weapon of Personality: A Review of Sexist Criticism of Madame de Staël,” traces the gender bias Staël's contemporaries and critics through 1975 have perpetuated. *Atlantis* 8.1 (1982): 78–82. Among others, also see Gutwirth's *Madame de Staël, Novelist* and Mary Seidman Trouille's *Sexual Politics in the Enlightenment* (Buffalo: SUNY University Press, 1997).

⁴⁷ For readers advocating for melancholy's benefits, see Isabelle Naginski, “Germaine de Staël among the Romantics,” in Gutwirth, Goldberger, and Szmurlo, p. 179. Eric Gidal also finds that “Staël construes [melancholy] as an empowering rhetorical strategy and reflexive category of political identification,” in “Melancholy, Trauma, and National Character: Mme de Staël's *Considérations sur les principaux événements de la Révolution française*,” *Studies in Romanticism* 49.2 (2010): 261–292, p. 267.

⁴⁸ She wouldn't have known that these were primarily Roman copies. However, as Michael Squire points out in “Greek Art through Roman Eyes,” “the *production* of objects and images did not one day suddenly ‘stop’ being Greek or begin being Roman. We are dealing with a living and continuing artistic tradition.” See *A Companion to Greek Art*, vol. 2, ed. Tyler Jo Smith and Dimitris Plantzos (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), p. 606; emphasis original.

beauty, in eternal repose, seems to admire itself" (C, p. 139).⁴⁹ Amelia Rausser demonstrates that neoclassicism itself was embodied: her indispensable research shows how that movement was "[m]arked by a sensual, even ecstatic communion with a deeply strange and primitive classical past" and that it "aimed to use art as a portal through which the harmonious union of art and freedom – both bodily and political – could be brought back to life in a new golden age."⁵⁰ Rausser's insights offer one reason why Corinne gravitates toward classicism itself, why she urges Oswald to experience "a sensual, even ecstatic communion" with these ancient statues, whose own embodiment could inspire the living man to embrace material existence; for her, however, this "primitive classical past" will be the "portal" through which Oswald will emancipate himself and Corinne will remain liberated.⁵¹ In this move, the novel links feminism and classicism, a link not historically accurate, but one extremely fruitful for the heroine.

How do these statues offer curative support? First, by virtue of their genre, they heal more efficaciously than paintings can: Sculpture, Corinne states, "could show the spectator only a vigorous, simple existence, while painting indicates the mysteries of reflection and resignation," and though the heroine necessarily shows him "*les chefs-d'œuvre de la peinture*" (C, p. 143; Balayé, p. 221), ancient sculpture, given its repose and "vigorous existence," will counteract his self-absorption and "resignation" to shame. While Cohen maintains that Corinne's claim of "superiority of painting over sculpture" arises from the fact that the latter "is too closely bound to the brute materiality of external fact,"⁵² I find instead that it is sculpture's very materiality that leads it to be most worthwhile in its ability at this

⁴⁹ Her choice of classical sculpture reflects the popular Neoclassical and Romantic-era hagiography of Greek art. Corinne associates the classics with liberty and takes a radical agenda in making that connection, but this was not an automatic assumption, in England at least. For Timothy Webb, "Greek history, it would seem, was by no means a simple advertisement for the virtues of democracy." See *English Romantic Hellenism: 1700–1824* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1982), p. 29.

⁵⁰ *The Age of Undress: Art, Fashion, and the Classical Ideal in the 1790s* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020), p. 8. Rausser does not discuss *Corinne*.

⁵¹ Conversely, Susan Tenenbaum argues that in "[r]ecasting the Quarrel of the Ancients and Moderns to suit the circumstances of her day, Staël repudiated the authority of classical models . . . in the sphere of politics, rejecting the classically inspired Jacobin veneration of civic virtue." See "*Corinne: Political Polemics and the Theory of the Novel*," in Szmurlo, p. 155. Geneviève Gennari sees Corinne as a classicist and Oswald as a romantic. *Le Premier Voyage de Madame de Staël en Italie, et la Genèse de Corinne* (Paris: Boivin, 1947), p. 172. And Nancy Rogers finds that *Corinne* "shows itself to be on the cusp between classicism and romanticism," rendering Oswald "Romantic" and Corinne "neoclassical" ("Undermining and Overloading," in Szmurlo, p. 54). For me, the novel partakes of the energies of both movements, as do both characters.

⁵² Margaret Cohen, p. 97.

precise moment to offer Oswald solid, three-dimensional views of nourishing consolation.

These classical statues can also retune Oswald's melancholy since they offer a paradigm for true heroism insofar as they remain composed, though suffering anguish:

in ancient times, there was something more noble than grief; it was heroic composure, it was the feeling of one's own strength, which could develop freely in free institutions. The most beautiful Greek statues have rarely conveyed anything but the idea of rest The moral being of the ancients had such a healthy constitution, air circulated so freely in their broad chests, and the political system was so well in tune with their mental powers, that there were hardly ever any maladjusted souls as there are today. That maladjusted state leads to the discovery of many subtle ideas but does not provide the arts, and particularly sculpture, with the simple affections, the basic feelings, that alone can be expressed in everlasting marble. Scarcely any traces of melancholy can be found in their statues. (C, p. 140)

Here she posits ancient statuary as a paragon for a healthy, well-adjusted human. These Greeks, with their "broad chests," could breathe, and partly because they did not insist on a binary between their intellect and their government. A "something more noble than grief" is repose, in contrast to unproductive grief, an idea I return to when I discuss Wordsworth's *The Ruined Cottage*. Here, these statues embody deep feeling conjoined with autonomy.⁵³ In showing them to Oswald, Corinne hopes that a therapeutic abrasion will emerge between his position and the ideals Greek art embodies, for Nelvil must strain to encounter the nonhuman, and to feel some resonance with these statues, he must transcend his own dominating subjectivity in order to reach "heroic composure"; further, if Oswald could connect in that way, he would feel the differential snap between his own nonheroic reactions and those these figures embody – institutional vigor, well-being, and tranquility – since, in contrast, his nationalism, disaffected from physical vitality, produces a "maladjusted soul," and in his chest, blood vessels "burst" (C, pp. 140, 136).

Additionally, the statues' "perfect beauty" (C, p. 139) resuscitate Oswald because they remedy his fixation on abstraction. Here, Corinne may be thinking about Johann Gottfried Herder's matter-driven

⁵³ This resembles "*le sentiment*," the "source," Kari Lokke points out, of the "disinterested mystical consciousness that for Staël is the essence of moral and spiritual strength." See "Staël's Enthusiasm, Eternity, and 'les armes du temps,'" *Essays in Romanticism* 15 (2007): 33–49, p. 44.

conception of beauty in statues, which “is always only the shining through of form, the sensible expression of perfection in relation to an end, the surge of life, human health.”⁵⁴ Such beauty shining through sculpture “does not form abstractions but *persons*; it gives us *this* person, with *this* character, and *this* character is made present in *every* part of the body, in its placing and *position*, as if an enchanting wand had turned the living person into stone”; thus, “it is never abstract *love* that stands before us, but the *god* or the *goddess* of love, not the female *divinity* or the virgin *virtue*, but *Minerva*, *Juno*, *Venus*, *Apollo*, and other highly specific names, forms, and persons.”⁵⁵ Herder here invites one to belong with the statue; Oswald, embracing the withdrawal and separation that abstraction triggers,⁵⁶ requires connection to Herder’s solid specificity “shining through,” a tangible anchor to connect to, and a heroic exemplar that eschews melancholic separation and instead embodies “the surge of life, human health.”

The visual paradox of serene faces and broken bodies⁵⁷ further benefits Oswald by helping him physicalize his own dismemberment and by providing a model of composure in the midst of disintegration, letting him silently witness what is missing without feeling that he must replace or complete what has been shattered – whether that is a statue’s body part, or correlatively a father’s faith in his son.⁵⁸ Sophie Thomas argues that “[r]uins provide evidence of counter forces, of ‘counter lives’ that speak for otherwise silenced differences.”⁵⁹ And Alexander Regier has pointed out how the fragment is a “concept,” both “critically self-replenishing and

⁵⁴ See John Gottfried Herder, *Sculpture: Some Observations on Shape and Form from Pygmalion’s Creative Dream*, ed. and trans. Jason Gaiger (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), p. 78. Quoted in Sophie Thomas’s “Vital Matter(s): Shelley, Herder, and Sculpture,” *European Romantic Review* 29.3 (2018): 377–387, p. 385; emphasis original.

⁵⁵ Quoted in Thomas, “Vital Matter(s),” p. 381. See Herder, pp. 97–98.

⁵⁶ *OED*, 5.1a. defines abstraction, which can mean “separate, distinct; set apart from; withdrawn, secluded.” Though this definition is now rare, it was used in English from the sixteenth century. It had a similar meaning in French: “*Retiré, caché, isolé*” (“withdrawn, hidden, isolated”), though that had disappeared by 1789 (see “*abstrait*” in *Le Trésor de la Langue Française*, www.atilf.fr/tlfi, ATILF – CNRS and University of Lorraine). While Staël does not use the word abstraction in relation to Oswald, she conveys this sense in other ways that she describes him.

⁵⁷ For the nineteenth-century reader (perhaps especially the English), this brokenness would call to mind the Elgin Marbles. As Thomas notes, Keats found the fragments “a source of distress.” See *Romanticism and Visuality: Fragments, History, Spectacle* (New York and London: Routledge, 2008), p. 62. Also see Angela Esterhammer, “Translating the Elgin Marbles: Byron, Hemans, Keats,” *The Wordsworth Circle* 40.1 (2009): 29–36.

⁵⁸ Malcolm Baker observes that “[b]y identifying with the sculptor of a figure – especially a damaged or incomplete one . . . – the viewer can imaginatively participate in the work’s creation.” See *Figured in Marble: The Making and Viewing of Eighteenth-Century Sculpture* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2000), p. 167.

⁵⁹ *Romanticism and Visuality*, p. 67.

productive," partly because it "resists totalization"; it "encourages us to look for details, and to perceive the importance of minuteness anew. It requires of us a certain attentiveness that reminds us how each fracture, textual or phenomenological, demands scrutiny in its relation to a larger structure."⁶⁰ In *Corinne*, such a kinesthetic "attentiveness" – one stimulating movement from details to larger structures – functions at the level of marble form and at the strata of psychological exemplar for accepting loss with equanimity. One sees in

those admirable features and physiques ... an indescribable divine intention for man, expressed by the noble face that God has deigned to bestow upon him. In this contemplation, the soul is uplifted to hopes filled with enthusiasm and virtue, for beauty is one in the universe, and whatever form it assumes, it always arouses a religious feeling in the hearts of mankind. (C, p. 139)

Rather than positing binaries between body and spirit or body and thought, here the narrator conceives a ternary structure wherein all imprint upon each other; and though a spiritual design is "indescribable," this sculpture, to some degree, manifests this design in "those admirable features and physiques." When these elements intertwine, faces and bodies can serenely express joy or sorrow – or both simultaneously – and those expressions thereby prompt the viewer towards a "contemplation" that recalls the "divine intention." Evidently, it is precisely the interactions among these elements that inspire an enthusiastic and virtuous hope, one which manifests public and private greatness. Paradoxically, the classical form, once fragmented, fuels insight. Its "wounds" – broken hands and arms – constitute a "sign of life," one that "lends animation to a statue."⁶¹ In "How Keats Falls," Jonathan Mulrooney insightfully observes that trauma can "make new kinds of imagining possible."⁶² Like the *Venus de' Medici*, these ruins propel new forms – mobilizing cosmopolitanism and viable gender ethics, for example – while, as I show in Section 2.6, countering modern art's inadequacy and grief's debilitating impact.

Finally, *Corinne* recovers classical ideas from these statues, ones that historically excluded women, and renders them agents that challenge a

⁶⁰ *Fracture and Fragmentation in British Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 4, 5, 25.

⁶¹ Kenneth Gross, *The Dream of the Moving Statue* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), p. 86. Gross argues that: "The sign of life that lends animation to a statue ... takes the explicit form of a wound; it can look like a thing that violates, mars, or stains the statue" (p. 86).

⁶² *Studies in Romanticism* 50.2 (2011): 251–273, p. 266.

nation advising women to “stay in the shade” (*C*, p. 318).⁶³ Bringing a feminist perspective to this classical equipoise, the novel finds in this statuary “a happy mixture” of the sublime and the beautiful, a mixture that corrects an imbalance between gender and power: The Greeks, “to give beauty its more sublime nature, combined, turn and turn about, in the statues of men and women, in the warlike Minerva and in the Apollo Musagetes, the charms of the two sexes, strength with gentleness, gentleness with strength, a happy mixture of two opposing qualities, without which neither would be perfect” (*C*, p. 141). Such a mingling characterizes Corinne herself. Her rooms are “an agreeable mixture of everything that is most pleasing” from France, England, and Italy; and she says “I feel I am a poet, not only when a happy choice of rhymes or harmonious words, when a happy combination of images . . . dazzles the audience, but when my soul is uplifted”; Oswald, however, cannot understand how she can fuse “so many different charms which would appear to be mutually exclusive” (*C*, pp. 37, 46, 52). Further, when she is “crowned” at the Capitol, “her tall, slightly plump figure, in the style of a Greek statue, gave a keen impression of youth and happiness” (*C*, p. 23). The laurel and myrtle adorning her collapse gender binaries between strength and gentleness. As Ianetta points out, the first is “sacred to Apollo, god of poetry” and the second is “sacred to Aphrodite.”⁶⁴ These amalgamations – especially those of gender “traits” in ancient sculpture – then, could potentially liberate women, as well as men, from emotional and political stagnation. These mixtures – as well as the persistent interchange between human and marble flesh – defamiliarize familiar ideas that dualism is inevitable.

If particular kinds of sculpture can heal, then statues and observers must belong with each other, and indeed Staël illuminates how art, myth, and even science have focused on the tense reciprocity existing between human and statue. As the human body has been the archetype for sculpture, so has sculpture been considered as “a kind of model . . . for man as a species.”⁶⁵ Condillac offers a precedent for such a method when he recommends a plastic identification – really almost a symbiotic relationship – between

⁶³ For Ianetta, Corinne resembles the Greek rhetorician Aspasia, who, figuring in Plato’s *Menexenus* as a teacher and performer of improvisational rhetoric, has mastered epideictic discourse; in this resemblance, Corinne represents a “potent figure of a woman orator [who presents a] sensuously alluring yet ideologically uplifting performance” (p. 96).

⁶⁴ Ianetta, p. 104.

⁶⁵ In “Measuring Statues,” Hobson affirms that “[t]he importance of ancient sculpture as a cultural value in the late eighteenth century is not news. What is perhaps more novel is its relation to the practice of measurement, and to a search for standards of measurement” (pp. 33, 43).

subject and object, wherein one “must enter into” the statue’s life, “begin where it begins, have but one single sense when it has only one, acquire only the ideas which it acquires, contract only the habits which it contracts: in a word he must fancy himself to become just what the statue is.”⁶⁶ The sensation of sculpture coming alive is widely examined in French eighteenth-century studies, given Diderot’s writings on the “problematics of viewing.”⁶⁷ Certainly Diderot, when delighting in Étienne-Maurice Falconet’s *Pygmalion aux pieds de sa statue, à l’instant où elle s’anime*, exhibited at the 1763 Salon, performs the same moves as those who gaze on the *Venus de’ Medici*. He doubts that the piece could be marble and not flesh, exclaiming: “What hands! What supple skin! No it is not marble; feel it under your finger and how eas[ily] it gives way to pressure”; in conversation with the nonhuman, he endorses a connection to things by speaking to the sculpted cherub, and intensifies the players’ animation and connection in this moment, imagining them in different poses, ones he believes would be “more energetic than Falconet’s. My figures would be better grouped than his. They would touch each other.”⁶⁸ Diderot wants more energy and interaction in and between the nonhuman entities, and the intimacy he experiences with these statues resembles the “companionship with” rather than the possession of things, which Corinne hopes to spark between Oswald and the material world.

2.5 The Severing

Interlacing the human and nonhuman in the Pygmalion-like way it brings marble alive, *Corinne* (specifically, but also the other texts I address throughout this book) demonstrate how crucial the circulation is among politics, art, and human health, for when humans reject belonging with the nonhuman, the “Severing” – “a foundational, traumatic fissure” – a

⁶⁶ Condillac, p. xxxvii. ⁶⁷ See Baker, p. 167.

⁶⁸ *On Art and Artists: An Anthology of Diderot’s Aesthetic Thought*, ed. Jean Seznec, trans. John S. D. Glaus (Dordrecht, Heidelberg, London, New York: Springer, 2011), pp. 56, 57. Seznec’s quotation stops at “Falconet’s.” For the whole of this quote, see original: *Salon de 1763*. http://obvnil.sorbonne-universite.fr/corpus/critique/diderot_salon-1763/. Université Paris-Sorbonne, LABEX OBVIL, 2013, license cc. ATILF, Frantext, Ro29. Sarah J. Lippert suggests that Diderot might have “been undermining or satirizing Falconet’s effort by reminding viewers of its marble properties while claiming that the artist had succeeded in animating the hard block of stone.” See *The Paragone in Nineteenth-Century Art* (New York and London: Routledge, 2019), pp. 87–88. Satire seems unlikely to me, given that Diderot’s praise of Falconet’s realistic portrayal of not one, but three kinds of flesh, recalls his claim that among the “considerable difficulties” painters face, “it is flesh that is difficult to do” and that this “is nearly the same for marble, when the sculptor accomplishes the exploit of having made it living and breathing” (*On Art and Artists*, pp. 131, 132).

“catastrophe . . . that does not take place ‘at’ a certain ‘point’ in linear time, but a wave that ripples out in many dimensions, in whose wake we are caught.”⁶⁹ Despite Corinne’s thing-theory work, Oswald chooses severing; resembling the preacher, he refuses to feel the “cap” – or any other material object – tingling against his skin, breathing its breath into his system. Thus, contrasting to the heroine’s lively give and take in her improvisations, Nelvil does not want to share her with anything: Seductively he pleads, “Corinne, you do not need these external activities to make me stay with you. On the contrary, when I look away from you for anything at all, I am making a sacrifice to please you” (*C*, p. 139). Resisting Corinne’s “denationalized internationalism” and her “internationalist political education,”⁷⁰ Oswald’s obstinate possessiveness resonates through his social and personal relationships: “You reveal to me the thoughts and emotions which external objects can arouse. . . . But this magic of the universe you are teaching me to know will never offer me anything more beautiful than your look, more touching than your voice” (*C*, p. 86). In collapsing all attention on her, he isolates them both from the material world. As he cannot see things, neither can he see Corinne. He longs to possess her as property, not to belong with her.⁷¹

Once back in his native country he defies *belonging with*, returning to “a certain rigidity in his ideas that the intoxicating wave of the arts and Italy had washed away”; now Corinne’s lessons about things seem mere evanescence: “[E]ntrancing pictures [*les tableaux séduisants*], the poetic impressions, gave way in his heart to the deep feeling of liberty and morality” (*C*, p. 304; Balayé, p. 447). His allusion to these “seductive” arts mirrors his father’s sense that if Oswald had married Corinne, “*il l’aimerait sûrement beaucoup, car il est impossible d’être plus séduisante*” (Balayé, pp. 466, 467). Here, in collapsing the heroine with Italian art Oswald finds both incompatible with liberty. This conclusion reveals that since his “morality” cannot coexist with matter, he must let human abstractions coerce his ethics, a move which, ironically, ensures his own imprisonment.

⁶⁹ This is Morton’s brilliant phrase and definition from *Humankind*; he goes on to say that “some humans persist in reenacting [the “severing”] on and among ourselves (and obviously on and among other lifeforms” (pp. 13, 15).

⁷⁰ Robbins, “Comparative Cosmopolitanism,” p. 183. Jennifer Birkett discusses relationships between Corinne’s improvisations and political systems in “Speech in Action: Language, Society, and Subject, in Germaine de Staël’s *Corinne*,” *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 7.4 (1995): 393–408.

⁷¹ Geneviève Lafrance perceptively observes that “Oswald’s error is not to have mistaken the identity of Corinne,” but “to have believed that Corinne did not have a past.” See “De la reconnaissance comme aveu: Anagnorisis et sacrifice mémoriel dans *Corinne ou l’Italie* de Mme de Staël,” *SVEC* 12 (2006): 261–267, ed. Edward Nye (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation), p. 264. My translation.

In an observation that forms an apt analogy to Nelvil, Corinne perceives that true autonomy is unavailable in a monastery since the inhabitants “pay no attention to external objects. Their discipline is too harsh to allow their minds any kind of liberty” (*C*, p. 168). Indeed, the heroine diagnoses his malady: “Thought without external nourishment turns in on itself, analyses, works on, digs into, inner feelings, but it no longer has the creative strength which depends on happiness and the ample strength which only happiness can give” (*C*, p. 140). In *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, Derrida states that the Nation-State’s “foundational violence is not only forgotten. The foundation is made *in order to* hide it; by its essence it tends to organize amnesia, sometimes under the celebration and sublimation of the grand beginnings.”⁷² Thus, while with Corinne, Oswald may have practiced connecting to matter, neither the matter itself nor that training’s larger purpose has made a permanent imprint since he commits himself to a “foundation” meant to “hide” the fact that his nation-state does not embody liberty and morality for him or Corinne.

These monuments and classical sculptures, then, influence Corinne and her confidence in the impact they could imprint on Oswald, limning the hope for happiness, creativity, and political freedom; the chapter’s next parts consider how Staël places the ancient in friction with a modern – that is, post-Renaissance – art, sensibility, and governance that churns out grief, tyranny, and imaginative paralysis.⁷³ I spotlight statues and the ways they both metamorphose into life (Galatea) and immobilize into death (Medusa) but also how they disrupt that binary, since sometimes contiguity exists between them.⁷⁴ *Corinne* draws on this transformation between marble and human to manifest the differences between classical and modern art, particularly insofar as the disparities question what artistic and political configurations might appease suffering and inspire creative work.

⁷² Trans. Simon Critchley and Richard Kearney (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), p. 57; original emphasis.

⁷³ Staël responds complexly to classicism, and her interest in ancient and modern perspectives surfaces in 1800 well before *Corinne*. For my purposes, *Corinne*’s rethinking of a male–female split regarding classicism offers a gender perspective that eschews dichotomies. *De la Littérature, Œuvres Complètes* (Paris: Treuttel and Würtz, 1820), vol. 4, p. 206.

⁷⁴ Van Eck observes that one turns stone to life and the other turns life to stone (pp. 47–48), and Mitchell contrasts the “Pygmalion effect” and the “Medusa effect”: “a mimetic charm that turns the beholder into a paralyzed image” versus “a fulfilled fantasy that mates with the beholder” in *What Do Pictures Want* (p. 58, note 2).

2.6 Abandoning Thing-Theory Practice: Oswald and Corinne's Turn to Modern Melancholia in the Statues of Canova and Michelangelo

Beginning as a vision of belonging with the nonhuman via an embodied cosmopolitanism, a companionship with things, a nondualistic outlook, and an impatience with possession, *Corinne* ends disastrously, imprinting how a narrowly defined nationalism and faith in abstract ideas devastates both the individual and the community, engendering a profound melancholy that dominates modern life.⁷⁵ Rendered traumatic under Napoleon's rule, this world – one lacking the “healthy constitution” of the Greeks, the “air [that] circulated so freely in their broad chests, and [a] political system . . . so well in tune with their mental powers” (*C*, p. 140) – fuels such modern abjection. *De la littérature* restates this idea: “The representations of later times do not simply offer a picture of majestic distress [as the ancients do], but distress, solitary, and without support.”⁷⁶ And yet, as I noted in Section 2.4.3, this novel's refusal to glorify melancholy or the art springing from that emotion, as well as the text's conviction that ancient art instead will “support” the overheated, trauma-laden Oswald, sets it apart from some of Staël's later writings. Thomas Pfau reveals that the years 1798–1815 can be identified as a “traumatic period,” a “world whose economic, legal, and spiritual bearings had been decisively altered, indeed rendered almost unrecognizably alien and disconcerting.”⁷⁷ Oswald, having absorbed those years' impacts, acquires a very “modern” attitude toward life and aesthetics, insofar as he feels that, in contrast to classicism's representations of heroic composure, the arts “ought to reveal to us the charm of grief and the melancholy of prosperity” (*C*, p. 146). I am not claiming that the novel invokes either ancient or modern culture as a monolithic apparatus but rather that it intermixes them. Thus, while *Corinne* claims that ancient sculpture potentially has greater healing power than post-Renaissance art, the novel's Romanticism relies on fragmentation as a theme and as a structural motif. However, since Oswald's melancholy enchains him, it is significant that Corinne argues that when such despondence *is* found in classical art, it was created during

⁷⁵ Luzzi observes that while Oswald is in England, “Staël offers a critique of European modernity predicated upon her construction of a premodern *eccezione italiana*” (p. 68).

⁷⁶ *The Influence of Literature upon Society* (New York: William Pearson, 1835), p. 21.

⁷⁷ *Romantic Moods: Paranoia, Trauma, and Melancholy, 1790–1840* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), p. 22.

a time of enslavement.⁷⁸ Castel-Forte reinforces this link by reminding Corinne of “how much the English in general are slaves to the customs and habits of their country” (C, p. 50). It is important to remember the physical ways that the characters embody this modern oppression, giving up their right to respiration and movement: Corinne’s “soul,” alienated from the human and nonhuman, “can no longer breathe enough air, enough emotion, enough hope in this world,” and social custom has nearly crippled Lucile, since at sixteen, “her body [is] almost too slender, for a little weakness could be seen in her walk” (C, pp. 237, 306). Oswald “breath[es] with difficulty” (C, p. 269), constricting oxygen and blood flow such that his heart fails him, and Corinne becomes one of the maladjusted souls,” who “trie[s] a thousand ways of calming the consuming power of thought, which no longer, as in the past, gave her a great variety of ideas, but only one idea, only one picture, armed with sharp points which rent her heart” (C, pp. 140, 351).

The novel specifically embodies Oswald as “modern.” Touring Antonio Canova’s studio by torchlight, the protagonists encounter a statue, the “spirit of grief, leaning against a lion” (C, p. 143), that both Corinne and Canova agree resembles Nelvil. Enrico Bruschini and Alba Amoia suggest that Staël could be referring either to Canova’s sculpted figure, the “Genius of Death” from the *Cenotaph of Archduchess Maria Christina of Austria* (Figure 2.2) or the figure of the same name from the memorial to Clement XIII⁷⁹ (both “geniuses” are positioned on the tombs’ lower-right-hand corners). Given that Staël describes the spirit *leaning* on the lion and given the creation’s date, 1805, they most likely see the statue from Maria Christina’s ossuary, for this “genius,” having collapsed onto the lion, his head resting on the animal’s fur, seems especially grief-stricken; suggestively, however, the “Génie de la douleur” on Clement XIII’s memorial lies recumbent at the foot of a powerful man, which would manifest Oswald’s subordination to his father’s politics and anticipate the hero’s physical and emotional breakdown after Corinne’s last improvisation. Both “spirits” lack muscular definition, and both embody sorrow.

And yet, because the “spirits” are so similar, both resemble Oswald, their sameness, in turn, recalling modern art’s repetitive drone: “the cry of

⁷⁸ As Balayé explains in “la vision européenne,” “Staël was opposed to slavery and to the slave trade and strongly condemned [Charles Victor Emmanuel] Leclerc’s expedition to Saint-Domingue [1801–1803] and the imprisonment and subsequent death of Toussaint Louverture” (p. 23).

⁷⁹ “Rome’s Monuments and Artistic Treasures in Mme de Staël’s *Corinne* (1807): Then and Now,” *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 22.3/4 (1994): 311–347, p. 343.



Figure 2.2 Antonio Canova, *Cenotaph of Archduchess Maria Christina of Austria* (1805). Church of St. Augustin, Vienna. Credit: Peter Schickert / Alamy Stock Photo.

pain, which in the end becomes monotonous” (C, p. 356).⁸⁰ Practically identical twins, the statues convey “only one idea, only one picture” (C, p. 351). Hippolyte Taine’s 1866 analysis of the “insipid or attitudinizing” figure on the tomb of Clement XIII highlights its modernism when he writes, “[t]he more a monument approaches our time the more do its statues assume a spiritualistic and pensive expression; the head usurps all the attention; the body is reduced, veiled, and becomes accessory and insignificant.”⁸¹ Taine’s observation echoes Oswald’s reliance on abstraction – to the degree that he renders the material “insignificant.”⁸² As I will show, Canova’s statue forecasts Corinne’s own debilitating sorrow, suggesting that modern grief has a contagious quality, one infecting the

⁸⁰ In finding these statues embodying multiple possibilities, I draw on the classicist, Deborah Tarn Steiner, who argues that an “image’s relation to the original turns out to combine both metonymy and metaphor”; the statue “hosts the multiple and shifting positions that all representations . . . occupy vis-à-vis the originals for which they stand in.” See *Images in Mind*, p. 5.

⁸¹ *Italy: Rome and Naples*, trans. J. Durand, 4th ed. (New York: Henry Holt, 1874), p. 351.

⁸² This relationship between disembodiment both in sculpture and modern times recalls Bonnie Smith’s observation that “Oswald’s father foretold the disembodied voice that shaped the writing of history from the nineteenth century on.” “*Corinne* and the Hermeneutics of History,” in *Who’s Afraid of Femininity? Questions of Identity*, ed. Margret Brüggmann, Sonja Heebing, Debbi Long, and Magda Michielsens (Amsterdam and Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1993), p. 72.



Figure 2.3 Michelangelo, *Tomb of Giuliano, Duke of Nemours* with figures of *Night* (l.) and *Day* (r.) (1519–1534). Cappelle Medicee, Church of San Lorenzo, Florence, Italy. Credit: Ian G. Dagnall / Alamy Stock Photo.

heroine herself, for once Oswald has married Lucile and Corinne has returned to Italy, her pain petrifies her into sculpture, a solidity that ironically dematerializes her by reducing her to one emotion, and a modern one at that – anguish that cannot be tranquil.⁸³

While Oswald ossifies into the “Spirit of Grief,” Corinne, now fully “modernized,” is rendered as Michelangelo’s female statues, *Night* and *Dawn* (Figures 2.3, 2.4), which the heroine sees in Florence’s San Lorenzo. As with Canova’s figures, each is posed on a tomb, and each is drawn from two different groupings; whereas the former focuses on the male “spirits,” *Corinne* fixes on the female statues and, in doing so, accentuates the heroine’s isolation and fragmentation as a woman while also splintering the tomb compositions themselves. The novel quotes dueling verses about *Night* which echo Corinne’s own fluctuations between dying and reviving since Giovanni Strozzi’s lines beckon her to

⁸³ Vallois’s “Old Idols, New Subject” observes that “each monument, each statue, becomes the double of Corinne, a double made of stone but able to speak in her name when the human heroine loses her gift of language” (p. 91).



Figure 2.4 Michelangelo, *Tomb of Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino*, with figures of *Dusk* (l.) and *Dawn* (r.) (1519–1534). Cappelle Medicee, Church of San Lorenzo, Florence, Italy.⁸⁴

Credit: Ian Dagnall Computing / Alamy Stock Photo.

live, while Michelangelo's urge her to anesthetize her senses and sacrifice her material vitality:

A poet [Strozzi] wrote lines about the statue of Night; it ends with these words: *Although she sleeps, she is alive; waken her if you do not believe it; she will speak to you.* Michelangelo . . . replied [to this poem] on behalf of Night:

Sleep is sweet to me, and sweeter for it to be in marble.
 As long as injustice and shame last,
 I am very happy not to see and not to hear.
 So do not wake me, please speak quietly.

(*C*, pp. 352–353; emphasis original)

In seeing these statues, she is momentarily “reawakened,” only then to identify with an inscription which reads: “*Alone at my dawn, alone at my*

⁸⁴ As McCue points out, Staël “misrepresented these works as the tombs of Lorenzo il Magnifico and his brother, Giuliano” (p. 53).

dusk, I am still alone here" (C, pp. 353, 354; emphasis original). Indeed, during her short visit to San Lorenzo, she zigzags between connection with and alienation from embodiment.

The narrator exemplifies Michelangelo as a "sculptor of modern times," and *Dawn* and *Night* as bearing the medieval "spirit" of "an energetic, gloomy soul" (C, pp. 352–353). The statues manifest the heroine's agony, but so too do Michelangelo's words, which in their desire for sensory deprivation recall Corinne's withdrawal from sensuous materiality. Slip-sliding between human and nonhuman, the heroine doubles as *Night*, a female figure (Figure 2.3), as she becomes a marble sleeper. While the Pantheon is a "festive" death house that honors vital existence, here the female *Dawn's* (Figure 2.4) melancholy face, in ironic counterpoint to her name, and *Night*, in a depressive sleep with her head down and eyes closed, embody Corinne's awareness that "[t]he sense of existence pursued her like a relentless pain" (C, p. 351). In contrast to the transformation classical statuary promised and the "sensual pleasure" the ancients felt "in the idea of death," this encounter accentuates Corinne's entombment in stone (C, p. 81). And, like both female statues, she herself lies prostrate at the foot of a man who feels herculean to her, a double itself of Oswald's relation to the "spirit" collapsed below Clement XIII. These statues physicalize Corinne's state, but ironically the less she connects to the breathing, material ebullience that roused her creativity, the more dematerialized she herself becomes.

Throttled by "modernism," barely able to breathe and unable to write or perform, Corinne visits the Uffizi's Tribuna to resuscitate herself by seeking inspiration from Greek sculpture's "happy mixture" of sublime and beautiful energies (C, p. 141). Hoping to locate something embodied that would check her despair, she turns to the *Niobe*, a statue expressing "calm and dignity despite extreme grief" (C, p. 355). Earlier in the novel, when the hero and heroine were touring the Vatican galleries, the narrator had claimed that two of the most disturbing statues of Greek origin, the *Laocoön* and *Niobe*, "are the only ones that portray violent grief, but they both recall the vengeance of heaven and not passions born in the human heart": Thus, because their heartache is generated from without (the Gods) rather than from within, they can express anguish without absolute, dysfunctional despair, while still conveying "the idea of rest" (C, p. 140).⁸⁵ *Niobe*, however, fails to help the heroine compose. Corinne,

⁸⁵ Balayé argues instead that all the heroine sees in *Niobe* is a woman "struck by the vengeance of the gods." "*Corinne et la Ville Italienne ou l'espace extérieur et l'impasse intérieure*," in *Mélanges à la*

whose choking passion armors her – as if she were marble – discovers that it “cost her an effort to find each word, and often she wrote words with no meaning, words which frightened even herself” (C, p. 355). The words do not belong together. Anatomized modern life is literalized in how each word is separated from the other, each hardened into an isolated state, rendering her unable to “expre[ss] the general ideas, the universal feelings, which appeal to the hearts of all humanity” (C, p. 356). Instead of taking motivation from the thing, the artwork, she has merged symbiotically with her angst. Like Canova’s “Spirit of Grief,” she merely records “the cry of pain, which in the end becomes monotonous” (C, p. 356). The abstractions she tries to counter, the illusions she had earlier rejected, become her reality and, partitioned from the sensible, she abandons herself to one pole: that which harbors the death constructs of female powerlessness, national prejudice, and oppressive politics. Now grief possesses her, and she no longer belongs with her own being. This standpoint is reiterated not only by Corinne’s inability to find inspiration in the lamenting Niobe but is also reinforced by the fact that that statue, housed in the Tribuna, calls attention obliquely to the *Venus de’ Medici*’s absence. Corinne’s silence on this missing statue sounds out rebelliously against Napoleon’s role in producing modern grief since her contemporary readers would well remember that that emperor had purloined the *Venus*, an act broadly linking the statue to his exile of Staël, and, thus, by default, *Corinne*. This scene thereby illuminates the cause-and-effect relations among nationalism and misogyny as well as tyranny and melancholy in this modern world.

Corinne’s desire to defy the gap between life and death and sculpture and human lead her away from joy and “festive” death toward a “lesser perfection,” one dominated by “sadness, pain or melancholy” (*Ethics*, ΗΠΙΙΣ), since she uses her power only “to invest the painful trace and to repel or destroy the object which is its cause.”⁸⁶ She manifests this by diminishing and harming Lucile by secretly instructing her daughter, Juliet, and by tutoring Lucile herself to “be both you and me at the same time.” In these acts, we see damaging instances of how “[s]tories of both animation and petrification . . . are at a deep level equivalent”; that is, both metamorphoses “fulfill a . . . basic wish: that of collapsing the distance, the space of both desire and frustration, between the sculptural signifier and

mémoire de Franco Simone, III: France et Italie dans la culture européenne (XIXe et XXe siècles) (Geneva: Slatkine, 1984), p. 44.

⁸⁶ Deleuze, p. 101; he refers to Curley’s translation of *Ethics*, IVP18DEM.

the living signified to which it is semiotically bound.”⁸⁷ She refuses to strive for her own joy and preserve her own life, choosing instead to be, after death, “reembodied” in Lucile and Juliet. And avowing that “my only personal wish is that Oswald . . . may never enjoy a feeling without recalling Corinne” (C, p. 398), she forces him to feel only her, as she could feel “only one idea, one picture” (C, p. 351). By wrecking vengeance on Oswald and Lucile, Corinne transforms them both into stone, renounces *belonging with*, and strives instead to possess her sister and her former lover in death and life. In doing so, she enwraps herself and Nelvil in what Hannah Arendt calls “relentless automatism,” a condition arising when one chooses vengeance over forgiveness, since “[f]orgiving . . . is the only reaction which does not merely re-act but acts anew and unexpectedly.”⁸⁸ The spontaneous improviser has left the room.

Staël renders asphyxia and “marbelization” a political emanation as well as a novelistic motif. In *Considerations on the Principal Events of the French Revolution* as well as in *Corinne*, Staël underscores the alienation arising from Napoleon’s tyranny and self-absorption, while identifying and yearning for governmental and cultural practices that would instead animate companionship between the human and nonhuman and between men and women. For example, once Staël learned that “Bonaparte had triumphed,” she “wept, not over liberty, for it never existed in France, but over the hope of that liberty, without which this country can only have disgrace and misery”; and, like *Corinne*’s characters, she “felt within [herself] at this instant a difficulty of breathing which, I believe, has since become the malady of all those who lived under the authority of Bonaparte.”⁸⁹ In Napoleon’s presence, Staël could never “dissipate the difficulty of breathing,” and she describes how, whenever Bonaparte “discovered that my looks were fixed upon him, he had the art of taking away all expression from his eyes, as if they had been turned into marble. His countenance was then immovable.”⁹⁰ Staël’s own choked breath in Napoleon’s presence, and his choice to become rigid and impenetrable recalls Corinne’s suffocation and, after her eventual transformation into marble, her refusal to connect either to human or nonhuman.

Throughout the novel, the resuscitation and suffocation of the cosmopolitan promise of singular-plural governance, the improvisation’s guarantee of conversation, and thing theory’s potential of connection play

⁸⁷ Gross, pp. 129, 128–129.

⁸⁸ *The Human Condition*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958, 1998), p. 241.

⁸⁹ *Considerations*, part IV, ch. ii, p. 431. ⁹⁰ *Considerations*, part III, ch. xxvi, p. 410.

out in this double conceit of stone metamorphosing into human flesh and human flesh rigidifying into stone. *Corinne* begins with the heroine's utopian hope for animating Oswald; he enacts this conceit by welcoming and then resisting her life force. She too tries to remain alive and transformative, only to abandon her energy-infused material existence. By the novel's final scene, these switchbacks accelerate. Entering a room where her improvisation will be performed, Corinne is half-petrified: "veiled," her walk is "unsteady" and her weakness resembles the feeble Lucile's (C, p. 400). Prepared to listen to her improvisation by proxy, the powerful artist abandons her right to a lively material incarnation. Further, when she sees Oswald in the audience, "Corinne, with a quite involuntary movement, . . . got up and stretched out her arms to him. A moment later, however, she fell back, turning away her face"; and in listening to Corinne's last song, Oswald loses "consciousness entirely," prompting his former lover to "wan[t] to go to him, but her strength failed her" (C, pp. 400, 402, 403). Signaling the inability to integrate the human and the nonhuman – life and death, person and statue – the scene itself vacillates stiffly between those two narrative paradigms, Pygmalion and Medusa. Rather than embracing animation's transformative potential, the characters fall into that very modern condition, howling "the cry of pain, which in the end becomes monotonous" (C, p. 356). By this point in the novel, to quote Henry Peacham's observations of Greece (1622), there are "more statues standing than men living."⁹¹

Conclusion

The novel's tragic end has been read variously, though generally within frameworks of victimization or blame: *Corinne* portrays how society abandons the woman of genius, forcing her to "remain in the shade"; or the unworthy man forsakes a worthier woman; or the woman abandons herself to social constructs of romantic love; or Corinne becomes a martyr.⁹²

⁹¹ *Peachum's Compleat Gentleman* (Oxford: Clarendon Press: 1906), p. 107. Thanks to Simon Mills who shared this quotation with me.

⁹² For example, see Jennifer Law-Sullivan, "Civilizing the Sibyl: Staël's *Corinne ou l'Italie*," *French Forum* 32.1–2 (2007): 53–71, p. 68. For Lokke it "is the hegemonic power of the masculinist paradigm of Romantic melancholy – the degree to which it defines Oswald's aesthetic, political, and religious vision" which "seduc[es]" Corinne (*Tracing Women's Romanticism: Gender, History, and Transcendence*, New York and London: Routledge, 2004, p. 49). Vincent Whitman describes Corinne's "fall" as "the product of the contractive operation of patriarchal law upon an expansive and multiply engaged poetic sensibility" (p. 68). "Remember My Verse Sometimes: Corinne's Three Songs," in Szmurlo, pp. 55–68.

In Lokke's words, "feminist criticism" reads "Corinne's self-destruction both as a protest against the restrictions of patriarchal society and an embodiment of a brilliant woman's self-destructive internalization of the values of that society."⁹³ Alternatively, to rework Joseph Luzzi's point that "Staël's ill-fated heroine remains the consummate symbol of European Romanticism,"⁹⁴ one could argue that Corinne is a Romantic; therefore, she dies. While the novel's tragedy seems overdetermined, as this brief survey suggests, and while these interpretations are compelling and many irrefutable, I have moved away from this broad theme of victimization per se, and instead folded the loss of love or courage into the much larger subject of how *Corinne* explores human interactions with the material under different political systems.⁹⁵ To be sure, materialist political structures influence the characters' lives; further, to open possibilities for superior vision and political change, the heroine's thing theory envisions larger assemblies, such as governance, that respect interactions between human and nonhuman. A position that rejects *belonging with* thereby renders unattainable any recovery from trauma or avoidance of it.

This chapter's *préambule* staged my interpretation of *Corinne*. I return to that moment when the narrator describes the *chef religieux* who "threw" down and "harangued" his Jean-Jacques cap, asking what he/it had to "*say against my arguments?*" Then he would be silent for a few moments, as if waiting for an answer, and as the cap would say nothing in reply, he would put it back on his head and would finish the conversation with the words: *Now that you are convinced, let us say no more about it*" (C, p. 170; emphasis original). This passage reverberates obliquely through the entire novel, reminding readers that restricting the right to belong with the nonhuman leads to subjects who can only "harangu[e]" an object, dictate to it what it "represent[s]," only pretend to listen to it, and then assume that that thing has been so "*convinced*" that "*no more*" should be said "*about it.*" *Corinne* muses on how resuscitating our connection with things might heal what

⁹³ *Tracing Women's Romanticism*, pp. 35–36. As Lokke points out, feminist critics have illuminated significant facets of this self-destructive acceptance of the patriarchal value system that ultimately kills Corinne. Lokke herself discovers in "female genius . . . the potential . . . for a revolutionary and feminist conception of art, subjectivity, and spirituality" (p. 36). Also see Gutwirth, *Germaine de Staël, Novelist*; Deborah Heller, "Tragedy, Sisterhood, and Revenge in *Corinne*," *Papers in Language and Literature* 26.2 (1990): 212–232; Ellen Peel, "Corinne's Shift to Patriarchal Mediation: Rebirth or Regression?" in Gutwirth, Goldberger, and Szmurlo, pp. 101–112; and Margaret Waller, *The Male Malady: Fictions of Impotence in the French Romantic Novel* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1993).

⁹⁴ Luzzi, p. 14.

⁹⁵ John Isbell argues that "Corinne must die . . . because the revolution and liberty died" (C, "Introduction," p. xiii).

the novel refers to as the grief-stricken “modern” mind. This process, when applied to different national cultures and intimate relationships, promises to advocate for liberty since, as soon as the heroine abdicates thing-theory praxis – an ability to breathe in the transcendent, the intellectual, and the emotional in materiality and in the human – she violates herself and others. And though it ends tragically, this novel, dedicated to exposing historical and political ailments, also initially galvanizes us to contemplate and belong with things in ways that quicken happiness, a happiness crucial to producing a vital and transformative outlook in the political and domestic spheres.

Listening to the Radiant Voices of Others
 Diamonds and Jewels in *Les bijoux indiscrets* and *Belinda*

Préambule

Chapter 2 provided a new reading of *Corinne* as I identified ways the novel highlights how imperative it is for individuals to connect to the material world; such *belonging with* initiates possibilities for creating and maintaining more viable social circuits, of which freedom from gender constraints and cosmopolitanism's greater openness provide examples. Staël's novel, describing *Romeo and Juliet*, could in fact be illuminating its own fundamental conviction: Neither the play nor *Corinne* is "just one shade, just one sound"; its "colours" do "not make [its] style cold and artificial; it is the ray of light, divided up, reflected, and varied, that produces these colours, and one can always feel the light and fire from which they stem" (C, p. 123). As this chapter shows, such a prismatic effect captures how diamonds spring forth in *Belinda* to teach readers to become better interpreters, their radiance providing a prototype for developing intellectual elasticity and their facets refracting insight into the relationships things have with gender, politics, and ecosystems.¹ Having thus far discussed public objects – the *Venus de' Medici* and *Corinne's* Italian monuments – I now move to private things – diamonds such as the Pigot as well as those glittering stones that individuals more generally longed for. These diamonds, communicating kinetically, are "mouths" speaking discreet and indiscreet truths. For this reason, I begin with Diderot's *Les bijoux indiscrets* (1748), a novel that dazzles as a particularly famous account of "jewel-mouths"² and one that opens a dialogue about listening to matter.

¹ Though I don't focus on how things "make us enact the qualities that make us human," I agree with Festa's excellent point that "texts demand that we use our minds" (*Fiction without Humanity*, p. 9; emphasis original).

² *Les Bijoux indiscrets*, in *Œuvres complète de Diderot*, ed. J. Assézat and M. Tourneux, 20 vols. (Paris: Librairie Garnier Freres, 1875–1877), vol. 4. Please note that discrepancies exist regarding the capitalization of "bijoux"; I use the lower-case form.

Shuttling between French and British explorations of the nonhuman, I examine intersections between these two novels, both of which express a desire for *belonging with*, and I then turn to a translation of *Belinda*, which resists connections among humans and among their relations with things.³

In *Les bijoux*, Mangogul acquires a ring that, when directed toward women, makes their “jewels” – that is, their genitals – tell the truth about their erotic lives. As a philosophical work, it elevates the body and heals the ruptures between and among soul, physicality, and things, as when Mangogul asks: “Who knows what a jewel” – simultaneously a woman’s body and an ornament – “may have in its soul?” (*IJ*, p. 14). For Mangogul, one thing (a silver ring set with a stone) makes other things (“jewels”) mouth truths so that women cannot deceive men about their sexual indiscretions, though the text reveals the axiom that jewels speak because fearful women have been forbidden to be honest.⁴ These indiscreet voices precipitate something radical: candid relationships between lovers. For Odile Richard-Pauchet, “Mangogul is a modern Ulysses,”⁵ an idea that, combined with the novel’s conceit that a thing can talk, strengthens my thesis that discovering and interacting with things galvanizes an experimental journey into new zones of belonging with.⁶ In listening to matter and thus rendering it volatile, *Les bijoux* dizzies us with interlacings among human–nonhuman and thing–thing encounters.

For example, in one vignette, Diderot links bodies and things by amalgamating the genital-jewel with a real gem. Manille, an obsessive gambler, has lost “10,000 ducats” to Turcarès, a financier; to continue playing, she needs something valuable as her stake. She thinks first of her literal gemstones but dares not proffer them since her husband has recently “recovered” them (*IJ*, p. 39). Instead, she bids all she has left: her genital-jewel. What initially seems to be a series of oppositions – her husband takes, pawns, and redeems her *pierreries* rather than her bodily *bijou*, while

³ I thank Bill Brown for his comments on an earlier version of this chapter when it was still in conference format.

⁴ Expected differences between the source text and Hawkes’s translation emerge: for example, *anneau* and *bague* (a band versus a band with a stone) and *bijoux* (stones in a setting) versus *pierreries* (loose precious stones). Diderot often substitutes one for the other (Cucufa, trying to find the magic ring, pulls out “*un anneau d’argent, que Mangogul prit d’abord pour une bague de saint Hubert*” (*Les bijoux*, vol. 4, p. 148). Hawkes translates this as “a silver ring, which Mangogul at first mistook for a Saint Hubert’s ring” (*IJ*, p. 13).

⁵ “Mangogul ‘Odysséen’ dans *Les Bijoux indiscrets* : le découvreur et le poète,” *Recherches sur Diderot et sur l’Encyclopédie* [En ligne] 46 (2011): 119–126, p. 120.

⁶ In “Diderot: le roman comme expérience,” Luc Ruiz argues for experimentation’s importance in Diderot’s novels. *Littérature* 3.171 (2013): 13–24.

she gambles her jewel away rather than her jewelry – instead becomes an aggregate of relations in which human and thing fold into each other. They do not collapse into one, however, as becomes clear when the Jewel (I now capitalize this, since she identifies herself as an individual) divulges her own feelings as well as the torments she and Manille share. The Jewel reveals that Manille’s lover Turcarès, vain about “possessing a titled jewel” – the phrase itself spills over from the human genitals to the nonhuman label – “offered to finance Madame’s gaming, on the condition that I serve his pleasures. Soon it was a deal. But since [Manille] played high and the financier’s resources were not endless, we soon came to the bottom of his coffers . . . , and God knows how many times I shall be wagered” (*IJ*, pp. 39, 40). Bodies, jewels, gemstones, and money all implicate each other in this poignant gathering as the Jewel differentiates herself as an “I” with intelligent hopes and emotional desires, and even – though perhaps just an idiom – a call to God.

Because the Jewel has her own desires and woe, I diverge from Thomas Kavanagh’s suggestion that “[t]he words of the hidden speaker float from under a dress and reach the ears of their scandalized audience as messages purified of all traces of that natural body they are meant to represent.”⁷ I argue instead that the Jewel articulates how she acutely feels her physical labor. Her lament (“God knows how many times I shall be wagered”) opens up a rich concert of possibilities. Thus, while Anthony Wall proposes that what we see in *Les bijoux indiscrets* “are the products of . . . rape” that erupt from the “desire” of “a capricious and bored sultan,” one who “invades . . . the woman’s body through coercion, making bodies speak what no one, except perhaps Mangogul, really wants to hear”⁸ – conversely, I claim that in including manifold voices, Diderot reveals precisely what does need to be heard: that women whose physicality has been silenced must render their virtue separate from their bodies and hearts. Here, then, Diderot strives to overcome such dualism and to acknowledge that matter – one’s body – could help make truthfulness between humans possible.⁹ While we see inhumanity practiced in this novel (does

⁷ “Language as Deception: Diderot’s *Les Bijoux indiscrets*,” *Diderot Studies* 23 (1988): 101–113, p. 107.

⁸ “Le Bavardage du corps ou *Les Bijoux indiscrets* de Denis Diderot,” *Neophilologus* 78.3 (1994): 351–359, pp. 353, 352.

⁹ For other readings, see Lamb, who concludes that if humans communicated truthfully, thereby silencing their jewels, this would be, in Diderot’s mind, a European “fantasy” (p. 209), and Festa, who interprets *Les bijoux* as exemplifying object narratives which “exploit [a] pornographic potential.” See *Sentimental Figures of Empire in Eighteenth-Century Britain and France* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), p. 124.

Mangogul have the right to listen to a woman's jewel without her permission?), the reconciliation between human and nonhuman does arise when the former listens to the latter and works in conjunction to explore the binaries that lead to such misery in marriage. As Anne Deneys-Tunney illuminates, *Les bijoux* "is in fact an investigation of sex that stages a radical critique of metaphysics, or more specifically, a radical critique of the dualism of soul and body."¹⁰ We see this when, Mirzoza, the king's "favorite," contends that "the affectionate woman[']s . . . soul is usually in her heart, but sometimes also in her jewel" (*IJ*, p. 126).¹¹ In other words, the soul inhabits a body both sexual and spiritual, and both virtuous and affectionate.

In breaking down binaries between human and nonhuman, *Les bijoux*, as *Corinne* does, foretells the possibility of a theory of things that involves *belonging with*: We hear Mangogul's happy thought "that jewels deign to speak our language and contribute to the conversation. Society can only benefit tremendously from this duplication of faculties. Possibly we men, in turn, shall one day speak from somewhere other than the mouth" (*IJ*, p. 24). I suggest here that *Les bijoux* anticipates Vicki Kirby's question that "if nature is literate, then the question 'What is Language' – or more scandalously – 'Who Reads?' – fractures the Cartesian Subject to its very foundation."¹² Diderot thus argues for connections among the body, soul, and intellect and for links between the nonhuman and the human, in his case, the ring and a woman's biological "jewel." Analogously, some theories of things today try to fulfil Mangogul's prophecy, one wherein humans will speak from more than just one single, ubiquitously noisy Anthropocene "*bouche*." The Sultan's philosophers wonder why, "[i]f it is by the grace of Brahma . . . to double [women's] organs of speech, . . . they were unaware or neglectful of so precious a natural gift for so long a time"; continuing to ponder, they ask "[w]hat mechanism causes one mouth perforce to shut while the other speaks?" (*IJ*, p. 31). Indeed, why have humans, who also have been given another mouth – a nonhuman

¹⁰ "The Novel, Philosophy and Obscenity in Diderot's *Les Bijoux indiscrets*," *Diderot Studies* 31 (2009): 83–95, p. 85. As Deneys-Tunney says, Chapter 29 carries the reader "from the philosophical question of the location of the soul in the body, to the idea of the intimate union between body and soul – through the 'jewels' and their sexual enjoyment – to the sexual intercourse between Mirzoza and Mangogul" (p. 93).

¹¹ "*La femme tendre, celle dont l'âme est habituellement dans le Cœur; mais quelquefois aussi dans le bijou*" (*Les Bijoux indiscrets*, vol. 4, p. 246).

¹² *Telling Flesh: The Substance of the Corporeal* (New York: Routledge, 2014), p. 127.

one – to listen to, been “unaware or neglectful” of this exquisite endowment? What “mechanism” makes humans stop listening?

These philosophers’ comments and questions constitute subjects I address in this chapter on *Belinda* and diamonds: How might we more happily belong with our world by recognizing multiple “mouths” – women’s, the body’s, and the nonhuman’s – and by listening to these? This “indiscreet” – because radically revealing – triple-talk potentiates connections. While Melanie Holcomb points out that “[a]dorning oneself competes with language and the creation of tools as markers of humanity,”¹³ literature confirms how diamonds, rather than competing with language, have a voice that reveals information about the nonhuman and about women’s place in culture, a voice that specifically broadcasts colonial and domestic interlacings.¹⁴ Diamonds cut, polished, and worn on the body become, as it were, “indiscreet,” communicating with those who wear and those who view them. Many studies have demonstrated how jewelry expands and intensifies the human body, becoming, as it were, another mouth that speaks. Certainly, during the long eighteenth century, women’s relationship to jewelry was characterized in multifaceted and overlapping ways. This bears out Marcia Pointon’s understanding that jewels offer a “historically valuable body of evidence in cultural history.”¹⁵ In this chapter, I examine the ethical implications that arise when the diamond and marriage markets enter into concentrated relationships with candor, authenticity, status, property rights, and gender fashions.

In my focus on *Belinda*, it is worth noting that scholars have not scrutinized the links I find in the novel among diamonds, women, and colonialism.¹⁶ Further, while many critics have parsed these interconnections in Victorian literature, no one mentions *Belinda* as an important

¹³ *Jewelry: The Body Transformed*, ed. Melanie Holcomb, catalog to the exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), p. 9.

¹⁴ Srinivas Aravamudan connects the jewels to other it-narratives, arguing that the magic ring serves as a device fulfilling police procedure. He concludes, however, that the novel ultimately acknowledges “that the police procedures” have either “failed” or have been “deferred,” since “neither science nor religion – neither biology nor theology – can be relied upon to explicate sexuality.” I agree with his conclusion since I find dynamic tension rather than hegemonic control in Diderot’s novel. “Talking Jewels and Other Oriental Seductions,” in *Diderot and European Culture*, ed. Frédéric Ogée and Anthony Strugnell (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2006), pp. 32, 34.

¹⁵ *Brilliant Effects: A Cultural History of Gem Stones and Jewellery* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 2. In “Intriguing Jewellery: Royal Bodies and Luxurious Consumption,” *Textual Practice* 11.3 (1997): 493–516, p. 509, Pointon suggests ways women were “defined by jewellery,” as when pearls were associated with fertility. Grieg also shows how diamonds “were repositories not just of wealth but of family history, interpersonal association, and exclusive contacts” (p. 61).

¹⁶ I am indebted in my general reading of *Belinda* to many scholars, several of whom were particularly helpful: Marilyn Butler’s *Maria Edgeworth: A Literary Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972)

precursor of this conversation. Dwelling on the gems lodged between and exceeding the book's covers, *Belinda* germinates open-minded relationships that arise from the diamond's paradoxical qualities – adamantine yet capable of shattering light; foreign yet domestic; natural yet artfully transformed; supposedly inanimate yet conducting heat. Most specifically, this gem dynamically inspires varying interpretative possibilities, since incandescence and prismatic variegation characterize the diamond as well as offering a model for the openness epitomizing *belonging with*. Because these highly refractive stones illuminate and transform surfaces, they afford an apt correlative for creative thinking itself.¹⁷ In other words, like the *Venus de' Medici* and Italy's monuments, this lightsome mineral *moves* because it transforms itself and the things around it. I will be listening in this chapter to polyphonic interactions that offer mobile, imaginative ways of being and understanding as I explore the following: “indiscreet” connections and collisions in which gender performance in courtship defies established rules; mercantile corruption, affecting both diamonds and brides, generated from within England, rather than from that stemming from abroad; and diamond ownership that is not merely considered immoral.¹⁸ Taken together, things in *Belinda* – diamonds and treatises written about them – tangle up the human and the nonhuman, integrating material and intellectual knowledge.

and her “Edgeworth's Stern Father: Escaping Thomas Day, 1795–1801,” in *Tradition in Transition*, ed. Alvaro S. J. Ribeiro and James G. Basker (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); Jeffrey Cass, “Fuseli's Milton Gallery: Satan's First Address to Eve as a Source for Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda*,” *ANQ* 14.2 (Spring 2001): 15–23; Marjorie Lightfoot, “Morals for Those That Like Them: The Satire of Edgeworth's *Belinda*, 1801,” *Eire* 29.4 (Winter 1994): 117–131; Teresa Michals, “Commerce and Character in Maria Edgeworth,” *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 49.1 (1994): 1–20; Mitzi Myers, “My Art Belongs to Daddy? Thomas Day, Maria Edgeworth and Pre-Texts of *Belinda*: Women Writers and Patriarchal Authority,” in *Revising Women: Eighteenth-Century “Women's Fiction” and Social Engagement*, ed. Paula R. Backscheider, 104–146 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000); Myers, “Shot from Canons; or, Maria Edgeworth and the Cultural Production and Consumption of the Late Eighteenth-Century Woman Writer,” in Bermingham and Brewer. Also see Wil Verhoeven, “The Global British Novel,” in *The Oxford History of the Novel in English, English and British Fiction, 1750–1820*, ed. Peter Garside and Karen O'Brien, 12 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), vol. 2, pp. 566–588; Gillian Dow, “Women Readers in Europe: Readers, Writers, Salonnières, 1750–1900,” *Women's Writing* 18.1 (2011): 1–14; and Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, “Home Economics: Domestic Ideology in Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda*,” *The Eighteenth Century* 29.3 (1998): 242–262.

¹⁷ Harry Emanuel discusses these refractive powers in *Diamonds and Precious Stones: Their History, Value, and Distinguishing Characteristics*, 2nd ed. (London: John Camden Hotten, 1867), p. 10.

¹⁸ Pejorative associations between women and jewels have a long history. See, for example, John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*, ed. John Russell Brown (London: Methuen, 1964), I. 1. 299–301. When the widowed Duchess defends second marriages by noting that “[d]iamonds are of most value, / They say, that have pass'd through most jewellers' hands,” her brother retorts that “[w]hores by that rule are precious” (I. 3. 344–346).

3.1 The Currency of Diamond-Brides

Though not going as far as John Ruskin did in linking girls to crystals that, like “a lovely group of rosy sugar-candy, [are] arranged by atomic forces,”¹⁹ Romantic-era writers still found inextricable connections between women and diamonds. It was common to use the stone to indicate artlessness and translucence. In a move resembling that in *Les bijoux*, wherein a “jewel” reveals whether women are limpid and “pure,” these same qualities became a goal doubly for purchasers of human and nonhuman dazzlers. Second, a morality evidently present in both women and diamonds suggests another reason for rendering them commensurate. Charles William King (1867) articulated long-held claims that both the ancients and the moderns have “ever declared that virtues do subsist in stones”: the Pythagoreans, he continues, believed “that virtues subsist in all things, and proceed from a *soul*”; further, exchanging energy with humans when they are in proximity, stones can “impress their peculiar virtues upon the substance of the man.”²⁰ Third, diamonds’ enduring materiality suggests permanence, their origins in the earth’s secret recesses promising intriguing mystery, and their prismatic beauty intimating light and depth, all qualities felicitous for companionship with the human. On the other hand, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century educational treatises teaching potential buyers about these stones address the pervasive fear that a diamond might not be a diamond, but a counterfeit – simply “paste” (George Frédéric Stras’s eighteenth-century invention)²¹ – or that sellers trick the public by cutting gems badly and inflating their prices. If one substitutes bride for diamond, as was consistently done, this becomes a description well befitting wives-to-be and the marriage market in which they momentarily glitter. This last connection is paramount in *Belinda*, which explores fraudulent practices in both the diamond and marriage markets. I show here how the novel capitalizes on the contiguity between these kinds of merchandise to expose how both stones and young women are similarly assessed and appraised, since cultural touchstones often equated the (good) female with transparency and thus innocence. In doing so, the novel amplifies how the diamond trade vernacular has infiltrated that of the marriage bazaar (and vice versa), wherein both stones and bodies, talisman-like, supposedly

¹⁹ Quoted in Catherine Robson’s “The Stones of Childhood: Ruskin’s ‘Lost Jewels,’” in *Ruskin and Gender*, ed. Dinah Birch and Francis O’Gorman (New York: Palgrave, 2002), p. 33.

²⁰ *The Natural History of Precious Stones and of the Precious Metals* (London: Bell & Daldy, 1870), pp. 35–36.

²¹ See Clare Phillips, *Jewels and Jewellery* (London: V&A Publications, 2000), p. 54.

divulge a woman's "virtue" while simultaneously disclosing which diamond-brides constitute a "safe" – that is, profitable – unit of currency.²²

Diamonds' growing popularity in eighteenth-century British novels and poems rendered them the thing to adorn those other things: women on the marriage market. Indian, Brazilian, and African stones were conveyed to Western Europe, becoming more desirable, more profitable, and more symbolically and culturally charged than any other prized jewel has been since. They were especially present in Britain's capital given that crafting, marketing, and wearing these gems was inextricably mixed with London's economy. As Gedalia Yogev explains, the city was at the center of the diamond trade, having become a "great mart for diamonds and other precious stones and jewels, from whence most foreign countries are supplied," partly because Jewish diamond merchants had immigrated from Europe to London, and partly because an Act of Parliament had, in 1732, "abolished customs duties on diamonds"; thus, London had "a virtual monopoly" on importing uncut diamonds from India, with the East India Company controlling sales.²³

As this stone became especially big business from the mid eighteenth century on, treatises were written purporting to show how to ascertain a diamond's authenticity and value. For example, the third edition of David Jeffries's best seller, *A Treatise on Diamonds and Pearls*, appeared in 1800, the same year that Edgeworth was writing *Belinda*. In this *Treatise*, Jeffries says that the finest diamonds will be "free from stains, foulds, spots, specks, flaws, and cross veins"; these "will carry the highest lustre of any whatever, and will be esteemed the most perfect"; one strives to find, he says, diamonds with "the greatest purity and perfection of their complexion, which . . . must be like a drop of the clearest rock water."²⁴ Literature borrows such images, as when Alphonse de Lamartine's Raphaël describes his lover's letters as "fire and purity combined, like light and transparency

²² Arguing that diamonds in Victorian literature "revea[l] the limits and possibilities of genre," Stefanie Markovits writes that: "Of glass, crystal, and diamond, the last is the most obviously form-oriented, the most discretely thing-like. . . . Victorian literature registers the diamond's increased visibility" (pp. 601, 594). I suggest that this diamond "visibility" was apparent in the long eighteenth century and influenced the later nineteenth century. See "Form Things: Looking at Genre through Victorian Diamonds," *Victorian Studies* 52.4 (2010): 591–619.

²³ *Diamonds and Coral: Anglo-Dutch Jews and Eighteenth-Century Trade* (London: Leicester University Press, 1978), p. 68; Yogev quotes the Parliamentary Register for 1732.

²⁴ *A Treatise on Diamonds and Pearls. In which their importance is considered; and plain rules are exhibited for ascertaining the value of both; and the true method of manufacturing diamonds*, 3rd ed. (London: C. Clarke, 1800), pp. 72–73.

in a diamond.”²⁵ Even Percy Shelley shows he was familiar with the patois of diamond-bride assessment, writing to James Hogg in May 1811 that his soon-to-be wife, Harriet Westbrook, was “more noble, yet not so cultivated as [her] elder [sister]—a larger diamond, yet not so highly polished.”²⁶ Here the jewel marks “naturalness” as more valuable than enhancement, and though Shelley goes on to disparage such comparisons – “I confess that I cannot mark female excellence, or its degrees, by a print of the foot, a waving of vesture, etc., as you can” – it is fitting to note Jeffries’s warnings about the ways large diamonds fracture when not correctly “manufactured” as prophesying Harriet’s fragility, or rather of the failure to “manufacture” her properly.

Treatises, written to show how to ascertain a diamond’s authenticity and value, stake their claims using what we could call “bride” language, as they siphon from gender-talk such trademark concepts of purity and perfection. For example, *The Discovery of the Vital Principle, or Physiology of Man* (1838) genders diamonds while simultaneously emphasizing the gem’s illuminating life force, construing the best stone as one that is “perfectly crystalline, resembling a drop of clear spring-water, in the middle of which you will perceive a strong light, playing with a great deal of spirit.”²⁷ The author, who goes on to trace the diamond’s genesis in the earth, emphasizes its motility, its “tender nature,” and its “tender matter,” as he draws on the analogy of human fertilization and growth in the womb:

Concerning the fouts and other imperfections that take from the value of the diamond, it is said, that all diaphanous stones are originally fluids and spirituous distillations, falling into proper cells of the earth, where they lie until they are ripened, and receive the hardness we generally find them of. . . . While this petrific juice, or the matter which grows in the stone, is in its original tender nature, it is liable to all the accidents we find in it, and by which it is so often damaged: for, if some little particle of sand or earth fall into the tender matter, it is locked up in it, and becomes a foul black spot; and, as this is bigger or less, so it diminishes the value of the stone.²⁸

The language here underscores the spillover between the nonhuman and human as it articulates a double sensation of stone and embryo. We *hear* the fluid softly drop into a home gendered as a womb and *feel* the volatile

²⁵ *Raphael; or, Pages of the Book of Life at Twenty* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1868), p. 88.

²⁶ *The Letters of Percy Shelley*, ed. Roger Ingpen (London, 1909), vol. 1, p. 85.

²⁷ Anon., *The Discovery of the Vital Principle, or Physiology of Man* (London, 1838), p. 77; emphasis original.

²⁸ *Vital Principle*, p. 78. This portrayal of a diamond’s origin uncannily recalls Winckelmann’s description of the *Venus de’ Medici*, which I quote in [Chapter 1](#).

matter to which this “tender matter” is revealed. Reminding readers poetically of the stone’s origins in nature, of its life outside of consumption, it then curtly returns us to “value,” rendering “foul” contamination an economic concern. And though neither *The . . . Vital Principle* nor Jeffries’s *Treatise* are narratives like Diderot’s *Les bijoux*, I want to point out that all three of these texts *listen* to things which divulge truths about themselves since the “jewels” recount their stories and the diamonds reveal how they ripen during their budding growth.

Connections between the language of women and purity and the diamond lexicon of spotlessness subtly make their way into *Belinda*, which, like *Les bijoux*, motions toward multiple “mouths” that speak: for example, Hervey pronounces Virginia St. Pierre’s heart as “perfectly pure,” and Lady Delacour uses the phrase “immaculate purity” to portray Belinda and styles Vincent, Belinda’s suitor, as having a “soul in which neither spot nor blemish can be found” (*B*, pp. 367, 182, 277). These allusions are roguishly problematical, however, given that Virginia’s heart is neither pure nor transparent (a point I will return to in [Chapter 4](#)), that Lady Delacour is ironic in portraying Belinda, and that when praising Vincent her hyperbole traduces him since she prefers Hervey as a husband for her friend. The novel, thus, refuses to reproduce as a standard for women the power relations diamond descriptions enforce between purity and value: In the diamond trade only those which have escaped “blemish” can be classified as valuable and worthy, while the blots on *Belinda*’s characters emit tension and ultimately deliver happiness in the novel, an argument I developed in [Chapter 1](#), where I emphasized that *Belinda* does not endorse the conventional associations related to women’s stainless perfection, but instead scrutinizes such unrealizable gender expectations.

While engaging in such scrutiny, *Belinda* aptly draws on the technical vocabulary associated with the diamond trade so as to mouth “indiscreet” knowledge of aristocratic women. She critiques their collapse into objects for sale, as when she characterizes the “overdressed” Lady Newland “entangled in her bale of gold muslin, . . . conscious of her bulse of diamonds” (*B*, p. 169). Lady Delacour’s nice play on words arises from having *listened* to and understood the language of export from India or Brazil to Europe: these gemstones are sent in “bulces, which means parcels of diamonds neatly tied up in muslins.”²⁹ She also links these two markets when she jokes that the “two lady R’s stic[k] close to one another; their father pushing them on together, like two decanters in a bottle-coaster—with

²⁹ Jeffries, p. 62.

such magnificent diamond labels round their necks!” (*B*, p. 74). Further, when she refers to heiresses as “lozenge[s] . . . of sovereign use” who heal the “consumptions” of aristocratic males who have gambled away their inheritances (*B*, p. 36), her wit highlights the word’s double meaning, since she refers as well to the French “*en losange*,” which means both a lozenge and a diamond’s shape. *Belinda* repeats the word “lozenge” again, this time in relationship to slavery. Marriott buys hempseed for the bullfinch, only to discover that the food is “wrapped” in “a printed handbill” which she almost discards, thinking it is “some of those advertisements for lozenges or razor-straps, that meet one wherever one goes; but miss Delacour picked it up, and found it was a kind of hue and cry after a stolen or strayed bullfinch” (*B*, p. 326). This evokes Rochfort’s earlier description: “Belinda Portman, and her accomplishments, I’ll swear, were as well advertised as Packwood’s razor strops” (*B*, p. 25).³⁰ Thus, by aligning the “razor strops” – used to whip the enslaved – and lozenges, *née* diamonds, used to ally women to rich men, the novel links the exploitative economies of the slave trade, the marriage market, and the labor exacted from those working in diamond mines and on plantations.³¹

What rights might a diamond and a bride have, especially when treated duplicitously? In *Les bijoux* a gemstone (*un chaton*) unmasks infidelity; likewise, both Edgeworth and these treatises address the ways diamond and bride manufacturing both traffic in deceit, but also how they can expose violation of human and nonhuman rights. In doing so, they link consumption and marriage to respect and care for the thing itself, though in the diamond business, such nurturing is always held in strain with economic gain. Jeffries discloses the scams inherent in production and merchandizing by coiling together human and nonhuman beings – buyers, traders, and diamonds – to show how fraud injures all the bodies concerned. Like Mangogul’s ring, *A Treatise on Diamonds and Pearls* tells truths hitherto secreted from view: it

³⁰ The word “strap” is spelled “strop” when Rochfort uses it. Greenfield discusses the razor strap in detail and reveals that these advertisements “sometimes featured black characters as promoters” (“Abroad and at Home,” p. 222).

³¹ While the novel links these, I am not saying they are commensurate. See James M. Morris, “Transferential Rhetoric and Beyond: The West Indian Presence in Maria Edgeworth’s *Belinda* and Amelia Opie’s *Adeline Mowbray*,” in *Intersections of Gender, Class, and Race in the Long Nineteenth Century and Beyond*, ed. Barbara Leonardi (New York and London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), pp. 165–166 and Michelle Faubert, “The Fictional Suicides of Mary Wollstonecraft,” *Literary Compass* 12.12 (2015): 652–659, p. 656.

contains rational and plain rules for estimating the values of diamonds and pearls under all circumstances, and for manufacturing diamonds to the greatest perfection: both of which have hitherto been but very imperfectly understood. From hence, all property of this kind has been exposed to the greatest injury, by being subject to a capricious and indeterminate valuation; and the superlative beauty of diamonds has been much debased. . . . [This is] a circumstance of no small concern, inasmuch as their worth has hitherto been rated by fancy and caprice, which has frequently proved very injurious even to traders in them, as well as to others who have brought them for their use. . . . [A large stone, badly cut, will create] defects . . . to the still greater prejudice of the stone and therefore it will be purchasing deformity at the price of beauty.³²

Injuring a diamond, he implies, desecrates its right to “be” itself: Has it, for example, been well manufactured – is it cut well? And what is its value relative to the whole versus the size when cut? In addressing the human and nonhuman as living, vulnerable beings, subject to mistreatment and even to prejudice, he rethinks alleged binaries between bodies and things, suggesting that what is best for the diamond will also be best for the purchaser. *A Treatise on Diamonds and Precious Stones* also enlightens readers about the diamond racket, describing how “[w]hite topazes, and rock crystal, have been exposed for sale as diamonds, and glass has also been made into peculiar forms, to resemble the rough gem.”³³ Jeffries’s sense of these “peculiar forms” conjures up misused human, as well as nonhuman bodies. *Belinda*’s critique of “delicacy” in women as a moral state (*B*, p. 229) anticipates Mawe’s vocabulary when he speaks of “splitting” diamonds as “delicate” work and of merchants engaging in the “delicate method . . . of offering polished diamonds for sale.”³⁴ The novel clinches the link between these when Lady Delacour describes Hervey as a “fair appraiser of delicate distresses” (*B*, p. 83). As *Belinda* makes clear, marriage matchmakers (like stone cutters and sellers) do indeed enter into “delicate” labor.

Rights for the “diamond-bride” resound when treatises present “rational and plain rules for estimating the [economic] values of diamonds,”³⁵ and Edgeworth explores what constitutes a “rational” plan for estimating the quality of a future partner’s moral character. When a woman’s value is artificially inflated, the marriage market practices a parallel sort of hoax that Jeffries identifies: While diamonds were cut to emphasize their weight and increase their price, brides were engineered to amplify their charms,

³² Jeffries, pp. iv, ix, 21.

³³ Mawes, p. 7.

³⁴ Mawes, pp. 72, 27.

³⁵ Jeffries, p. ix.

with both entities suffering the loss of their integrity. Though Hervey acknowledges Belinda's diamond-like allure – “there's a kind of electricity about that girl” – he suspects her of “artifice in every word, look and motion”; he lives “with [the] increasing dread of being *taken in* to marry a niece of ‘the catch-match-maker,’ the name by which Mrs. Stanhope was known among the men of his acquaintance”; suggesting a parallel between matchmaking and diamond swindling, Hervey explains that: “Young ladies who have the misfortune to be *conducted* by these artful dames, are always supposed to be partners in all the speculations, though their names may not appear in the firm of the house” (*B*, pp. 24, 15; emphases original). Diamonds and brides, however, appear more often as dupes of these maneuvers rather than “partners.” From this perspective, they resemble the women in *Les bijoux*, who, unhappily married and unsatisfied, having been forced to live a lie, become the jewel's truth-telling victims.

Ann Bermingham illustrates that eighteenth-century “[f]emininity is constructed . . . within a particular relation to high art. Whereas classical art – in the form of the statue – deals in essences, the art of accomplishments, like the art of femininity, deals in appearances. Like femininity it demands to be *read* as a surface of socially signifying signs: harp; dress; hair-style; deportment.”³⁶ To her list I would add diamonds. While Chapter 1 discussed how femininity is constructed in relation to statuary, here, six of Mrs. Stanhope's nieces have been “read” by their future husbands as “surfaces” and have themselves been subjected to deceptive plots. When reckless of long-term happiness, Mrs. Stanhope sets up one young woman as a “musical girl” and marries her to a music connoisseur, though she “has no more ear than a post” (*B*, p. 24), her manipulations recall how the diamond business (like the marriage market) can produce a stone “of an ill form, . . . lifeless and dull.”³⁷ Another of Mrs. Stanhope's victims, the newly married Mrs. Tollemache, had nothing, according to a potential suitor, “but a pair of good eyes. Her aunt, to be sure, taught her the use of them early enough. . . . However they are going to part now, I hear—Tollemache was tired of her, before the honey-moon was over” (*B*, p. 24). Misused and disregarded, she resembles diamonds “exposed to the greatest injury, by being subject to a capricious and indeterminate valuation.”³⁸ I glean from this that Edgeworth – alongside some of these treatises, which of course teach readers to be financially self-interested –

³⁶ “Elegant Females and Gentlemen Connoisseurs,” p. 493; emphasis added.

³⁷ Jeffries, p. 21.

³⁸ Jeffries, p. iv.

sees the larger implications of abusing both the nonhuman and human, and that in the end all will suffer.

Metonymically, then, *Belinda* relies on the substitution between brides and diamonds since the novel aims to differentiate two ways of choosing a husband or wife: an honest courtship versus one based on false appraisals that deny the rights of both parties. As exploitative as the two markets for these “goods” are and as strongly as Edgeworth intertwines them for her own critique, *Belinda* ultimately contradicts the notion that “rational and plain rules,” such as those Jeffries’s *Treatise* advocates, work when the commodities being assessed are women. This is not to make a claim for superiority held by one or the other, but to signpost how these guides, not unlike conduct books or sentimental novels, promise a mastery over rather than a belonging with the thing – whether diamond or wife. Thus, what appears “rational and plain” easily backfires since dominance over any object eludes “buyers” in one way or another. Further, exercising authority over stones or brides can make both diamond and marriage merchants forget that human connections with things require reciprocity, or, to use Nancy’s term, “l’entrecroisement” (*BSP*, p. 5). *Belinda* crisscrosses the manufacture and trafficking of diamonds and brides so as to uncover the “indiscreet” truth that such fraudulent dealings wound all parties in this nexus of mineral, laborer, purchaser, bride, and groom.

Identifying diamond and bride sales as contiguous in their embodiment of or rejection of rights, *Belinda* entangles domestic and colonial immorality, but not by finding venality an “import.”³⁹ As Tim Fulford explains, Britons judged it reassuring to believe that “‘infections’ of moral and political corruption were [not] endemic to the British character,” but were threats “from without.”⁴⁰ *Belinda* indeed repudiates that such contamination stems “from without” or from “abroad.”⁴¹ Specifically linking contours between diamonds and wives and disputing that purity always equals value, the novel takes on another anxiety: that “[d]iamonds were a tainted

³⁹ Greenfield compellingly argues that “[t]he continual blurring of boundaries throughout the novel suggests that the divisions fundamental to the narrative (female/male, inside self/outside self, English/foreign, white/black, home/abroad) are fictions at risk of disintegration” (p. 219).

⁴⁰ “Romanticizing the Empire: The Naval Heroes of Southey, Coleridge, Austen, and Marryat,” *MLQ* 60.2 (June 1999): 161–196, p. 168. As Melissa Free argues regarding Wilkie Collins’s *The Moonstone*, “[m]utually constitutive of what it meant to be English, domestic and foreign were false binaries, ideologically and discursively produced and consumed.” See “‘Dirty Linen’: Legacies of Empire in Wilkie Collins’s *The Moonstone*,” *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 48.4 (Winter 2006): 340–371, p. 340.

⁴¹ Edgeworth’s initial title for *Belinda* was *Abroad and at Home*, a name which fits the contours I discuss regarding relationships between Ireland and India in the novel. See Siobhán Kilfeather, “Introductory Note,” in *The Works of Maria Edgeworth*, vol. 2 (New York: Routledge, 2003), p. ix.

material artifact from India, . . . markers of new wealth, signs that becoming an imperial power was reshaping Britain. They were not to be touched by good Britons.”⁴² Instead, such human–nonhuman separations taint life locally and afar. In [Section 3.2](#), I show how *Belinda* reveals collusion between home and abroad as she explores the role of one particular diamond – the Pigot – in the political and economic arena of Britain, India, and Ireland.

3.2 “Conflict” Diamonds and Colonial Domesticity in *Belinda*

Belinda intensely mines the diamond’s refractory powers when it alludes to the Pigot diamond, a stone named after its owner, George Pigot, who received it as a bribe while serving for the East India Company. This diamond “*bouche*” tells a dense, almost mythic narrative which interweaves bribery and corruption on foreign and home soil, further “enlarging” the myriad implications of this 48-carat giant.⁴³ Sean Silver contends that cosmetics “only work as cosmetics by *forgetting* the global empire to which they are attached;⁴⁴ in contrast, I argue that the Pigot only works as a diamond by *remembering* that global empire since it functions as a conduit for linking personal profiteering with what was being done on the colonial stage and underscores the collapse between foreign and domestic pursuits.

Edgeworth’s novel mentions the Pigot once in a scene that forges a subtle, but powerful economic connection between women, colonialism, and diamonds.⁴⁵ The reference occurs when Lord Delacour, innocently praising the innocent ingénue Belinda to his daughter, Helena, says, “[t]he more you know of miss Portman, the more you will like her, child—at least, I have found it so.” This compliment unwittingly fires his wife’s paranoia that the young woman connives to enthrall him, Helena, and his title. Lady Delacour replies, attempting to let Belinda know she is in on the seduction game the younger woman allegedly plays:

⁴² Tillman W. Nechtman, “A Jewel in the Crown? Indian Wealth in Domestic Britain in the Late Eighteenth Century,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 41.1 (2007): 71–86, p. 81. She discusses neither *Belinda* nor the Pigot diamond.

⁴³ Authors diverge in calculating the Pigot’s total carats. Omar Khaldi, for example, simply says it was “variously reported at 45 to 85 carats.” See *The Romance of the Golconda Diamonds* (Ahmedabad: Mapin, 1999), p. 67.

⁴⁴ Silver, p. 103; emphasis added.

⁴⁵ Conversely, Sharon Smith argues that “[w]hile Edgeworth critiques certain elements of colonialism, this critique is ultimately undermined by her own propensity to write within the terms provided by colonial discourse without sufficiently examining them” (p. 73).

“Clarence Hervey would, I am sure, have given the Pigot diamond, if it were in his gift, for *such a smile* as you bestowed on lord Delacour just now” For an instant Belinda was *struck* with the tone of pique and reproach, in which her ladyship spoke. “Nay, my dear! I did not mean to make you blush so piteously,” pursued her ladyship, “I really did not think it a blushing matter—but you know best.” (*B*, p. 188; emphasis added)⁴⁶

As if they are things in a smash-up, the two women collide: Miss Portman’s physical reaction – her smile – wounds Lady Delacour, who accordingly strikes back with words that cause a somatic shock, making Belinda blush. The impact arises when Lady Delacour links the marriage and diamond markets, as she assumes that the younger woman considers herself a “brilliant” available for marital purchase, ready to deceive, if that is necessary, to secure her goal. As I show in [Section 3.2.1](#), the Pigot diamond causes even more rumbling tremors in *Belinda*: Beyond the material dynamism of this thing–human exchange, the parallels between this diamond’s history and the novel’s narrative resound, as Lady Delacour’s above speech comes to embody an entire historical event and to reembody the thing (the Pigot) to which it alludes. This thing, like Diderot’s *bijou*, tells its own indiscreet story.

Scholars have ignored *Belinda*’s allusion to the Pigot,⁴⁷ but I claim that, though mentioned only once, the diamond plays a central role by sounding out three ideas it helps the work explore: the East India Company’s imperialism and its impact on British political and domestic life; gambling as inextricably linked to colonial pursuits; and the takeover of Ireland, an interventionist act, euphemistically called a “Union.” I will

⁴⁶ Perhaps an allusion to Thomas Holcroft’s *The Road to Ruin*, wherein Sophia says “I would not give you this tiny bit of paper, no not for a diamond as big—as big as the whole world!” (8th ed., London: J. Debrett, 1792), p. 44. Suggestively, Edgeworth uses this phrase writing to Charlotte Sneyd (1802): So pleased was her father with the daughter of a French landlord they stayed with, he wanted to hire her out to relatives, but Edgeworth says that the girl’s parents “would not part with her for Pitt’s diamond.” That Edgeworth replaces the Pitt with the Pigot reveals her specificity and suggests that the latter serves a specific purpose in the novel. *The Life and Letters of Maria Edgeworth*, ed. Augustus J. C. Hare, 2 vols. (Boston, MA and New York: Riverside Press, 1895), vol. 1, p. 99.

⁴⁷ Neither the Pigot nor the scandal surrounding it were as famous as that concerning Warren Hastings, who was brought to court by Edmund Burke and Philip Francis. On the graphic prints satirizing Hastings, see Daniel O’Quinn’s brilliant discussion in *Staging Governance: Theatrical Imperialism in London, 1770–1800* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), p. 172. The Pigot was famous enough, however, to be mentioned by Horace Walpole. Writing to Lady Mary Coke (August 22, 1771), he claims that Madame du Barry “has already given Pitt’s diamond to her chambermaid; and if Lord Pigot is wise, he will change his at Bett’s glass shop for a dozen strong beer glasses” (quoted in Pointon, *Brilliant Effects*, p. 250).

analyze these three throughout the rest of this section, beginning with the history of the stone's owner, Pigot.

3.2.1 *Embodying, Smashing, and Excising Colonial Power*

George Pigot happily served as Governor of Madras from 1755 to 1763, only to experience a fatal end during his second term from 1775 to 1777 when the East India Company (EIC)'s change in policy toward Indian rulers ensnared and penalized him.⁴⁸ During his first stint at Fort St. George, Pigot, obeying Company policy, recognized the nawab, Muhammad Ali Khan, as the sovereign and possessor of economic and military power. Perhaps his support was what led the nawab to give Pigot the eponymous diamond. After 1763, Pigot left India opulently wealthy, taking up residence in Ireland; however, during his recess from office, a mutually dependent and negative relationship between this nawab and the EIC materialized. Though recognized as the self-determining potentate, Muhammad Ali Khan was unable to protect his holdings, so he relied on the EIC to do so, but at a high cost, since maintenance for these troops came from his revenues. To pay, he took out loans of as much as £750,000 from EIC employees at extortionate interest rates. Also rendering this alliance more tumultuous were the nawab's continued requests for EIC support to attack Tanjore and wrest the territory from its raja, which they did in 1773.⁴⁹ At this point, the nawab was levying power not only in India, but in England. As Nicholas Dirks explains, "between 1763 and 1792, at least a dozen Englishmen actually sat in Parliament with seats bought by Nawabi money" and Pigot, himself, now having "exhausted" the fortune he had brought to Ireland, was still awaiting a "promised pension" from the nawab.⁵⁰

There was reason, thus, to subjugate this increasingly aggravating figure, and in 1775, Pigot, now a baron and foremost among those persuading the EIC directors not only that "the nawab had to be restrained but also that Tanjore had been badly treated,"⁵¹ was ordered from Ireland back to

⁴⁸ For histories of India, see Nicholas B. Dirks's *Scandal of Empire: India and the Creation of Imperial Britain* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006); Partha Chatterjee's *Black Hole of Empire: History of a Global Practice of Power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012); and William Cooke Taylor's *A Popular History of British India* (Delhi: Mittal Publications, 1987), especially pp. 151–153.

⁴⁹ Now called Thanjavure. The nawab's mostly specious justifications for attacking Tanjore were that the raja had failed to offer the financing and troops he had promised in the war with Ali Hyder, and that he had covertly communed with the enemy. See Taylor, p. 153.

⁵⁰ Dirks, pp. 64, 72. ⁵¹ Dirks, p. 72.

Madras to clean up the mess. Reinstated as governor, he restored the raja of Tanjore’s full authority. Pigot inevitably met with opposition from the nawab and, not surprisingly, from his own colleagues at Fort St. George, since his actions endangered these EIC employees’ ability to get a return on the money they had lent to Muhammad Ali Khan. However, Pigot had to stand almost alone in this negotiation since, by 1776, “almost every European in Madras was involved in some way in [the nawab’s] debts.”⁵² The British council in India mutinied against and arrested Pigot, who died imprisoned in 1777. To atone, Parliament posthumously exonerated him and promised recompense to Pigot’s heirs via the diamond.

These events concerning Pigot occurred in the 1760s and 1770s; nevertheless, the EIC’s role continued to inflame feelings in both Britain and India, especially with the parliamentary debate in progress concerning whether the Pigot diamond lottery – whose proceeds would financially compensate his heirs – should be held. This debate, which I examine in [Section 3.2.2](#), reanimated public memory and imagination in 1800, just as Edgeworth was writing *Belinda*. When the *Annual Register* reported on Pigot’s story, they expressed a bias against the nawab of Arcot, describing him as having, “through the protection and alliance of the East-India company, grown to very great power, and . . . to an uncontroled influence, not only over the natives, but by various management, over the British settlements also.”⁵³ They took the higher ground by favoring the displaced raja, though, as we have seen with Pigot’s championing of him, hypocrisy inflected such a morally superior stance.

When the Pigot opens its mouth to speak about *Belinda*, we *hear* that it, like all things, has manifold and sometimes contradictory meanings, as the diamond’s excess implications overflow, offering prismatic interpretive avenues for exploring *belonging with*. I propose, then, several ways – all “indiscreet” – that the Pigot’s history and *Belinda*’s inclusion of the diamond ferry meanings between them, exposing how dishonesty abroad disturbs lives at home, and vice versa. As I will show, these interpretations sometimes differ, but are all viable. Returning to Lady Delacour’s criticism of *Belinda* ([Section 3.2](#)), it seems that she sees her protégée as resembling the nawab, who “grow[s] to a very great power” not only over the EIC, but also local native populations – that is, in her case, Helena and Lord Delacour. She associates the Pigot with *Belinda*’s alleged ambitions, and

⁵² Dirks, p. 65.

⁵³ *The Annual Register, or a View of the History, Politics, and Literature for the Year 1777* (London: J. Dodsley, 1778), p. 95.

her evident knowledge of the diamond's history further opens up the possibility that Belinda, in living with Lady Delacour and purportedly helping her, also comes to embody Pigot and his actions – first as the British colonizer who enters a territory initially pledging fealty to one ruler (Lady Delacour, herself, and correlatively the nawab), and then, second, switching allegiance to the raja/Lord Delacour so as to extract greater prizes from this new “friend.” I emphasize that because the thing's excess overflows, I am not creating a one-to-one allegorical “match-up.” Instead, this historical and fictional exchange between human and nonhuman reveals the wide-ranging concern that a perverse balance of power based on bribery, one leading to instability, reverberates back and forth between the domestic and the colonial fronts.

When we move toward the Pigot, encouraging it to belong with its history, prismatic combinations between fictional and historical characters radiate. As Belinda varyingly embodies the Pigot diamond, Pigot himself, and the nawab, so does Lady Delacour see herself as Pigot, himself, post mutiny: Belinda thus now performs the role his rebelling council did when, power-hungry to accrue and maintain capital through allegiance to the nawab, they imprison Pigot, an act leading to his death. Disclaiming their responsibility, they mouth Pigot's actions as “arbitrary,” “unconstitutional,” and “violent and illegal.”

In the name of his Majesty, and the English nation, from whom are derived the authorities and powers of the Honourable East India Company, our constituents, We, the subscribing members of their government of Fort St. George and its dependencies, *composing a majority of the members of the said government, and therefore by law, and the express orders of the Company, being virtually the government,* issue the following Proclamation.⁵⁴

The council, believing they had the right to replace and imprison Pigot, employ here powerful legal justification to rationalize their actions. And though lawfully permissible, identifying the Company as “*being virtually the government*” reinforces it as an abstraction that dislocates them and it from any consequences to the human–nonhuman nexus outside their own financial maneuverings. Lady Delacour believes that Belinda, too, has formed a “virtual” government to produce her own profits, a move that

⁵⁴ George Pigot, *Lord Pigot's Narrative of the Late Revolution in the Government of Madrass, Dated 11th September 1776* (London, 1778?), p. 20. Pigot quotes from “the general orders and public proclamation, whereby Mr. Stratton, etc. have constituted themselves President and Council” (p. 18; emphasis original).

will, allegedly, eventuate in the former's exile and death and the husband's re-formed alliance in remarriage.

In addition to this single allusion to the eponymous stone, the novel also introduces a diamond coronet; when interpretively connected, these gems brandish truths about toxic and intersecting organisms – enslavement, the colonial system, the diamond trade, and the marriage market – where bribery, deception, and profit dominate. Struck down by these infections, all players are compromised and all experience, in varying degrees, collateral violence. Lady Delacour renders this relational entity tangible when she accuses Belinda of wanting to marry Lord Delacour (thereby receiving a coronet) and of believing that she "stands between" the ingenue and her machinations. Lady Delacour sees herself in a situation that once again refracts polychromatically from the EIC and George Pigot's intrigues, for now a dense and volatile analogy emerges between her and the raja of Tanjore, with whom the British newspapers sided, contending that he "defended his capital bravely; but being subdued after a sharp siege, the unhappy Prince was stripped, without remorse or pity, of every thing but life."⁵⁵ Feeling besieged and betrayed, she exclaims:

"The poor mad wife would still be in your way, would yet stand between you and the fond object of your secret soul—a coronet!" As she pronounced the word "coronet," she pointed to a coronet set in diamonds on her watch-case, which lay on the table. Then suddenly seizing the watch, she dashed it upon the marble hearth with all her force, "Vile bauble!" cried she, "must I lose my only friend for such a thing as you? Oh, Belinda! Do not you see that a coronet cannot confer happiness?" (*B*, pp. 206–207)

Like that "unhappy Prince," she feels she will be "stripped, without remorse or pity, of every thing." Rendering human and nonhuman contiguous, she attacks this *bijou indiscret* since it allegedly reveals Belinda's indiscret betrayal, one which strips her of friendship – *belonging with* – for supremacy and possession. Smashing the coronet constitutes a violent encounter among characters and things, one that explores the excess radiating outward when the diamond and marriage markets are seen to belong together, in this case a belonging that, paradoxically, cultivates greater understanding about how both intensify alienation. Jonah Siegel has suggested that "excess and death are twin elements that are juxtapose[d] . . . not simply for contrast but to suggest relation."⁵⁶ Lady

⁵⁵ *Annual Register*, p. 98.

⁵⁶ *Desire & Excess: The Nineteenth-Century Culture of Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 255.

Delacour's terror that Belinda's treachery will not only steal her husband but her right to live weaponizes her arm, which propels the watch into space. The coronet she thinks her friend idolizes must be "dashed" and thus *defaced* so it can materialize her thoughts, rendering them visceral for Belinda, since a marriage for alliance has disfigured Lady Delacour. The watch's ruined "face" thus doubles as her "death-like countenance" (*B*, p. 31), while simultaneously anticipating Belinda's, if she were to pursue this same course.

In light of the Pigot and the coronet's ability to expose in tightly compressed allusions the colonial, slave, diamond, and marriage markets, we should pay attention to what consequences arise when a writer "shuts up" these diamond mouths, silencing even their murmurs. To do so, I turn to the first French translation (and rewriting) of Edgeworth's novel, Octave Ségur's *Bélinde, conte moral de Maria Edgeworth traduit de l'anglais* (1802).⁵⁷ Here *Belinda* is recycled, becoming its own after-book, one which resembles *Paul et Virginie* more than Edgeworth's original. This translation expurgates the Pigot diamond – and thus colonial history – when Lady Delacour merely says to Belinda that Clarence "would have given his fortune" (Ségur, vol. 2, p. 92) to have received the same smile that Belinda has just bestowed on Lord Delacour. Ségur also eliminates the multiple fiscally driven connections between heiresses and diamonds Lady Delacour satirizes, and he excises allusions to slavery in the analogy that Belinda is marketed like "Packwood's razor strops" (*B*, p. 25); instead, we hear that her perfections are as widely advertised as pretty muslins (*jolies mousselines*) (vol. 1, p. 41).

Ségur not only purges colonial references, but his *Bélinde* rejects *Belinda's* palpable physicality in the watch-smashing episode. He includes Lady Delacour's physical instantiation of her rage by having her throw the coronet away from her (*elle la jeta loin d'elle avec force*), but in omitting its collision, he silences metal and mineral striking marble; Lady Delacour cries out that she, herself, will always be

"un obstacle entre vous et l'objet secret des désirs de votre âme. La possession d'un *titre*." En prononçant ces mots, elle fixait *les armes* de Lord Delacour représentées en diamans sur sa montre, qui était sur la table; la saisissant alors avec vivacité, *elle la jeta loin d'elle avec force*. "Vils enfans de

⁵⁷ On this work, see Carmen Fernández Rodríguez, "An Analysis of Octave Ségur's Translation of Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda* (1801) into French," *Alicante Journal of English Studies* 29 (2016): 91–111. On translations of Edgeworth's works into French, see Ana Gabriela Macedo and Margarida Esteves Pereira, *Identity and Cultural Translation: Writing across the Borders of Englishness: Women's Writing in English in a European Context* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006).

l’orgueil!” s’ecria-t-elle; “faut-il que pour vous je perde ma seule amie? O Bélinde! ne deviez-vous pas voir que *la grandeur* ne donne pas le bonheur?” (Ségur, vol. 2, pp. 137–138; emphasis added)⁵⁸

As seen in this extract, instead of using the word “coronet” (*couronne*) three times, as Edgeworth does, Ségur first substitutes it for “*un titre*,” second for “*les armes*” (heraldic symbols on a coat of arms), and third for “*la grandeur*.” Ségur’s substitutions, I suggest, lack the *form* that the diamond coronet gives to us. A crown functions, of course, as a symbol and works that way in *Belinda* as well, but, in literally striking the marble, the diamond coronet conjures more somatic specificity than reference to an ancestral title does. I draw here from Angela Leighton, who explains that form, because of its “multiple significations” and “innumerable associations . . . is mobile, versatile. It remains open to distant senses, distortions” and constitutes “a matter of crusading physical presence.”⁵⁹ She quotes from Raymond Williams’s *Keywords* that “the dictionary definitions of the word [form] range from ‘an essential shaping principle’ to ‘a visible or outward shape, with a strong sense of the physical body.’”⁶⁰ While my differentiation of coronet from “title” or “coat of arms” or “*la grandeur*” is subtle, I suggest that in the thing’s collision with the marble hearth, the qualities of form Leighton highlights – energy and transformation – reinforce the watch’s be-diamonded materiality, a thinginess which returns us to these markets’ exploitative economies. These diamonds model interpretive excess, excess “everywhere, just behind the corner, in the footnote, between the lines, in what is not said.”⁶¹ For anyone who has read the source text and Ségur’s translation, the coronet’s surplus overflows in *Bélinde* as well, not because it is present in the text, but because its absence signifies what cannot be said. Analyzed comparatively, these embodiments, conspicuously lacking in *Bélinde*, render their presence in *Belinda* especially conspicuous, with the Pigot diamond specifically and the coronet more generally providing links to the colonialism driving the

⁵⁸ [Lady Delacour cries out that she “will always be an obstacle between you and the secret object your soul desires. The possession of a *title*.” In pronouncing these words, she fixed her eyes upon Lord Delacour’s *coat of arms* represented in diamonds on her watch, which was on the table; quickly seizing it, *she threw it far from herself with force*. “Vile child of pride!” she cried; “must I lose my only friend for you? Oh Belinda! Must you not see that *grandeur* does not give one happiness?”]

⁵⁹ *On Form: Poetry, Aestheticism, and the Legacy of a Word* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 2, 3, 9.

⁶⁰ Leighton, p. 2. See Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983; 1st pub. 1976), p. 138.

⁶¹ Jeffrey Kripal, *Eroticism & Reflexivity in the Study of Mysticism: Roads of Excess, Palaces of Wisdom* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), p. 307.

novel's emotional and financial domestic chaos, which itself, in turn, resembles how, by 1800, London itself had completely lost control of the East India Company, which was millions of pounds in debt.

3.2.2 *The Pigot Diamond Lottery: Gambling, Gender, and Colonial Pursuits*

In Section 3.2.1, I excavated how the Pigot turns readers toward the East India Company. Here I decipher a second way in which Edgeworth's colonial and feminist critique extends beyond the West Indies. On July 2, 1800, "His Majesty was . . . pleased to signify his royal assent" to the "Pigot's Diamond Lottery," a means by which Pigot's heirs should be allowed to "*dispose* of a certain very valuable diamond."⁶² This mouths a history one no longer *hears*, but one that deserves to be told. As I will show, the lottery itself embodies the descriptive and economic overlappings between diamonds and women, ones that demonstrate colonialism's rippling effect on domestic customs. It further underscores how the Pigot was not an ancestral possession, but imperial booty, English owned, but then state sponsored, such that it sanctioned the Pigot's sale just as the East India Company, and collaterally British governing powers, legitimated bribery and imperialism. Pigot's heirs were unable to sell the stone for its appraised value, and the government no doubt felt guilty for the governor's death at his own countrymen's hands: in retrospect, the East India Company apparently did not have the right to imprison and thus *dispose* of Pigot himself. Parliament debated the issue, though, because lotteries "encourag[ed] one of the worst species of gaming"⁶³ – an activity readers will recognize as pertinent to Edgeworth's criticism of colonial enslavers' indolence. For example, Vincent, as a youth in the West Indies, gambles day after day, and ultimately as an adult in England risks his entire fortune in such play.⁶⁴ Certainly, like gambling, this lottery transplanted from India the English nabob's fantasy of getting rich quick. Over 10,000 people, including Lord Nelson and Lady Hamilton, each spent two

⁶² *The Parliamentary Register* (London: J. Debrett, 1800), vol. 12, pp. 230, 124; emphasis added.

⁶³ *Parliamentary Register*, p. 125.

⁶⁴ On gambling, see Jessica Richard, *The Romance of Gambling in the Eighteenth-Century British Novel* (New York and London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 127–145. Also see Alison Harvey, "West Indian Obeah and English 'Obee': Race, Femininity, and Questions of Colonial Consolidation in Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda*," in *New Essays on Maria Edgeworth*, ed. Julie Nash (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2006), p. 5.

guineas on a lottery ticket. Possessing such a splendid thing – a gorgeous stone excessively large, brilliant, and valuable, normally inaccessible even to the very rich – suddenly became a shimmering possibility for anyone, even women.

Indubitably, the lottery announcements struggle with the gender democracy this sanctioned gambling seems to promise. The London *Oracle and Daily Advertiser* (1800) reveals that “The Goddess Fortune”

recommends the PIGOT DIAMOND to the patronage and protection of the Ladies in the Imperial Dominions of Britain; [she] declares likewise that it shall be given to the FAIREST who of them would not therefore adventure the trifle which purchases a ticket in the Lottery for the Superb JEWELL, when the fortunate she who obtains it, will not only excel most of her competitors in FORTUNE, but also ALL OF THEM IN BEAUTY, as the Deity above mentioned has declared.⁶⁵

This advertisement renders the lottery an exercise in “gender performativity”⁶⁶ and connects the varying themes I have been discussing: those of gambling (the “Goddess Fortune”); links between women and diamonds; colonialism (“Imperial Dominions”); and female “virtue” as disassociated from agency. Women evidently want the Pigot diamond (perhaps it would ensure their liberty and thus the happiness of their other “jewel”), but according to the announcement’s logic, such a desire would be excessive, and to take action to secure it would have women striving, an affront to constructions of female identity. Here, instead of offering us multiple mouths – perspectives – this advertisement chatters out both sides of its mouth, for “morality” forbids these women from pursuing the gem while motivating them to covet it; hence they have the right to do so, but only via a male proxy. With dizzying circumlocution, the advertisement ensures that if “the Fairest” refuses surfeit longings, she will gain the Pigot, yet this unmistakably appeals to a woman’s vanity, for if she or her male proxy were to win the prize, this outcome was already prophesied by the Goddess Fortune.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Tuesday, November 18, 1800; Issue 22, p. 398. *Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Buryen Newspapers Collection*.

⁶⁶ In *Staging Governance*, O’Quinn shows how Hastings’s trial provided “a spectacle of gendered performativity that is rivaled only by London’s pleasure sites” (p. 169).

⁶⁷ On March 2, 1801, Richard Blanchford, John Cruikshank, John Henderson, and William Thompson won the lottery. Unable to sell the Pigot, they sent it back to the marketplace in 1802, when it was auctioned at Christie’s.

3.2.3 “An Act for the Union of Great Britain and Ireland”

To turn to the third main way the allusion to the Pigot broadens *Belinda's* political critique, it is important to read about both bills passed on July 2, 1800: “His Majesty was . . . pleased to signify his royal assent to the bill, intitled, ‘An Act for the Union of Great Britain and Ireland’; And also to Pigot’s Diamond Lottery.” History has conjoined these two bills, and I claim that at the narrative level *Belinda* does so as well, awakening us to reframe the novel and see fresh meanings through the register of things. The Pigot and its lottery not only guide our focus to India, but also to another colonial critique by turning the light onto Ireland. Pigot himself was created an Irish peer and it was in that country that he squandered his fortune, precipitating his need to return to India. Additionally, not only were these two bills linked chronologically, but they share the same leitmotif of bribery: The latter passed primarily because, as is well known, the British awarded honors and peerages to the Irish in exchange for votes, so that parliament, though self-righteously condemning the East India Company, was unquestionably pursuing the same policy in Ireland as the Company did in India.⁶⁸ And that policy was, to requote the *Annual Register*, “trac[ing] out new sources of power and wealth, wherever they could be discovered in the various and remote parts of this widely extended empire.”⁶⁹ This global conflagration further echoes the equations between profit and loss, for when diamonds were discovered in Brazil, the Indian market crashed; when Africans discovered diamonds, the South American market collapsed. Each abandoned country tried to lure the traders back by avowing that the new profiting nation’s diamonds were fake, substandard, or even inferior stones stolen from their own domain. Finally, historically, too, imperial expansion continues to reverberate around the Pigot since, in 1804, after purchasing the diamond for 8,000 guineas, the jewelry store and workshop Messrs. Rundell, Bridge and Rundell sent Philippe Liebart to Paris with the Pigot hoping that Napoleon might purchase it for his coronation.⁷⁰ This journey, as fraught with secrets as *Belinda*, itself, required that Liebart travel with the Pigot and other diamonds “sewn into

⁶⁸ Susan B. Egenolf offers an excellent discussion of Edgeworth’s reaction to the rebellion in *The Art of Political Fiction in Hamilton, Edgeworth, and Owenson* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2009).

⁶⁹ *Annual Register*, p. 95.

⁷⁰ Jack Ogden, “England’s Largest Diamond,” Part 2: “From Pall Mall to the Pyramids,” *Gem and Jewellery History* 18.3 (2009): 36–37, p. 37.

the hem of his coat.”⁷¹ When officials doubted the origins of the stones he carried, Liebart fled, abandoning the diamonds, which were not recovered until 1818.⁷² The saga of colonial invasion that rendered diamond ownership possible continued for the Pigot, with one more mysterious episode, for it was at this time that Mohammed Ali, the Pasha of Egypt, purchased the Pigot from Rundell in 1822 for £30,000. He then gave it to the Ottoman Sultan, Mahmoud II, possibly as a bribe, an act that potentially repeats the Pigot–nawab phenomenon of extortion masquerading as gift giving. At this point, the Pigot vanished from history and its whereabouts remain unknown.

I have argued that when we *listen* to the Pigot, *Belinda* excoriates colonialism, though scholars have said otherwise, even about this earlier edition, one not bowdlerized, that includes the interracial marriage between Lucy and Juba and the heroine’s engagement to Vincent, who, as a creole, functions as a displaced racial other.⁷³ I base my claim partly on the evidence that even in later versions of the novel with those erasures, the Pigot and other diamonds remain. Their presence inspires us to *hear* that those multiple markets – the marriage, the Indian, the West Indian, and the Irish – necessarily belong with each other if we are to expand our understanding of *Belinda*’s broad and interwoven colonial critique.

3.3 The “Nature” of the Diamond

This section investigates the gendered ecosystems of women, ornaments, and nature. As I will show, *Belinda* explores this bionetwork by focusing on human and nonhuman disconnection from and connection to nature, suggesting that a belonging with things can also involve a happy renunciation of them as possessions.⁷⁴ The ecological disasters accruing from diamond quarrying and the racial inequities staining the diamond trade,

⁷¹ Christopher Hartop, *Royal Goldsmiths: The Art of Rundell & Bridge, 1797–1843* (London: John Adamson for Koopman Rare Art, 2005), p. 48.

⁷² Hartop, p. 48; Ogden, p. 37.

⁷³ As Kathryn J. Kirkpatrick shows, R. L. Edgeworth told his daughter to excise this marriage, given that “gentlemen have horrors upon [the] subject, and would draw conclusions very unfavourable to a female writer who appeared to recommend such unions.” See “Gentlemen Have Horrors upon This Subject: West Indian Suitors in Maria Edgeworth’s *Belinda*,” *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 5.4 (1993): 331–348, p. 342. Greenfield concludes that the novel endorses colonial rule and practice (p. 219).

⁷⁴ In linking nature, women, materialism, and feminism, I look to Elizabeth Grosz, who warns scholars to avoid feminists’ “strong resistance . . . to any recourse to the question of nature, . . . [since it] has been regarded primarily as a kind of obstacle against which we need to struggle.” See “Darwin and Feminism: Preliminary Investigations for a Possible Alliance,” in *Material Feminisms*,

given the abuse of the natives who labored to find them but also given the prejudice against Jews who sold them, offer excruciating examples of dislocation from human and nonhuman life. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century environmentalism led Harry Emanuel to call the discovery of diamonds in Brazil “a curse” on humans and their environment: When the Portuguese detected these stones they “took forcible possession of the land, expelled the original inhabitants, and declared the diamond trade a monopoly, and themselves the exclusive proprietors”; claiming that nature itself punishes those who abuse the earth’s riches in such ways, he says that during the year the diamonds were discovered, “the whole district was afflicted with a dreadful drought [and a] fearful earthquake . . . It seemed as if the genii, guardians of the treasure, were indignant at the presumption of man, and tried by every means to prevent the dispersion of their buried treasures.”⁷⁵ In this account, mining for and possessing diamonds challenge nature’s laws, which strike back.

Though our contemporary society endorses the practice of personally boycotting diamonds, this phenomenon in fact emerged in the eighteenth century, and to some degree it resembled the Romantic-era abstention from sugar and rum in loyalty to the abolitionist movement. For example, in Eliza Fenwick’s *Secresy, or the Ruin in the Rock* (1795), Caroline Ashburn rhetorically asks, “those diamonds heaped into different ornaments, how were they obtained? Thousands perhaps—Oh, Sibella! I have laid aside my ornaments!”⁷⁶ Her silent pause, graphically signaled by the em dash, substitutes for the horrors those “thousands” suffered, indicating that such tormenting circumstances must remain unsaid. Perhaps Caroline had been reading travelers like Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, who, as early as the seventeenth century, documents the torment unspoken in the space of that em dash. *Travels in India* (1676) strives for an objective voice, and yet the account’s facts silently mouth the laborers’ working conditions. At the Kollúr mine, “close upon 60,000 persons” toil: the men dig, and the women and the children carry earth,⁷⁷ and at Raulconda, “[b]usiness is conducted with freedom and fidelity” but the “poor” workers earn only “3 *pagodas* per annum, although they must be men who thoroughly understand their work.”⁷⁸ John Mawe’s 1809 revelations also expose grueling circumstances of workers in Brazil who labor long hours in

ed. Stacy Alaimo and Susan Hekman (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2008), p. 23.

⁷⁵ Emanuel, p. 58. ⁷⁶ ed. Isobel Grundy, 2nd ed. (Ontario: Broadview, 1998), p. 67.

⁷⁷ Trans. V. Ball (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1889), vol. 2, p. 75. ⁷⁸ Tavernier, vol. 2, p. 59.

uncomfortable postures "while washing" the diamonds, positions that deform the bones of "young growing negroes"; and yet their food is "poor and scanty," while the "officers are liberally paid and live in a style of considerable elegance . . . Our tables were daily covered with a profusion of excellent viands, served up on fine Wedgewood [*sic*] ware."⁷⁹ One wonders if those dishes carried the famous image of an enslaved and enchained man accompanied by the motto "Am I Not a Man and a Brother," which Wedgewood first reproduced in 1797, and, if so, if anyone heard his plea.

To clarify my argument: I differentiate between the kind of ethical renunciation Caroline demonstrates – one *Belinda's* Lady Delacour also enacts – and the flat sense that wearing diamonds reveals iniquitous female extravagance, an example of which *Secresy* illustrates when Caroline explains how Sir Thomas Barlowe's "fears have made him covetous; he hoards his diamonds in their cases," an activity which disrupts drawing room politics by allowing Mrs. Ashburn to "out-glar[e]" Lady Barlowe's "glitter."⁸⁰ My point is that diamonds in eighteenth-century novels do more than merely link possessing jewels with wealthy pageantry, the dreary lesson Hannah More reaches for when she finds that disrespect for women follows naturally from owning these gems: "A relation of the Duchess of Chandos died . . . a few days ago, at the card-table: . . . they stripped off her diamonds, stuck her upright in a coach, put in two gentlemen with her, and sent her home two hours after she was dead; at least so the story goes."⁸¹ As I shall show, there are more positive implications to owning diamonds than More's equation suggests – diamonds and gambling lead inevitably to humiliating *dénouements* – since women varyingly enacted the buying and displaying of such jewels. Certainly, it was not the case that the most commendable fictional characters constitute those who have never owned a diamond.

Female ownership of diamonds could prove liberating, allowing for recycling that often first required shopping. More than simply something that women wore to represent fashionable surfeit, these jewels became an alternative currency, one they could draw on to help themselves and

⁷⁹ *Travels in the Interior of Brazil: Particularly in the Gold and Diamond Districts of That Country*. . . (1809–1811) (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1812), p. 225.

⁸⁰ Fenwick, p. 110.

⁸¹ *The Letters of Hannah More*, ed. R. Brimley Johnson (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, Ltd., 1925), p. 37. Also see Grieg's historical study, *The Beau Monde*, which emphasizes diamond-wearing and ownership in literature "as a characteristic motif of fashionable society, one that underscored its frivolity" (p. 47). She briefly analyzes Edgeworth's *Emmü* along those lines.

others. A common medium of exchange during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, diamonds shared the same properties as any capital. Between 1750 and 1850, the “Brazilian diamond . . . became a valued security for making bank loans. The stone now found a new use as a money equivalent, or diamond-as-capital.”⁸² Profitable and portable, these gemstones remained a dominant unit of account because of their allegedly indestructible materiality: “[D]iamonds deserve the chief regard of all jewels. . . . [T]hey lie in the smallest space of any, and are therefore the most portable” form of money; further, “their superlative hardness secures them from all injury by wear.”⁸³ Their transportability made them even more important: “In times of revolution and political trouble, jewels, from their extreme portability, have always risen in price: in Paris, during the great Revolution of 1789–96, diamonds doubled their previous value, and even now, in foreign countries, many personages of note make a practice of keeping them in their possession in case of emergency.”⁸⁴ Such exchange involves recycling. Natacha Coquery shows, for example, how eighteenth-century Parisian (as well as English) jewelers “played an essential role in the flourishing second-hand and antique markets within the luxury and semi-luxury sectors,”⁸⁵ an indication that “second-hand trading was not part of a parallel, invisible economy but actually thrived at the very heart of the elite luxury market. . . . Recycling was not marginal but central to consumption.”⁸⁶ Further, the right to recycle jewels by selling them remained an exception to the prohibition usually levied on women owning and transferring property since it could thus provide an escape route during crisis, permitting women to evade the intensive control political bodies exercised to manage their power.⁸⁷ *A Treatise on Diamonds and Precious Stones* provides an educational précis for women who, by “necessity,” must enter the “extensive traffic in these precious substances, exclusive of the regular trade between the jeweller and the merchant.”⁸⁸ He wants to help those who are “delicately situated” – presumably women who must be

⁸² Harry Bernstein, *The Brazilian Diamond in Contracts, Contraband and Capital* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1988), p. 1.

⁸³ Jeffries, p. 75. Also see John Plotz’s *Portable Property: Victorian Culture on the Move* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008). He does not discuss *Belinda*.

⁸⁴ Emanuel, p. v.

⁸⁵ “The Social Circulation of Luxury and Second-Hand Goods in Eighteenth-Century Parisian Shops,” in Fennetaux, Junqua, and Vasset, p. 13.

⁸⁶ Fennetaux, Junqua, and Vasset, “Introduction: The Many Lives of Recycling,” p. 4.

⁸⁷ Discussing *La Princesse de Clèves*, April Alliston notes circumstances where maternal inheritance of valuable jewels is either thwarted, incomplete, or bypassed altogether. See *Virtue’s Faults*, chapter 2.

⁸⁸ Mawe, 2nd ed. (London, 1823), p. 16.

discreet – to receive full value for their stones. Here diamonds, now belongings, are material bodies acting as radiant forces impacting other bodies, providing a means for the disenfranchised to survive and transforming the act of possession. Conceiving of diamonds as a “practical superfluity,” *Belinda*, as I have shown, relates belonging with them to the positive superabundance of multiple meanings, those embodied in “the excess [*le surcroît*, the addition, increase, extra]”⁸⁹ that a diamond’s material qualities radiate.

The novel demonstrates the force a woman, specifically Lady Delacour, can wield when she chooses to recycle her belongings. Fennetaux, Junqua, and Vasset “study the various processes of what Susan Strasser has termed ‘the stewardship of objects,’ that is the different strategies at work to adapt, repair, or transform everyday objects in order to lengthen their life-cycles.”⁹⁰ Playing “steward,” Lady Delacour will recycle her jewels by giving them to Belinda, who she hopes will sell them, if poverty so demands. No longer a diamond “on the market,” she now decrees the ethical metamorphosis of these stones, writing in her will that

it is my intention that the said jewels should be part of my bequest to the said Belinda Portman. If she marry a man of good fortune, she will wear them for my sake: if she do not marry an opulent husband, I hope she will sell the jewels without scruple, as they are intended for her convenience, and not as an ostentatious bequest. It is fit that she should be as independent in her circumstances, as she is in her mind. (*B*, p. 299)

Here the novel identifies how jewels could offer financial power, indeed, “independence” to the marginalized gender, a fact that reminds us that a woman’s relationship to any object is complicated by the economic rules that dictate what she is authorized to own, buy, and sell. Here Lady Delacour’s jewels constitute belongings, things meant to be shared. Her use of such lawyer-like language as the “said jewels” divulges that she knows she has the lawful right to bequeath her things,⁹¹ a knowledge contrasting to her earlier impatience with reading legal contracts and her willingness to squander material resources of her own, protected by law. The passage suggests that a thing’s overabundance can offer liberation when it is a

⁸⁹ Jean-Luc Marion, *In Excess: Studies of Saturated Phenomena*, trans. Robyn Horner and Vincent Berraud (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002), p. xxi; translator’s brackets.

⁹⁰ “Introduction: The Many Lives of Recycling,” p. 5. See Strasser, *Waste and Want: A Social History of Trash* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1999), p. 21.

⁹¹ See the wills James Barry Bird reprints. *Original Precedents of Settlements, Drawn by the Most Distinguished Conveyancers of the Present Day* (London: W. Hughes, 1800).

belonging, rendering objects that might be considered merely luxurious life-giving forces. The contiguity between a woman and her jewels reveals that Lady Delacour here claims the same independence, at the level of mind and corpus, that she bequeaths to the less “nobly” endowed Belinda.⁹² In keeping, renouncing, or transforming their diamonds through exchange, women can assert their virtuous, ethical responsibility; thus, I avoid merely denouncing materiality in general or diamond custodianship more specifically, since censure merely crafts an antagonistic relationship to the nonhuman, one that fragments the affiliation humans and things require for joint survival. As I demonstrate, when Lady Delacour recycles a diamond her husband bequeaths to her, the kind of virtue she manifests arises precisely from her newfound connection to the nonhuman.

Belinda, while not charting environmental disasters, reconnoiters, via the interrelations among a diamond, an aloe plant, and a cherry tree, the eco-social and ecological consequences of exploiting nature and laborers for gain. We see these connections by entering into that domestic “mine,” the Delacour union. When the couple decides to reconcile, the Lord gives his Lady, as a pledge, a “handsome diamond ring,” one he had purchased, on credit, for her adversary, Mrs. Luttridge (*B*, p. 291). In one of the odder examples of “regifting” in English literature, Lord Delacour imagines that as a present the gift will “be peculiarly acceptable” to his wife, and that she will “do me the honour to wear it for my sake” (*B*, p. 291). Given that he originally chose this diamond for Mrs. Luttridge, the ring functions as the opposite of a gift, as one ideally imagines it. Scott Shershow comments that:

On the one hand, the gift presents itself as a radical Other of the commodity – and therefore also of work, insofar as the latter is understood as an investment of time and energy made in the expectation of wages or profit. On the other hand, the idea of the gift seems constantly to be drawn back under the horizon of rational exchange, and to be thus endlessly revealed as a secret ally of both work and the Work.⁹³

As Lord Delacour’s “gift” to Mrs. Luttridge and later to his wife, the ring proffers a perverse “investment of time and energy made in the expectation of wages or profit” since, in the first case, he labors to procure and maintain as an ally his wife’s nemesis and, in the second, to inflame her enmity for and competition with Mrs. Luttridge. Such an “investment” renders contiguous Lord Delacour’s exploitation of this diamond to bribe

⁹² For a stunning article on the slippage between diamonds and women’s sexuality in *The Eustace Diamonds*, see William A. Cohen, “Trollope’s Trollop,” *Novel* 28 (1995): 235–256.

⁹³ *The Work and the Gift* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), p. 5.

two women and Pigot’s distributive favoritism toward the nawab and then the raja of Tanjore. His “gift” diamond, then – as Lady Delacour’s pulse had done, beating in shadow against the wall, visible for all to see and for Dr. X to diagnose as disturbed – incarnates the illnesses afflicting the couple: gambling, emotional infidelity, and alcoholism.

Instead of accepting the diamond, Lady Delacour reframes the life she has lived by recycling it: She tells her husband that: “If you wish to do me a kindness, I will tell you what I should like much better than diamonds”; when he asks: “What should you like better, my dear, than this foolish ring,” she explains that she wants him to bestow its worth, in the form of an annuity, on the gardener she had earlier exploited (*B*, pp. 291, 292).⁹⁴ We recall that she had purchased from that gardener an aloe that blooms “but once in a hundred years” (*B*, p. 63) so that her party could outrival Mrs. Luttridge’s; this jousting, which used as a weapon a rare flowering plant, ultimately leaves the gardener a “beggar” (*B*, p. 106).⁹⁵ The diamond ring and the aloe fold into each other since both were deployed to inflict rage on others. Now restored to happiness and able to attune herself more emphatically both to the human and nonhuman, Lady Delacour finds that belonging with these things in greater harmony helps her to terminate the revenge cycle which she has pursued throughout her life and to enter an orbit where generosity prevails. While her “reparations to the gardener” do reveal that to be properly reformed “she must fulfill domestic duties and those required of the aristocratic woman,”⁹⁶ I add that, to be fully virtuous, reformed, and restored, she must also develop respect for the nonhuman and joyfully nurture the living – herself included. In giving the gardener an income and hiring him to cultivate cherry trees, both Lady and Lord Delacour cultivate *belonging with* by promoting rational exchange and fostering beneficial work. The couple thereby reground their ethics in nature by establishing positive links between gifts and labor, which they render the “secret ally” of work. Rancière has written that during the Romantic era, what he calls the “aesthetic regime of the arts,” “sensible materiality was the very goal of the activity of thought in general. . . . Art

⁹⁴ As Lady Delacour reframes and remakes her life here, so too were diamonds continually reset during the eighteenth century, either to show their glitter better or when new marriages caused pieces of inherited jewelry to be “reset to mark the transition” to a new bride (Grieg, p. 56).

⁹⁵ This complicated story involves many characters, including a “pupil” of Mrs. Stanhope who seduces and marries the gardener to get the aloe. He is paid roughly half of what he had hoped for the plant, and his wife runs away from him, leaving him a beggar.

⁹⁶ Nicholas Mason, “Class, Gender, and Domesticity in Maria Edgeworth’s *Belinda*,” in *The Eighteenth-Century Novel*, ed. Susan Spencer (New York: AMS Press, 2001), vol. 1, p. 279. He is also discussing the gift to the gardener.

anticipates work because it carries out its principle: the transformation of sensible matter into the community's self-presentation.⁹⁷ Once Lady Delacour *listens* to the links between the nonhuman and the human – the aloe, the cherry tree, the gardener, and the flashing gem – the first three can thrive and the fourth becomes, shall we say, a more conflict-free diamond. Via these connections, *Belinda*, itself, intimates that the East India Company's work comprises a perverse "investment of time and energy made in the expectation of wages or profit."⁹⁸

In recycling the diamond into fair trade, which equitably compensates the gardener, Lady Delacour rights the injustice she had committed, for now, rather than trying to master a thing, she *moves toward* relationships power politics do not fully dominate. However, this pomological solution can emerge only because the gardener himself agrees to *belong with*: He willingly entertains a second attachment – the cherry tree has "succeeded the aloe in his affections" (*B*, p. 292) and it gives him "pleasure" to tend to it. This sideways treatment of the subject of second "loves" brings us back to gender and things insofar as it reminds us that, in 1802, the novel gives Belinda the freedom to break her engagement to Vincent and marry Hervey. Thus, the gardener's loss of the aloe and his acquisition of the cherry tree cross with Belinda's and Hervey's rejection, respectively, of Vincent and Virginia for each other. The aloe after all, would only have bloomed once – rather like the relationship between Vincent and Belinda, since if they had wed, her rational, loveless regard for him would have prevented any flowering in the marriage; the cherry tree, however, bears flowers and fruit again and again, as we are expected to believe that Belinda and Hervey's union will. Lady Delacour repurposes the diamond when she swings from one love (extravagant purchases for rivalry) to another (ecological and social work for healing), a choice reaffirming the novel's belief that the human and the nonhuman work best when they work together.

Belinda thus treats the stewardship of things as a serious work, even implying that *belonging with* advances the capacity to appease, to mend, and thus to enchant, a pattern [Chapters 1 and 2](#) highlighted. This enchantment partly manifests since diamonds can baffle their owners, as when, in being reset and given or lent to another, the gem could not be identified as belonging to the previous owner.⁹⁹ But most often in Romantic-era literature, diamonds signify a truth-telling magic, a pattern the ring and its stone in *Les bijoux* performed. Accordingly, these jewels become oracles

⁹⁷ *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, trans. Gabriel Rockhill (London: Continuum, 2009), pp. 43, 44.

⁹⁸ Shershow, p. 5. ⁹⁹ Grieg, pp. 58–59.

spotlighting social customs and emotional imbalances, and, in *Belinda*, actual illness. Discussing Emile Durkheim's "history of reenchantment," Roach emphasizes the "Idea of Force," a phrase used "for the powers of nature embodied in an object or person."¹⁰⁰ Many novels express faith in the ancient belief (scientifically verified, in some cases) that the electrical current between gems and their wearer can have therapeutic properties (coral, associated with good health, was given to newborns). Charles King documents how diamonds had been, since antiquity, valued for their medicinal uses; he emphasizes how "[t]he diamond is highly electric, attracting light objects when heated by friction; and almost alone among gems, has the peculiarity of becoming phosphorescent in the dark, after long exposure to the sun's rays."¹⁰¹ This in itself is a form of *belonging with* – a movement toward and attraction sparking radiant connection. Indeed, *Corinne* draws on beliefs in psychokinetic powers when Oswald gives the heroine a ring and pledges his love to her; she exclaims, "if you stop loving me, the ring itself will tell me. Does not an old belief tell us that diamonds are more faithful than men, and that they become dull when their giver betrays us?" (C, p. 271).¹⁰² Here, either by sustaining sparkle or becoming leaden, a diamond itself becomes a steward, embodying the "Idea of Force" to unveil secret truths to the one who wears it. In *Belinda*, *belonging with* this diamond voices the "secret" of how to forge a newfound connection to the environment, one which stimulates ethical practice and expedites healing from emotional alienation and physical pain.

Conclusion

Walter Benjamin suggests that "[s]imultaneous with any cognition of an object is the actual coming-into-being of this object itself."¹⁰³ Edgeworth's engagement with brilliants, coronets, and the Pigot diamond brings these things "into being," but does not exhaust their meanings. A comparison between *Belinda* and an enormous diamond reveals, indirectly, the East India Company's back story of corruption and internal mutinies, a

¹⁰⁰ *It* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007), p. 18. Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912), trans. Karen E. Fields (New York: Free Press, 1995), p. 208.

¹⁰¹ *The Natural History of Precious Stones and of the Precious Metals* (Bell & Daldy, 1867), p. 101. He cites Solomon, who claims that diverse "are the virtues of stones: some give favour in the sight of lords; some protect against fire; others make people beloved," pp. 35–36.

¹⁰² Emanuel reports that "[g]ems were also supposed to indicate the state of health of the donor or possessor" (1st ed., pp. 28–29).

¹⁰³ "The Concept of Criticism in German Romanticism," in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings: Vol. 1, 1913–1926*, ed. Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), p. 148.

narrative allied to violent domestic conflicts, international wars, and the crushed Irish revolt, which led to the “union” between Ireland and Great Britain. Thus, diamonds, prismatically repurposed in *Belinda*, would “sparkle no more” in the novel if they were to remain separated from their histories. Lady Delacour’s reformation arises when she transforms her understanding of the human–thing network and claims her right to *belong with*. Captive to a materiality without dimension or multifariousness, she had glibly abandoned her material wealth and independence, only later to be, ironically, nearly devoured by the material decay of a physically tormenting and unhealed wound in her breast. Her bodily discomfort, in fact, leads to baffling behavior – possibly stemming from temporary psychosis (her delusion that Belinda will steal her diamond “coronet”) or religious fanaticism (obsession with Methodism and death). Such bafflement itself recalibrates Lady Delacour’s relationship to things, and thus to humans. Wendell Berry, pinpointing how form can baffle us, argues that

the Muse of Realization . . . returns again and again to say, “It is yet more difficult than you thought.” This is the muse of form. . . . It may be then that form serves us best when it works as an obstruction, to baffle us and deflect our intended course. It may be that when we no longer know what to do we have come to our *real work* and when we no longer know which way to go we have begun our real journey. The mind that is not baffled is not employed. The impeded stream is the one that sings.¹⁰⁴

In *Belinda* such material forms – a colossal diamond such as the Pigot, the shattered coronet, or Lady Delacour’s breast wound – sing to readers in ways that bewilder and thus reorient understanding. When readers or characters practice belonging with the nonhuman, they engage in “*real work*” given that the abundant meanings that things engender both obstruct our journey (“we no longer know which way to go”) but also illuminate it, making things hum. Finding “companionship in physical objects,” to quote again from *Corinne* (p. 82), requires “*real work*,” what Oswald, as I have shown, finds impossibly hard labor. In investigating truths that the nonhuman whispers, this chapter has listened to things that are not supposed to “be” listened to. Like Diderot’s “jewels,” this longing to hear might be seen as “indiscreet” – injudicious, imprudent, and indecorous – and yet my goal has been to hear the interpretative possibilities that arise when we can belong with the nonhuman.

¹⁰⁴ *Standing by Words* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1983), pp. 204, 205; emphasis added.

*Recycling and Reembodying, Twining
and Untwining*
Paul et Virginie and Its After-Things

Préambule

Embodied Experience spotlights authors who envision a social contract based on the idea that a stable and liberating community – one that resonates with a vital mutuality between the human and nonhuman world – arises from *belonging with*, which itself involves a prismatic connection with quotidian things.¹ *Paul et Virginie*, like *Corinne*, opens with the vision and hope for such communion, as the eponymous heroines forge such links – whether that involves regarding Rome as a friend or recycling food so others may eat. In both cases, however, that contract is, after many efforts to sustain it, broken. This chapter’s *préambule* begins with a brief investigation into Bernardin’s *Études de la Nature*, with which the novel *Paul et Virginie* was originally published (1788).² Enfolding these two texts together thus makes organic sense and urges me to look in counterpoint at them in relation to belonging with the healing efficacy of human–thing connection, with the ripening of an ardent, sensory regard for the nonhuman’s diversity and ambiguity, and with the cultivation of an acute consciousness that all things exist in relation to other things.

The *Études* begins with Bernardin’s observations of insects on a strawberry plant. As his wonder unfolds, he offers a template for belonging with things that manifests early in *Paul et Virginie* and that provides a springboard for reading that novel and its things. He draws on what *Corinne* calls the “keener eye” (*C*, p. 82), carefully charting for three weeks the thirty-seven species that visit the plant. He observes and respects how each being

¹ A shorter version of this chapter first appeared as “Amber does not shed so sweet a perfume as the veriest trifles touched by those we love”: Engaging with Community through Things in Bernardin de St. Pierre’s *Paul et Virginie* and Alphonse de Lamartine’s *Graziella*,” in *Engaged Romanticism*, ed. Mark Lussier and Bruce Matsunaga (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2008).

² Chris Bongie illuminates the *Études* in relation to *Paul et Virginie*, though not in relation to material culture. See *Islands and Exiles: The Creole Identities of Post/Colonial Literature* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 92. All translations from the *Études* are mine.

varies in appearance and in movement: The insects are “gold,” “silver,” or “striped”; even their heads are varyingly “dark like a patch of black velvet” or spangled “like a ruby”; furthermore, he believes they enjoy themselves as they extend their wings: Some “flew spirally, like butterflies,” and others, resembling pilots, “rose into the air by steering themselves against the wind,” using “a mechanism more or less similar to that of paper kites” (*É*, pp. 3, 4). Their happy playfulness and the fact that “they seemed to take pleasure in displaying” (*É*, p. 3) their wings anticipate Potkay’s claim that “[t]he possibility that subrational things experience joy implies ethical consequences in our attitude toward or interaction with them.”³ Discussing those ethical consequences, Bernardin says that these beings are “surely worthy of my attention, since Nature bestowed upon them hers” and to express his frustration with “man’s” tendency to “call everything worthless which he cannot immediately use”; far from taking an Anthropocene viewpoint since he satirizes his gaze as coming from “the height of my greatness,” he grants to the nonhuman not only joy, but technological superiority, for their eyes can “perceive, by a mechanism of which we have no idea, every thing that is close, and that is far off” (*É*, p. 5).⁴ He acknowledges that he longs to become acquainted with the strawberry plant, though that would require the impossible task of tracing “how it has been able to scatter itself” from France to “*les montagnes de Cachemire jusques à Archangel*” (*É*, p. 11). He further highlights this ethical relationship between human and nonhuman: that to know the flower, one must study it in “*relation* to the rest of Nature,” to the “sun, which makes it bloom, to the winds which sow its seeds,” and “to the streams that strengthen and embellish their banks” (*É*, p. 11; emphasis added). Likewise, one must see the lily “on the edge of a rivulet,” “raising in the middle of the grasses its stately stem, and reflecting in the waters, its beautiful calix, whiter than ivory” (*É*, p. 30). Bernardin acknowledges that the nonhuman ultimately remains a mystery, but in partially deciphering it and respecting interlacings, one can belong with it. In *Paul et Virginie*, learning how humans connect to their environment, becomes, as it is in *Corinne*, crucial to the family’s survival and, when they abandon this practice, every member dies, an annihilation arising from forgetting one

³ Potkay, p. 398.

⁴ Malcolm Cook discusses the reception of the *Études*, explaining that in this text, “Bernardin seeks to define the essence of nature by showing its harmonious working, a process that is engineered and driven by a divine entity.” See *Bernardin de Saint-Pierre: A Life of Culture* (Oxford: Legenda, MHRA, and MANEY, 2006), p. 92.

of the lessons of the *Études* – that humans and nonhumans are “surely worthy” of mutual belonging.

4.1 Twining and Untwining

4.1.1 They “Twine Together to Withstand the Hurricane”

Paul et Virginie demonstrates how significantly humans and nonhumans require cooperation to survive and flourish. The families initially experience solidarity because, like delicate and “weak plants,” they “twine together to withstand the hurricane” (“*Ainsi des plantes faibles s’entrelacent ensemble pour résister aux ouragans*” [PV, p. 65; Ehrard, p. 148]). In their daily life, the characters accomplish this by watching over each other and revering the nonhuman; in doing so, they attend to each other’s emotional and working lives, as well as their environment itself, animating a simultaneous liberation of feeling and a solidifying of affective support.

Specifically, Paul and Virginie accomplish this twining together through the growing, sharing, and eating of food, as I show in this [first section](#). I acknowledge that food as an object constitutes something rather materially different from the goods I have examined in the first two chapters – statues and diamonds – as well as the *Paul et Virginie* artifacts (Section 4.3.2) and the hats I discuss in [Chapter 5](#). However, in analyzing the ways the hero and heroine belong with each other and with their environment, my choice of food is apposite (one might say inevitable), first, insofar as they have nothing else they could share and only one object that could be considered a possession, a miniature portrait, which I will introduce shortly. Their focus on belonging with things heartens them to belong with each other, a condition that will change when Madame de la Tour later persuades herself and the family that without property they cannot survive, a conviction that ironically leads to obliteration. Second, food fits well with the other consumer goods *Embodied Experience* reflects on, given that like those, it is recycled to join a dynamic human–nonhuman rotation, though with even more oomph since it is literally consumed and thus taken inward physically. Third, Paul and Virginie garner pleasure from belonging with harvesting and eating and – given that “pleasure is its own way of knowing” – their activities break down binaries between feeling and intellect and consumption and possession.⁵ Finally, my premise here is

⁵ Denise Gigante, *Taste: A Literary History* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), p. 2.

that while food is distinct from diamonds or statues, the same principle of *belonging with* applies, since consumers, in sharing a diamond and/or its wealth with others, animate the intimacy, generosity, and respect that sharing food can offer.

Initially the family finds happiness belonging in and with the world at large. Their ability to see or try to see things as experiencing joy and to take delight in their pleasure stimulates human–nonhuman cooperation, which in turn supports their own – as well as their land’s ecological – endurance. In a passage exemplifying this radiant eco-social philosophy, wherein nothing is “worthless,” we hear that Virginie, committed to recycling, “would never eat fruit in the country without burying the stones or the pips in the earth. ‘They will produce trees,’ she would say, ‘which will give their fruit to some traveler, or at least to a bird’” (*PV*, p. 100). Her vigilance here ensures a productive cycle where no being goes hungry, and where humans help sustain nature. In another example, we see that, at the feet of two coconut trees, they have planted maidenhair that “beamed like green and black stars, and bunches of hart’s-tongue, hanging down like long ribbons of purplish-green, [that] waved at the wind’s pleasure” (*PV*, p. 63). Here the nonhuman “beams,” offering smiles and light, and it “waves” when the wind experiences “pleasure.” They eat “country fare, for which no animal had paid with its life” (*PV*, p. 64) and keep the dynamic human–nonhuman cycle in motion since what they have planted feeds the animals that feed them: “[W]hile making cheeses with their milk, [Virginie] would watch with delight as [the goats] browsed on the maidenhair” (*PV*, p. 63). Although “clouds will sometimes arise to darken even the most perfectly regulated soul,” when this occurs, the family would “gather round” to put “bitter thoughts to flight” (*PV*, p. 65). Timothy Morton has written that “[s]olidarity *requires* nonhumans.”⁶ Certainly these gatherings – among humans and nonhumans – strengthen the ecosystem they all inhabit. And Peter Mortensen has rightly said that the novel, “[c]ombining political liberalism and abolitionism with philosophical holism and organicism . . . , urges the necessity . . . of reconsidering the conditions under which human beings interact with other living organisms – a dual focus that makes *Paul et Virginie* a prime example of the ‘ecological’ or ‘ecosocial’ Romantic orientation.”⁷ Indeed, the novel poses

⁶ *Humankind*, p. 189; emphasis original.

⁷ *British Romanticism and Continental Influences: Writing in an Age of Europhobia* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 97.

the question, how do we belong with the things that surround us, an inquiry that simultaneously explores a community's ethical structures.

Bernardin's *Études* reminds us that to become more intimate with the flower or any nonhuman thing, one must study them in "relation to the rest of Nature" (*É*, p. 10). The family themselves live in relation to nature's pulse, which orders their daily life: They know that "[i]t is dinner-time, . . . [for] the shadows of the banana-trees are at their feet" or, "[n]ight will fall soon, the tamarinds are closing their leaves" (*PV*, p. 70). Initially, the children, their somatosensory systems attuned to the material world, are especially aware of living in "relation to the rest of Nature." As Virginie belongs to an ecosphere where food must be composted to keep all its beings alive, so does Paul identify the nonhuman as *belonging with* in relation to other beings. He renders food gathering a loving act when he tells Virginie to "[e]at this honey-comb which I took from the top of a high rock for you" (*PV*, p. 71). Here another example emerges of the labor, vitality, and movement requisite for belonging with others, as Paul's climb to "the top of a high rock" to find this delicacy reveals his willingness to step toward both thing and human.

Resembling Castel-Forte's ability to perceive in Corinne's things "a spark of her life" (*C*, p. 26), Paul's sensory keenness finds incandescence in the interlacings among Virginie, the nonhuman, and his own love. He exclaims that: "Although the trees should hide you from my sight, I have no need to see you to find you again; something of you that I cannot express remains for me in the air when you pass, on the grass where you rest" (*PV*, p. 71). Even after Virginie's exile from the island, Paul remains able to connect with her through things. He gathers

the last posies she had carried, a coconut-shell cup from which she used to drink—and as if these traces of his friend had been the most precious things in the world, he would kiss them and carry them next to his bosom. The rarest perfume has not so sweet an odour as the objects touched by the object of one's love. . . . [A] lover's soul finds traces of its beloved everywhere. (*PV*, pp. 90, 127)

Here, as he kisses the posies and the coconut-shell – the latter another reference to the gustatory – the hero does not merely project onto these objects but reveals that he, Virginie, and these things, again to quote Nancy, live a life of "being-with." Human and nonhuman things leave their "traces" of touch, taste, sight, and "rarest perfume," ones that, when respected, encourage a continuum among the animate. Even the posies' "sweet odour" is recycled – moving vigorously from human to nonhuman

to human. These examples of recycling, listening, and caressing highlight the radiant ways Paul and Virginie live in sensuous relation to each other and their world.

Early on in the novel, drawing on the pleasures of eating and sharing food, *Paul et Virginie* suggests that consciously creating more eco-harmonic relations among all beings arises when one engages with the nonhuman's rich dimensionality; so, while Anna Neill contends that an ideal state is possible only when the "corrupting and divisive forces of economic and social progress"⁸ are resisted, I would say that, at least in *Paul et Virginie*, the process is less about resistance than about positively embracing the opportunities to nurture nonhuman and human connections – that is, the "ideal state" starts from the ground up. For example, this concept provides the key to the community's survival when the banana tree serves as food, shade, and table linen (*PV*, pp. 48, 64, 78), when "[h]alved gourds were all they had for dishes" (*PV*, p. 78), and when *belonging with* expands such that human relations defy rigid roles and boundaries: Women simultaneously are friends, sisters, and mothers to each other's children (sharing nursing duties); and children are friends, quasi-siblings, and lovers. I am not proposing that the community inhabits Rousseau's "state of nature" since the family enslaves human beings.⁹ Neither is it utterly utopian, licensing a perfect union between subject and object, person, and thing.¹⁰ Nor am I advocating for a naïve, full-on primitivism as an antidote for civilization's poisons. Instead, these non-dualistic engagements with the external world tender glimpses of how a less hierarchical social contract could look, one in which humans live more harmoniously with their environment by acknowledging the life and spirit inherent in things and by refusing to objectify other human beings,

⁸ "The Sentimental Novel and the Republican Imaginary: Slavery in *Paul and Virginia*," *Diacritics* 23.3 (1993): 36–47, p. 40.

⁹ Neill connects Rousseau and Bernardin, noting that Rousseau's phrase "little society" is also the one Bernardin uses (p. 40). Roddey Reid charts how the "Old Regime" first "victimize[s] Marguerite and Madame de la Tour," who then "unite" in "pastoral harmony," only to be destroyed by "the Old Regime social logic." See *Families in Jeopardy: Regulating the Social Body in France, 1750–1910* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), p. 121. Bongie says that "notwithstanding the unproblematized but highly problematic status of Domingue and Marie . . . , to say nothing of Bernardin's own reliance on slaves . . . , Bernardin consistently and vocally stressed in his writings the need to abolish the practice" (p. 451, note 69).

¹⁰ I argue that the novel's first part offers movement and the second part resists motion; Racault suggests instead that the opening in its "happy immobility" provides a "utopian enclave," but that Virginie's sexual awakening sparks mobility and closes the utopian moment. "Paul et Virginie et l'utopie: De la 'petite société' au mythe collectif," in *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* 242 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986): 419–471, p. 433.

evacuating their inherent being-ness. Catherine Labio has persuasively shown that the family's failure "is the continued subordination of the *petite société* to the colonial, that is, the European model that determines it."¹¹ I suggest that the colonial model itself arises symptomatically from a foundation that opposes nature and culture, body and spirit, and human and nonhuman. In revealing this dualism, the novel's appalling closure shows the consequences of rejecting such mutual engagement and of choosing separation.

In conclusion to this section, I requote Capra, who elucidates how "the origin of our [current ecological] dilemma lies in our tendency to create the abstractions of separate objects, including a separate self"; once we heal this "separate self," however, we can "overcome our Cartesian anxiety . . . [and] realize that identity, individuality, and autonomy do not imply separateness and independence."¹² While Bernardin embraces human–nonhuman belonging in his *Études*, *Paul et Virginie*'s characters cannot surmount "Cartesian anxiety"; and because they devolve from joyful connection to isolation, the latter shocks more than it might in a setting where there has been only estrangement. The contrast intensifies, though no doubt inadvertently, the ways the novel puts on view the penalties dualism legislates. This has political consequences since this disrespect for human materiality – the inability to see or acknowledge bodies – haunts the culture of slavery itself. Spinoza's claim is apropos here: "The human body, to be preserved, requires a great many other bodies, by which it is, as it were, continually regenerated" (*Ethics*, IIp13POSTIV). As I will show, the novel discards so many bodies that the community cannot revitalize itself. Nevertheless, by embodying how a community *could* function, fragments of *Paul et Virginie* dramatize how to live "lively" with the nonhuman.

4.1.2 *Untwining: Dissolving Ties, Desecrating Things*

In my Introduction to *Embodied Experience*, I noted how many thing theorists find a foundation in nonbinary cerebration. Coole and Frost, to offer one example, define their ethos as having an "antipathy toward oppositional ways of thinking," as constituting an ontology "more positive and constructive than critical or negative," and as avoiding "dualism" by

¹¹ "Reading by the Gold and Black Clock; Or, the Recasting of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's *Paul et Virginie*," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 16.4 (July 2004): 671–694, p. 681.

¹² *The Web of Life*, p. 295.

championing the “generative” and “lively.”¹³ Acknowledging matter’s radiance and committing to a respect for materiality seems to me an ongoing challenge in fiction and daily life, especially in worlds like ours today where untwining is the standard. *Paul et Virginie*’s characters embody this struggle when they misfire in their ability to recognize the other’s materiality as forming part of a larger personal and social connect-edness. As I broached earlier in this chapter, the novel does not dramatize just one “fall” from harmony to polarity; instead, dualism’s presence makes itself known at the text’s beginning, coexisting (but not dominating, as it does toward the end), with the family’s striving toward full engagement with the nonhuman world.

One episode stages an initial plummet into rupture, arising when the children fail to feel, taste, smell, see, and hear matter. This occurs when, left alone, they discover a woman, “emaciated as a skeleton” and wearing “nothing but a shred of coarse cloth wrapped round her loins” (*PV*, p. 51), who has liberated herself from enslavement. She asks Virginie for help – significantly telling the heroine her *own* agonizing story:

“Young lady, have pity on a poor runaway slave; I have been wandering in these mountains for a month, half dead with hunger and many times pursued by hunters and their dogs. I escaped from my master, a rich planter in the Black River district; see for yourself how he treated me;” and she showed Virginie her body which was furrowed with deep scars from the whippings she had received [*“il m’a traitée comme vous le voyez; en même temps elle lui montra son corps sillonné de cicatrices profondes”*]. “I was going to drown myself,” she added, “but knowing that you lived here, I said to myself: ‘I needn’t die yet; there are still some good white people in this country.’”

Virginie was much affected “Poor wretch; I must go to your master and ask him to pardon you; when he sees your condition he will be moved to pity.” (*PV*, p. 51; Ehrard, p. 127)

Appealing to Virginie’s sympathy, beseeching her to “have pity on a poor runaway slave,” this woman adopts “sentimental affect” as she describes her appalling hunger and the enslavers’ pursuit of her as if she were an animal. Ramesh Mallipeddi, arguing against the current theoretical grain, claims that “designating emotional responsiveness to slave suffering as always politically suspect and compromised . . . [has] made it hard to grasp the embodied dimensions of black experience in slave narratives and in black cultural and aesthetic forms more generally”; thus, he advocates for

¹³ “Introducing the New Materialisms,” pp. 8, 9.

“sentimental affect,” for the compelling link between “spectacle and sympathy.”¹⁴ He explores how “sentimental affect did not merely extend unilaterally from the privileged to the powerless, from English subjects to colonial slaves, but was a resource deployed by . . . women and slaves . . . to fashion their subjectivities.”¹⁵ And though she is a fictional character and Bernardin is white, this black woman does “spectacularize” herself by describing her scars at the same time that she shows them to Virginie, simultaneous communications apparent in the French: “*en même temps elle lui montra son corps*” (Ehrard, p. 127).¹⁶ Her visual-verbal interweaving intensifies her story for the reader.

This woman does evoke Virginie’s sympathy – the girl is “much affected” (“*tout émue*”); however, the heroine evidently glances at, but does not hear or actually see this black body, and because she does not *move toward* that body, it makes no imprint on her: No moment of radiant *belonging with* follows. While the enslaver objectifies the Maroon by stealing her labor, physically torturing her, and, no doubt, forcing her to reproduce, thereby rendering her wholly material, the hero and heroine here unwittingly enact their own dualistic bargain by being unable to read the harrowing story carved hieroglyphically into the woman’s body, which was “furrowed with deep scars from the whippings she had received” (*PV*, p. 51). Their inability to belong with the “*Marronne*”¹⁷ arises from their inability to see her body as abused. The children transport her back to her enslaver, asking him to forgive the woman,¹⁸ but his “forgiveness” merely doubles commodification and physical brutality, for Domingue, the enslaved laborer who works for the children’s family, reports that he has seen the woman “chained by the foot to a block of wood, an iron collar with three hooks fastened round her neck” (*PV*, p. 56). Thus, while agreeing with Mallipédi that sympathy can wage a protest against injustice, I want to emphasize my own point – that because the children skim

¹⁴ *Spectacular Suffering: Witnessing Slavery in the Eighteenth-Century British Atlantic* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2016), pp. 5, 4, 18. Mallipédi does not discuss *Paul et Virginie*. I am adopting his definition of “spectacle” as “an act of exhibiting a thing or person for the viewer’s pleasure” or for exhibiting those who suffer (p. 27).

¹⁵ Mallipédi, pp. 4, 182.

¹⁶ Ehrard notes that in *Voyage à l’Île de France*, Bernardin himself obtained a pardon for “*une esclave marronne*” (p. 321, note 27); thus, it is possible that some of the character’s words were spoken by the actual woman he met.

¹⁷ Bernardin uses the name “*une negresse marronne*” (Ehrard, p. 126).

¹⁸ Ian Henderson observes that in returning the enslaved woman, Virginie acts according to the “ameliorationists,” rather than those who advocated for “slavery’s abolition.” See “Reading Lessons: A New Appreciation of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre’s *Paul et Virginie*,” *SVEC* 12 (2003): 309–329, ed. Jonathan Mallinson (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation), p. 317, note 29.

over her punished skin, failing to feel the inflamed ridges of scar tissue, they cannot register that this black body, resonant with material, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual energies, has been unspeakably harmed. The *Marronne* simply functions as a maverick possession that must be returned to her enslaver since, in their own family system, they have seen enslavers as kind.

If readers did not initially register the woman's arteries of scars, Bernardin gives them another chance to do so when Domingue describes her body, chains immobilizing her and an iron collar suspending her in constant pain. The novel, spotlighting the horrific in tangible detail, protests enslavement, as does Domingue's savvy irony, which underscores this injustice: "*Mais quelle grâce!*" – an irony Donovan loses when he translates this as "[b]ut what a cruel pardon it was!" (*PV*, p. 56; Ehrard, p. 134). If we apply Elizabeth Colwill's thesis that eighteenth-century "Europeans' sense of the superiority over the 'primitive' obtained not from cranial measurements but rather from an ethos of politeness and sociability linked to commerce and civilization itself," then Domingue certainly reveals his "superiority," given that he remains "polite" while using inflection to make his powerful point.¹⁹ From my perspective, then, the novel does not put slavery under "sentimental erasure" but rather shows unmistakably that when characters cannot – or refuse to – respect an other's materiality and to see it infused with spirit, they perpetuate conditions that make enslavement possible.²⁰ For Carolyn Vellenga Berman, Bernardin "openly expected" *Paul et Virginie* to "produce immediate political effects";²¹ in his 1789 "Avis sur cette édition," he explains that the episode portraying the freedom seeker could plead "*en faveur de la liberté des noirs*

¹⁹ "Sex, Savagery, and Slavery in the Shaping of the French Body Politic," in *From the Royal to the Republican Body: Incorporating the Political in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century France*, ed. Sara E. Melzer and Kathryn Norberg (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), p. 204.

²⁰ Neill, p. 43. Christopher L. Miller strongly argues that while Bernardin's "representation of . . . Domingue and Marie is dangerously close to his depiction of their dog," what would have "grabbed [readers'] attention was [his] daring exposé of the cruelty of slavery," the inclusion, that is, of the self-liberated woman. See *The French Atlantic Triangle: Literature and Culture of the Slave Trade* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), p. 106.

²¹ *Creole Crossings: Domestic Fiction and the Reform of Colonial Slavery* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), p. 67. Bongie remarks that "the visions of cultural change and exchange that frequently surface in Bernardin's writings are in many ways remarkably 'advanced' for their time"; Bernardin's "hybridizing visions have at their core the scenario of interracial coupling" (p. 96). Roger Mercier affirms that "this brief episode in *Paul et Virginie* was powerful enough to cause reforms on the Ile de France, improving the lives of slaves." Quoted in Miller, p. 106; for original, see *L'Afrique noire dans la littérature française: Les Premières images (XVIIIe-XVIIIe siècles)* (Dakar: Publications de la section de langues et littératures, 1962), pp. 170–171.

before a public already disposed to break their irons” (Ehrard, p. 267).²² Ultimately, this incident proposes that humans render any material being – whether human or nonhuman – contaminated matter when they cannot acknowledge that entity’s multiple dimensions (having a soul and the capacity to love). In documenting the black woman’s escape, her sentimental appeal for help, the children’s journey to the Black River to return her, and the punishments the enslaver inflicts on her, this cameo, in its compressed form, confronts enslavement.

The enslaver, unable to connect to matter, adds sexual exploitation to his abusive commodification. When he promises to “pardon” this woman, he does so with “a dreadful oath, . . . not for the love of God but for love of her”: By *her*, he means Virginie, and by “love” he in fact means that this child’s beauty has aroused him sexually (*PV*, p. 52). In this instance, he can only apprehend Virginie’s “beautiful blonde hair . . . [and] the softness of her voice” (*PV*, p. 52) as erotic matter. In the end, he releases his violence and sexual frustration in the retribution he enacts on the enslaved black woman. The heroine, after meeting this enslaver, sees his rage but does not initially recant her decision to return the woman to a man she herself finds horrifying. Thus, while the journey to the Black River leads to further dehumanizing of the woman, and while Virginie ultimately realizes her mistake, the experience functions only to intensify the protagonists’ mutual love and to catalyze their later erotic attraction, rather than to spotlight enslavement’s inherent corruption, or even to offer the heroine a template for what it means to send a human into captivity.²³ As a whole, the episode underlines that although the children belong with each other, Virginie has already internalized the notion that the female body is property, and that the enslaver sees all as material – black bodies as merely bodies to be tortured and children’s bodies to be used for sexual gratification.

The enslaver’s reaction to Virginie also anticipates the shattering consequences of her own awakening sensual desires and underscores that while the novel can overtly protest enslavement, it is yet held in thrall to women as spirit constantly under matter’s threat. The heroine’s unknown and

²² Ehrard includes Bernardin’s “Avis sur cette édition” in his edition of *Paul et Virginie*. Paradoxically, Bernardin writes, however, that Paul and Virginie’s return of the “*négresse maronne*” was an act of “*vertu*” and “*bienfaisance*” (“charity”) (p. 267). My translation.

²³ For Donovan, the enslaved woman “carries the burden of Virginia’s sexuality” (Introduction, *PV*, p. 28); I suggest that Virginie carries the burden of her own sexuality insofar as it precipitates her exile from Mauritius. I see the enslaved woman and Virginie as both exploited, though the former suffers more horrifically.

“strange ailment” (“*un mal inconnu*” [*PV*, p. 72; Ehrard, p. 157]) causes a crisis, though, in reality, it is nothing “evil” or “unknown” – but simply her transition to sexual maturity. This change reaches a climax when, one night, restless with desire and unable to sleep, she flings herself into the outdoor bath that Paul has built for her and sees “in the dim water, on her bare arms and on her breast, the reflection of the two palm-trees that were planted at her brother’s birth and at her own, intertwining their green branches and their young coconuts above her head” (*PV*, p. 73). This astonishing passage interlaces body and spirit and human and nonhuman, since moonlight and tropical heat activate the trees, which manifest the children’s hitherto spiritual connection, causing the vegetation to imprint themselves physically on her arms and breasts, working in tune with her own desires. Confused and thus frightened by the way this yearning interlaces the tactile and the emotional, the spiritual and the corporeal, the thing and the subject, she runs to her mother, who rejects her daughter’s feelings, telling her instead that God gives her these desires to test her “today only to reward [her] tomorrow”; and that she must “hide” her affection from the man she loves (*PV*, pp. 74, 81), a dictum that necessarily undermines Virginie’s materiality. In other words, because her desires, simply put, do not now belong with her mother’s in this “Eden,” she has no right to feel or express them.

Both the enslaver and the mother act out the same impulse to desecrate Virginie’s sexuality. In *The Family Romance of the French Revolution*, Lynn Hunt asks, “once the French had killed the king, who had been represented as the father of his people, what did they imagine themselves to be doing . . .?”²⁴ Though anachronistically, the novel’s early editions pose a parallel question, for what does Madame de la Tour, part of a thriving matriarchal society, imagine herself to be doing when she divides her own daughter’s body into warring parts? In this sense, Bernardin’s plot embodies in condensed form the actual historical trajectory that occurs before and after its initial publication, since, like the Revolution, it defiles the new social contracts it is founded upon, enacting terrorism against its own inhabitants, and creating the grounds for the community’s own self-immolation.²⁵ This mother’s inability to see her daughter’s body and embrace her sexuality echoes Virginie’s inability to see the Maroon’s

²⁴ *Family Romance*, p. 8.

²⁵ The novel’s position vis-à-vis the Revolution is striking given that before 1788, the “expectation that a fundamental revolution was pending became positively commonplace.” See Israel, *Democratic Enlightenment*, p. 25.

abused body, though this is not a cause-and-effect relationship, since the Black River episode occurs first. Yet, both mother and daughter, in their respective ways, coerce another into turning her own eyes away from those longings for survival and joy, for human emancipation and for a spiritually infused, life-giving sexual union.

When Madame de la Tour “unlearns” the equipoise between steadiness and plasticity and collapses Virginia’s multiple roles as daughter, sister, friend, and lover into one – a beautiful body that functions as a cash crop – she transforms her child into a being who must resist the reciprocity between body and spirit. This decision arises from Madame’s growing distrust of the nonhuman that had previously sustained them (the goat milk, plants, and honeycomb). Such distrust and thus disconnection leads to the breakdown of the community’s “immune system.” From being confident that the families will have enough, she collapses into lack – “[w]hat would become of Virginia if I were to die and leave her without fortune?” To recall *Corinne*, Madame, forgetting to let her “whole being” be “moved by nature’s power,” becomes “distracted” by “society’s arrangements” (*C*, p. 194). No longer present or attentive to human or nonhuman, she rekindles a toxic relationship (one she, herself, tried to escape), writing to her aunt to ask for money (*PV*, p. 49). Trying to remind her friend to trust the cycle of care Virginia nurtured wherein the human and nonhuman feed each other, the wiser Marguerite exclaims, “[w]hat need have we of your relations? . . . Have we not lived happily until now? Why do you vex yourself? Have you no courage?” (*PV*, p. 50).

Marguerite’s call to “courage” could have reminded Madame de la Tour that ethical actions emerge, as Alaimo states, from an “uncomfortable and perplexing place where the ‘human’ is always already part of an active, often unpredictable, material world.”²⁶ Reminiscent of Wendell Berry’s “bafflement,” which leads us “to our *real work*,” Marguerite’s bravery – like all survival – requires an ability to adapt physiologically and culturally.²⁷ Ellen Spolsky explains how flexible creatures are “more likely to survive the unpredictable events of a feckless environment . . . The point is that the distinction we once thought so clear between biology and culture becomes fuzzy: what our evolved biology has apparently determined us to do is creatively to devise cultural means to provide a felicitous balance of stability and flexibility.”²⁸ Madame de la Tour rejects the happiness

²⁶ Alaimo, p. 17. ²⁷ Berry, p. 205.

²⁸ “Introduction,” in *Iconotropism: Turning toward Pictures*, ed. Spolsky (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2004), p. 15.

Marguerite experiences, loses conviction in belonging with the nonhuman, and falls back stubbornly on the very things – fortune and rank – that will lead to the very same tragedies she fears.

Eschewing *belonging with*, Madame de la Tour sees both black and white humans as her property. Stephanie E. Jones-Rogers, studying American “slave-owning” women in the south, “understand[s] [their] fundamental relationship to slavery as a relation of property, a relation that was, above all, economic at its foundation”; she contends that “[t]he regime of slavery could not have been sustained if the power, authority, and violence that characterized it had belonged to elite white men alone.”²⁹ Jones-Rogers’s scholarship draws out Atlantic world contexts for me, since *Paul et Virginie* emphasizes that Madame de la Tour wages “authority and violence” against her children and the humans she has enslaved in the interest of property. For example, when she decides to prevent or at least postpone the hero and heroine’s marriage, she orders Paul to travel to the West Indies to sell raw cotton so that he can purchase and profit from stolen labor, knowledge, and skills. I draw on another of Jones-Rogers’s analyses of southern white women’s powerful governance when she analyzes the term “mistress” in a way “that aligns . . . with its original meaning . . . in Western Europe,” where a mistress was “a woman who governs” a “subject or [a] servant.”³⁰ This partially explains why the novel refers to Madame de la Tour only by her title, for in this family compound, she is both a widow and “*la maîtresse de maison*,”³¹ the family’s governor, that is. Thus, when Paul refuses her mandate, she asserts her authority by exiling her more biddable daughter to France to “earn” a family inheritance, an action indicating how fully she considers her daughter a possession and not a belonging.³²

²⁹ *White Women as Slave Owners in the American South* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019), pp. ix, xii–xiii, 149.

³⁰ p. xv; Jones-Rogers quotes Samuel Johnson’s *A Dictionary of the English Language: in which the words are deduced from their originals, explained in their different meanings, ... Abstracted from the folio edition, by the author, Samuel Johnson, A. M. To which is prefixed, A grammar of the English language*, vol. 2 (London: 1786), n.p.

³¹ Definition of “Madame.” See Définitions, *Larousse*. I italicize “Madame” to highlight the character’s title, the counterpart to “mistress.”

³² Madame de la Tour shares the responsibility for this decision not only with La Bourdonnais, as Bongie shows, but also with a “colonial ‘bureaucracy’” (p. 115), since, as the governor says, “your aunt has used her influence with the authorities to bring your daughter to France,” and they have “instruct[ed] me to use the powers of my office if necessary” (*PV*, p. 78). This pressure is undeniable; however, if Madame had not written to her aunt or had allowed the couple to marry, even “*les bureaux*” could not have separated them.

I argued that early in the novel, *Paul et Virginie* draws on vegetable gardening, gathering, and sharing to embody *belonging with*; now, performing the “Severing,” the text employs clothes to execute a shift to possession. Initially, the family’s home-spun apparel, gesturing toward their autonomous economy, revealed their ability to reduce their material desires and to keep their needs connected holistically to their environment’s limits – they do not take more than they require. However, when Madame requires more than they need, Tonquin’s pink taffetas and China’s grass-green silks arrive to outfit Virginie for her voyage, foretelling the tragedy that will follow her exile from paradise to Paris. This fashion metamorphosis leads to a new social order, one manifesting discord between humans and the material world. Disembarking in their colony are India’s “richest cloths,” Gudalur’s “splendid dimities,” Dacca’s embroidered muslins,” Surat’s “bafts of splendid whiteness,” and China’s “magnificent silken stuffs” (*PV*, p. 82).³³ Dressed up in such cloth, Virginie becomes a map of imperial conquests, embodying the possessions of countries and peoples, and advertising the colonies’ burdens by “wearing” against her skin stolen labor; as Rauser explains, “[t]he abjection of the enslaved black body and the plantation culture it inhabited stalked neo-classical dress, which could not escape the material traces of its manufacture.”³⁴ The heroine has been “reduced to [her] object-like qualities”³⁵ and so too have these fabrics been reduced to their person-like attributes – “splendid,” “heavy,” and “soft,” but distanced from the colonized who have labored to create them.

In transforming Virginie into an object whose sexuality cannot belong with her love for Paul, and then dressing her according to her new market value, Madame de la Tour prepares Virginie for the gaze of the island’s Old Man and for that of the “old nobleman,” a Frenchman her aunt expects her to marry, and who, she says, “is much taken with my person” (“*qui a, dit-elle beaucoup de gout pour ma personne*”) [*PV*, p. 93; Ehrard, p. 186]).

³³ Most of these geographical sites were or ultimately became colonies.

³⁴ Rauser, p. 139. Rauser explains that not only did cotton “pla[y] a vital role in the eighteenth-century slave trade, . . . [f]inished cotton cloth was a desirable commodity in exchange for slaves in West Africa [D]uring the height of the cotton boom, nearly 30,000 slaves per year [were sent] to Saint-Domingue . . . alone.” Further, the descriptions of Virginie’s new clothes would, in a different way, have allowed for cross-cultural interaction with English women, since “[t]he emergence of new illustrated fashion journals in London, Paris, and Weimar in the late 1790s cross-fertilized these innovations By 1800, the high-waisted white muslin dress was the orthodox style for women across Western Europe and the Americas” (pp. 139, 22).

³⁵ Daniel Miller, “Introduction,” in *Materiality*, ed. Daniel Miller (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), p. 39.

Admiring her body beneath its transparent gown, the narrator reveals his attraction to her as she wears these luxuries. Although “Virginia had always seemed charming to me in blue Bengal cloth and with a red handkerchief tied round her head,” now, “arrayed like one of the ladies of this country, she made another sort of impression altogether”:

She was dressed in white muslin lined with pink taffeta. Her high and slender waist was perfectly outlined by her bodice [*corset*] Her fine blue eyes were full of melancholy and the passion she was struggling against in her heart gave a flush to her complexion and to her voice tones rich with emotion. Her elegant attire, which she seemed to have put on in spite of herself, contrasted with her languishment [*languueur*] and made it all the more affecting [*touchante*]. (*PV*, p. 83; Ehrard, pp. 172, 173)

Resisting such luxury, though at the “centre of a circle of radiation,”³⁶ she herself does not care if such fashion expands her orbit; she wears these possessions for others. Even her “melancholy” and “passion” no longer belong with her, but rather serve another’s sensual pleasure in her body – visible beneath her “*corset*” – in her flushed complexion, and in her voice’s resonant “pitch.”³⁷ The narrator enjoys watching her “struggles,” underscoring how “Virginie’s virginity and goodness offer us the paradigm of the young woman as consumable object.”³⁸ No longer recognizable, she is now a possession, wearing possessions; consequently, no one can listen to what the pink satin and white muslin say about their origins or about the fact that the heroine herself has been colonized, disconnecting her from her own physical body and reducing her to base materiality. She and her clothes do not belong with each other.

Her attire, expensive and lavish, bestows on her and on Paul sexualities that disenfranchise each from their hitherto harmonious companionship. Marguerite feels that her son, in loving Virginie, now “entertain[s] false hopes which only add to the bitterness of privation” since, as she now tells him for the first time, he is a “bastard” and thus nothing more than

³⁶ Simmel, *Simmel on Culture*, ed. David Frisby and Mike Featherstone (London: Sage, 1997), p. 209.

³⁷ Rausser underscores that “[n]eoclassical dress is transparent,” and that “[t]ransparency was so highly prized in neoclassical dress that some garments added even more transparent panels of netting to amplify the effect” (p. 65). Thus, Donovan’s translation – her figure is “perfectly outlined by her bodice” – undermines the image’s eroticism, given that the Old Man evidently sees Virginie’s figure beneath her stays. Gutwirth translates this as “[h]er tall, lithe figure was perfectly visible beneath her stays.” See *The Twilight of the Goddesses: Women and Representation in the French Revolutionary Era* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992), p. 201. For links among luxury, sensuality, and pleasure see Woodruff D. Smith’s *Consumption and the Making of Respectability, 1600–1800* (New York and London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 63–81.

³⁸ Gutwirth, *Twilight*, p. 201.

certified by the conditions of his conception; Virginie, too, has become an abstraction, now formally referred to by Paul as “Mademoiselle,” while her actual being has been discarded (*PV*, p. 83). Further, for the first time, they neither belong together, nor do they belong with each other. Lucas D. Introna contends that it is easy to move from a vantage in which things exist only for us to one in which humans themselves become objectified and thus lose the possibility for “simultaneous attunement,” a state “in which humans and things . . . allow for a multiplicity of different ways of being to emerge”; and when that vanishes, things are waste that can be “dumped if broken.”³⁹ Accordingly, when Madame disposes of her daughter, the space for “simultaneous attunement” has passed: Dressed up, Virginie jettisons herself as she herself has been jettisoned. In other words, the adults embrace what Bernardin critiques in his *Études* – the human tendency to “call everything worthless which [one] cannot immediately use” (*É*, p. 5).

In requiring Virginie to remain dressed rather than survive drowning, the novel transforms dynamic materiality into base corporeality. Sent back to Mauritius during hurricane season by her vengeful great-aunt when she will not make a profitable marriage, Virginie stands in a storm on the ship in sight of her family, forced either to disrobe or die. In electing the latter – in refusing to divest herself of gender “baggage” – she chooses death over life.

Only one of the sailors had remained on deck . . . He was completely naked and muscular as Hercules. We saw him approach Virginia with respect, throw himself down before her, and even do what he could to remove her clothes; but she, *turning away her eyes*, rejected with dignity his attempts to help her. At once the onlookers redoubled their cries: “Save her! Save her! Don’t leave her!” (*PV*, p. 120; emphasis added)⁴⁰

In *turning her eyes away* from his body – a corporality amplified by his Herculean masculinity – to meet “dignity’s” demands, itself an abstraction which outstrips material-spiritual life force, Virginie turns away from a virtuous marriage with Paul to a construct of virtue. Even the “*spectateurs*” have overcome any gender prejudices as their cries “redouble.” Conversely, Virginie has become “defenseles[s] against the demands of fashion” – the

³⁹ “Ethics and the Speaking of Things,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 26.4 (2009): 25–46, p. 41.

⁴⁰ Scholars have surmised that “this scene was inspired by the real sinking of the *Saint-Géran* in 1744, when, so it is said, it was the captain who, not wishing to arrive naked on shore, refused to take off his clothes.” See Lieve Spaas, “*Paul et Virginie*: The Shipwreck of an Idyll,” *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 13.2–3 (2001): 315–324, p. 322.

fashion, that is, for false modesty.⁴¹ Disrobing (one assumes down to her undergarments) would certainly reinforce that she is indeed made of matter and perhaps would spotlight a rousing sign of oneness. As Hunt argues, the “tension between dressing for difference and dressing for equality” seemed to sum up the *ancien régime* versus the revolution.⁴² This idea’s most extreme out-growth—one perhaps that reveals what underlies fear of the naked body – was the notion that “the nude pornographic scene made the basic materialist point that all bodies are alike.”⁴³ Virginie does not have the right to be a body, let alone have one that is equal. In supposedly embracing spirit over matter and dignity over animality – which constitutes instead custom parodying religion and triumphing over reason – her drowning recalls her mother’s rejection of Virginie as matter: her sexuality, that is. Elizabeth Grosz has stated that “[u]ntil . . . women’s bodies are inscribed and lived (by the subject and by others) as a positivity, there will always remain paradoxes and upsetting implications from any notion of femininity.”⁴⁴ As Virginie was instructed to turn her eyes away from Paul, so does she here turn away from life to fulfill an abstract “notion of femininity.” This does not constitute virtuous behavior.

Abandoning matter leads to personal disintegration. Virginie remains subjugated rather than linked to the very things which she has agreed to wear while in bondage to an aristocratic system. Like Corinne, Virginie succumbs to death trying to cast off matter. When the Old Man finds her, however, he sees only her body, half buried in sand: “One of her hands was on her clothes; the other, pressed against her heart, was tightly closed and stiffened. I opened it with difficulty and took from its grasp a little box; but what was my surprise when I saw that it was Paul’s portrait, which she had promised him never to part with” (*PV*, pp. 121–122). The objects she touches indicate the underlying dualism provoking her death: One hand lies upon her clothes, that is, upon custom, while the other holds the miniature, signifying her human love for Paul. These allegedly dueling loyalties prove to worship at the same fount, however, since the image does not depict Paul, though he resembles it, but St. Paul the Hermit, who,

⁴¹ Louis Rose, “Freud and Fetishism: Previously Unpublished Minutes of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society,” *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 57.2 (1988): 147–166, p. 156.

⁴² “Freedom of Dress in Revolutionary France,” in Melzer and Norberg, p. 229.

⁴³ Hunt, “Freedom of Dress,” p. 235.

⁴⁴ *Volatile Bodies* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), pp. 73–74.

unlike Virginie, was rewarded for wearing only “woven palm leaves.”⁴⁵ Further, she tightly clenches the miniature, which could indicate her loyalty to her lover, but her “stiffened” hand also implies tradition’s “rigor,” which itself has obviated any choice she might have made between life and death.

The narrator concludes that Virginie would have been neither human nor virtuous if she had discarded her clothes and lived. Finding a positive outcome in her drowning, he blesses the young woman for having left her body – her *ekstasis* – given that if she had lived and married, he believes, she would have had to barter herself sexually for food, a repulsive inversion of Paul’s loving acts of giving food to Virginie, which we encountered earlier. In a bizarre attempt to console Paul, he claims that the couple would have been unhappy once united, since their *inevitable* poverty would have led *inevitably* either to hunger or to Virginie having to “curry favour with” – that is seduce – the island’s governor to “obtain some paltry relief”; and if not that scenario, her very “virtue” would have led to his “persecution” (*PV*, p. 128).⁴⁶ The dystopian future the narrator imagines, one which splits sexuality from virtue and virtue from survival, renders death preferable to an existence without a lot of possessions. Evidently at least one eighteenth-century British reader noticed this sentence because Helen Maria Williams’s 1796 translation of *Paul et Virginie* excluded it and the paragraph itself. She explains in her Preface that she has “omitt[ed] several pages of general observations, which, however excellent in themselves, would be passed over with impatience by the English reader, when they interrupt the pathetic narrative.”⁴⁷ More likely, her omission

⁴⁵ Charles Kingsley, “The Life of Saint Paul,” in *The Hermits* (London and New York: Macmillan, 1891), pp. 86, 91.

⁴⁶ The Old Man’s speech in its entirety here follows in French:

Que savez-vous si, dans une colonie qui change si souvent d’administrateurs, vous aurez souvent des la Bourdonnais ? S’il ne viendra pas ici des chefs sans mœurs et sans morale ? si, pour obtenir quelque misérable secours, votre épouse n’eût pas été obligée de leur faire sa cour ? Ou elle eût été faible, et vous eussiez été à plaindre ; ou elle eût été sage, et vous fussiez reste pauvre : heureux si, à cause de sa beauté et de sa vertu, vous n’eussiez pas été persécuté par ceux mêmes de qui vous espériez de la protection ! (Ehrhard, p. 236)

As Ruth Thomas argues, the “essence of the [nineteenth-century French] novel “is the incompatibility between the real world and the ideal. . . . But in the eighteenth century, this incompatibility is stated in purely sexual terms, with the real constraints placed on the woman’s ideal.” See “The Death of an Ideal: Female suicides in the Eighteenth-Century French Novel,” in *French Women and the Age of Enlightenment*, ed. Samia I. Spencer (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), p. 329. I suggest that *Paul et Virginie*, published in 1788, fits both narratives.

⁴⁷ *Paul and Virginia*, trans. Helen Maria Williams (London: G. G. & J. Robinson, 1795), p. vi.

anticipates the English reader's distaste when being asked to imagine the heroine prostituting herself for food.⁴⁸ The Old Man thus falls into a binary: Either Virginie "would have been weak and you much to be pitied, or she would have been honourable and you would have remained poor" (*PV*, p. 128). Ruth Thomas demonstrates how French eighteenth-century male authors insist "that chastity and fidelity, lying at the heart of the family and the community, ensured the stability of the entire social structure."⁴⁹ If the novel is trying to embody such an idea, it completely fails, since Virginie's relinquishment of life, speech, body, and subjectivity leads to a rippling impact that annihilates the family, exterminating the community as a whole.

Virginie's suicide – her physical divesture – precipitates the family's network collapse, the all-systems shutdown of a radiant, pulsating energetic field. As a result, much has been written to reconcile us to the heroine's dematerialization and the consequences it levies on her community. For example, Janine Rossard justifies Virginie's death on aesthetic grounds since "its mystery renews its poetic value";⁵⁰ for Dorothy Betz, "the children's discovery of passionate love" destroys the harmony in their community.⁵¹ In an early essay, Malcolm Cook opines that her death, "a happy one, . . . please[s]" readers – "[s]he is transformed into light and will serve as an example to the darkness of human existence."⁵² Clifton Cherpach locates an answer in mythic patterns: The "presence of death is so intense [in the novel] and the pessimism so pervasive" that it makes sense to situate it "in the wider perspectives" of the "Tristan myth" and the "myth of the hero."⁵³

⁴⁸ For Gary Kelly, "*Paul et Virginie* portrays the edenic world as thoroughly feminized, not only lacking a central adult male presence but validating 'feminine' values of domesticity and philanthropy." *Women, Writing, and Revolution: 1790–1827* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 58. In contrast, I argue that patriarchy dominates, even in the female figure of Madame de la Tour.

⁴⁹ Ruth Thomas, p. 330.

⁵⁰ "La Mort mystérieuse de Virginie," *The French Review* 42.3 (1969): 409–418, p. 416.

⁵¹ "Bernardin's *Paul et Virginie*," *Explicator* 53.3 (1995): 138–141, pp. 139–140.

⁵² Malcolm C. Cook, "Harmony and Discord in *Paul et Virginie*," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 3.3 (1991): 205–216, pp. 215, 216. However, in *Bernardin de Saint-Pierre* (2006), Cook instead argues that "the reading that sees Virginie as a tragic figure who is a victim of social prejudice is, in my view, one that underlines the political dimension of the novel, which . . . appeared in 1788–89" (p. 109). Karin Peters argues that "[t]he narration makes Virginie a martyr and reunites the virtuous *petite société* in heaven," though she concludes that the drowning "proves that the novel has literally come to a dead end, an ideological deadlock." See "Arcadia Goes Overseas: Pastoral and Planetary Consciousness in Bernardin de Saint Pierre's *Paul and Virginia*," in *Globalizing Literary Genres*, ed. Jernej Habjan and Fabienne Imlinger (New York and London: Routledge, 2015), p. 102.

⁵³ "*Paul et Virginie* and the Myths of Death," *PMLA* 90.2 (1975): 247–255, pp. 252, 253. See Henderson on Bernardin's "reject[ion] [of] the binaries which structure reason, 'l'opposition des

While the scholars I canvassed in the previous paragraph pardon Virginie's death on religious, mythic, or aesthetic grounds, from my perspective, her martyrdom, detached from pulsating matter, is outside the perimeters of what any social or familial ethical contract should demand.⁵⁴ Matter, now debased, must be expelled, because it has become one and only one thing: virtue's opposite.⁵⁵ And yet, as Spinoza asserts, "[t]he striving to preserve oneself is the first and only foundation of virtue"; to commit suicide is to be "conquered by external causes contrary to [one's] nature" – it is, in fact, to act without virtue (*Ethics*, IVP22COR; 4P18Sii). Forced by "external causes" to "dress up" and stay dressed up, Virginie exposes how the community can no longer even try to embody a contract that strives to deepen what Gregory Bateson calls "circuit structure": Mark Lussier defines this notion as "the fundamental ecological relationship of mind and matter In this context, mind and matter exist, to fuse terms from David Hartley and Michael Faraday . . . as a vibrating field comprised of interactive forces."⁵⁶ Virginie's drowning insists that moments before reaching land, marriage, and participation in "a vibrating field," she must repulse her so-called brutish spirits. Because Madame and Virginie's great-aunt successfully indoctrinate her – the former recommending spirit without body and the latter trumpeting body without spirit, but both governing for economic gain – the novel ends by thrusting its characters and readers into heart-stopping binaries that repudiate the possibility that spirit, sexuality, and virtue could coexist in any one woman. Bateson guides us to see that "when you separate mind from the structure in which it is immanent, such as human relationship, the human society, or the ecosystem, you thereby embark . . . on a fundamental error, which in the end will surely hurt you."⁵⁷ Indeed, the hurting family members fall one by one, having broken down their contract for productive community: No longer can they, like plants, "twine together to withstand the hurricane" (*PV*, p. 65). Belonging with

contraires, entities juxtaposed physically and chronologically" which contrast to the "harmonies which reveal the single 'vérité intellectuelle,' the existence of God" (p. 309).

⁵⁴ Gutwirth wryly observes that "*Paul et Virginie* verifies the failure of human connection as surely as does Sade's *Justine*" (*Twilight*, p. 201).

⁵⁵ For Vallois, the novel's plot "turns upon a semantic conflict . . . over the word 'virtue,'" one which "opposes the old man and Virginie"; this "conflict between two theories of language" leads to Virginie's demise ("Exotic Femininity," pp. 191, 192).

⁵⁶ Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 146; Lussier, "Self-Annihilation/Inner Revolution: Blake's *Milton*, Buddhism, and Ecocriticism," *Religion & Literature* 40.1 (2008): 39–57, p. 41.

⁵⁷ Bateson, p. 493.

the nonhuman – and even the human – ultimately fails in *Paul et Virginie*, since there, if spirit must trump body, something must go, and in this novel that miserable material source is Virginie's body.

4.2 Retwining by Recycling *Paul et Virginie*

4.2.1 *After-Literature*

Regardless of perpetually causing misfortune, dualism has permeated Western culture, rendering it both a present condition and a powerful cultural memory that many Romantics, philosophers, and now thing theorists have challenged; this suggests that something more than an idealistic, sentimental fantasy drives the nonhuman and human to want to belong together. As Mieke Bal explains, “cultural recall,” something “you actually *perform*,” helps us “to mediate and modify difficult or tabooed moments of the past – moments that nonetheless impinge, sometimes fatally, on the present”; memorializing the past “rang[es] from conscious recall to unreflected reemergence, from nostalgic longing for what is lost to polemical use of the past to reshape the present.”⁵⁸ In the next sections, I explore how readers, disturbed by Virginie's death, long for the lost, but also use “the past to reshape the present.” Although *Paul et Virginie* divests its characters' belonging with the nonhuman and human world, future writers and artists try in varying ways to amend this imbalance: Striving to heal, so to speak, the novel's disastrous finale, they reenvision its ending as happy. Rather than indicating an intolerance to tragedy, this seems to me a revolt against the novel's ultimate endorsement of dualisms between body and spirit and human and nonhuman so entrenched that neither reason nor love – parental, fraternal, or romantic – could heal it.⁵⁹

Here I turn to three literary works – *The Ruined Cottage*, *Belinda*, and *Bélinde* – as well to some paintings, watercolors, a fan, textiles, and plates that all recycle characters and episodes from *Paul et Virginie*. Their

⁵⁸ “Introduction,” *Acts of Memory*, p. vii.

⁵⁹ Other writers have discussed those who transform the novel's ending into a happy resolution: two examples include James Cobb's *Paul and Virginia: A Musical Drama* (1801), which is, for Mortensen, “Anti-Jacobinism's most brazen co-optation” of the novel (p. 106). Alliston shows how George Sand “rehabilitate[s] Bernardin's pair of child-lovers in the tropics and allow[s] them, at the ending of *Indiana*, to live out the fantasy of adult sexual sympathetic community.” See “Transnational Sympathies, Imaginary Communities,” in *The Literary Channel: The International Invention of the Novel*, ed. Margaret Cohen and Carolyn Dever (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), p. 141.

refabrications resemble one of recycling's oldest and most congenial forms, architectural salvage. As *Corinne* explains, "a portico standing beside a humble roof, columns between which little church windows have been inserted, a tomb used as a shelter for a whole peasant family, produce an indescribable mixture of great and simple ideas, an indescribable pleasure of discovery" (C, p. 64). That recycling matter creates democratic and enjoyable energies inspires my own thoughts. *Paul et Virginie* recyclings stimulate "perpetual interest" insofar as they testify to desires to reembody the novel's crisis of materiality. These texts and artworks, which I refer to as "after-things" (and to be more specific, after-literature and after-art) resuscitate and rematerialize Bernardin's hero and heroine.⁶⁰ Such cross-cultural recyclings stimulate conversations between and among multiple novels and two nations, conjoin literary things with readings of the narratives, and historicize embodiment while simultaneously unfolding the influential effects these precipitate in each text. I suggest that this English after-poem and novel are looking to *reembody* Paul, Virginie, and the environment they inhabit and thus to link more closely the human and nonhuman, while Ségur's French translation, *Bélinde*, reverses that move, reinforcing separation.

4.2.1.1 *The Ruined Cottage*

Wordsworth excavates Bernardin's novel, rendering it the "archaeological" pre-history to *The Ruined Cottage*: In this, the poet emphasizes connection with the material world.⁶¹ Recycling the novel's insistence on separation into a renewal of connection, he establishes the kinds of interactions Bernardin's strawberry plant and its occupants experience. Striking parallels between this French novel and *The Ruined Cottage* materialize, though I have found only one other scholar, Nelson Adkins, who has noted the similarities. His point, though, is that the two texts share the same values: "a delight in the helpless, bright-eyed child" and "a sermon in the

⁶⁰ Julie Park makes a point pertinent to my argument that *Paul et Virginie* as a book becomes a material thing to be transmuted, when she writes that "[i]n its own status as a 'new' literary form that turned the experience of life into a curiously lifelike object of psychological and circumstantial plausibility, the novel shared a vital relationship with other objects of market culture positing subjectivity" (p. xix).

⁶¹ Charles Rzepka argues that in "The Thorn," Wordsworth reveals himself as "our first truly archaeological poet, the first to take seriously the notion of 'pre-history' as a mode of encountering the material world in the present, and not just a way of designating a material world that pre-dates written records." See "From Relics to Remains: Wordsworth's 'The Thorn' and the Emergence of Secular History," *Romanticism on the Net* 31 (2003): n.p.

rain-washed stone . . .,”⁶² while I suggest that Wordsworth recycles it to contemplate and revise *Paul et Virginie*'s values. Parallels abound. Each work's characters (two them share the same name) face mirrored circumstances: The poem's Robert and Margaret perish in exile or self-imposed banishment, and the novel's characters – Virginie, Marguerite, Madame de la Tour, and Paul die self-imposed deaths. Both Wordsworth's Pedlar (Armytage) and Bernardin's Old Man must each cope with losing a young woman they cared for, women who, effectually, bring on their own deaths – though with ample help from gender ideologies, colonial violence, war, and class injustice. Structurally, both texts open with a young and solitary male traveler who, after coming upon a ruined cottage – or, in the novel's case, “*les ruines de deux petites maisons*”⁶³ – encounters an older man, who narrates the story behind these remains. This section concentrates on the characters' different reactions in each text to grief and separation, parsing how Armytage and Bernardin's younger visitor find redemption in loss through belonging with things, in contrast to the novel's Old Man, who disconnects himself from both the human and the nonhuman, spurning an ecosystem that remains and positing nature as mourning its own destruction.

Bernardin's young, unnamed visitor meditates upon the grief in these ruins as Wordsworth's Armytage does, finding a belonging with nature that offers consolation. *Paul et Virginie*'s visitor, gazing on the ruined cabins, reflects on how “a profound silence reigns: all is tranquil, the air, the waters and the light. The echo barely repeats the whispering of the palmettos that grow on the high rock shelves, their *long spears* swaying constantly in the wind” (*PV*, pp. 39–40; emphasis added). When *The Ruined Cottage* invokes tranquility and the high spear grass, it recycles the novel's winds whispering among the palm's “*longues flèches*” (Ehrard, p. 110). These things from Bernardin's novel play centrally in the Pedlar's consoling philosophy.

I well remember that those very plumes,
Those weeds, and the high spear-grass on that wall,
By mist and silent rain-drops silver'd o'er,
As once I passed did to my heart convey
So still an image of tranquility,
So calm and still, and looked so beautiful

⁶² “Wordsworth's *Margaret; Or the Ruined Cottage*,” *Modern Language Notes* 38.8 (1923; italics original in title): 460–466, p. 461.

⁶³ Ehrard, p. 318, note 2; he quotes this from MS. Bibliothèque Victor Cousin. Later the cottages are referred to as cabins (*PV*, p. 39).

Amid the uneasy thought which filled my mind,
 That what we feel of sorrow and despair
 From ruin and from change, and all the grief
 The passing shews of being leave behind,
 Appeared an idle dream that could not live
 Where meditation was.

(RC, ll. 513–524)⁶⁴

The very difference between how the Pedlar feels and what the spear grass looks like enables him to endure Margaret's death. And the very ability, as I will show throughout this discussion, connecting with matter strengthens that endurance since though the spear grass is "still," the forces of mist and rain recycle it into a "silver'd o'er" living substance; noticing this movement helps move the brain and heart from rigidity. Thus, Armytage describes how he (as Corinne urges Oswald to do) reanimates his relationship with his own being by turning kinesthetically toward this luminescent matter.⁶⁵ This *moving toward* – this decision to "leave behind . . . an idle dream," the dream that one should forever mourn – offers the possibility of belonging with matter's radiant energies, for they retain life force even while individuals grieve. Such a *model* proposes an opportunity for belonging with the nonhuman and the means by which one could return to reality – even in unspeakable moments of "sorrow and despair" – by resuscitating one's own vitality.⁶⁶ This is not a symbiosis, however, since he contemplates how these nonhuman things are both connected to but different from him and how, in order to remain living and thriving, though Margaret suffered, he must withdraw not from her but from fusing entirely with grief.⁶⁷ The Pedlar thus reminds readers how difficult it is *not* to burden things or ourselves with our own grief, but that we should at least try, and, in trying, we make an ethical choice, thereby rendering

⁶⁴ I use MS. D for my analysis. Jared Curtis's headnote says this version revises the 1798 one (MS. B) and includes "material dating from 1799, 1801–1802, and – possibly – 1809–1812."

⁶⁵ In contrast, see Douglas Berman: The poem depicts nature "in two different ways: first, as destroyer of life, of Margaret's garden and, by extension, of her life, but also as a posited eternal nature, a nature of rebirth, as envisioned at the end of the poem by the Pedlar." I see the poem presenting nature as both simultaneously. See "Reading Wordsworth with Hegel and Deleuze," *Comparative Literature and Culture* 14.5 (2012): 1–8, p. 7.

⁶⁶ Potkay persuasively argues that "[i]nstead of anthropomorphizing things, Wordsworth here moves toward 'thingicizing' ethics. That is, his ethics of things is grounded in the nature of things, and, more particularly, in the claims to (our) conscious attention made by natural things" (p. 401).

⁶⁷ I admire Zoe Beenstock's argument that Wordsworth presents "withdrawal as necessary for understanding" Margaret's pain, since a "direct encounter" with that suffering would constitute "a voyeuristic 'feeding on disquiet.'" See "Reforming Utilitarianism: Lyric Poetry in J. S. Mill's "Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 81.4 (2020): 599–620, p. 602.

belonging with possible. Continuing the Spinozian thread I have woven through this book, Armytage chooses life and thus virtue. This passage echoes Corinne's endorsement of "festive" death, an ability to sustain one's *élan vital*, though bereavement seeks unbending domination.

Wordsworth's recyclings of Bernardin's novel suggest that the Old Man's bitter rupture from nature and others provides an instance of incommensurability in *The Ruined Cottage*. Accidentally meeting the young visitor where the ruined cabins recline, the Old Man reveals his disaffection, for he refuses the consolation which a connection to things offers. Instead, he mourns the ruins and memories that persist, seeing them as vindictive: "yet still, alas! Only too much remains for my memory to work upon. Time, which so quickly destroys the monuments of empires, seems in this wilderness to spare those of friendship and thus to perpetuate my sorrows to the end of my days"; this elderly storyteller, in fact, fractures the "profound silence" and the scene's tranquility (*PV*, pp. 43–44, 39–40) by defining nature as a punisher, one that has permanently destroyed and abandoned the plot's – and his own – vitality. The patriarch claims that nature's "things," both human and nonhuman, have departed from the place and no longer interact with it since, after the family's death, no one "has dared to till this desolate ground or rebuild these humble cabins. Your goats have run wild, your orchards are destroyed, your birds have fled" (*PV*, p. 136). Even worse, he imagines nature here as torturing itself by sending only prey-seeking creatures to the spot: "[N]othing can be heard but the cries of the sparrow-hawks as they circle high above this rocky valley" (*PV*, p. 136). The Old Man's hopelessness steers him to assume that nature has come to have a "psychoterratic dis-ease" – a negative relationship, that is, with itself.⁶⁸ Such an anthropocentrism suggests that human death leads to nature's own expiration, a point Wordsworth refutes.

Wordsworth's reformulation of the novel's binaries into a more holistic comradery between the human and the nonhuman supplies a contrast to what an alienating outlook – as embodied in Bernardin's elderly colonialist – looks like, and, in doing so, the poem calls attention to social injustice. That is, his recycling of *Paul et Virginie* furnishes a rebuttal to some New Historicist readings of this poem, which argue that its emphasis

⁶⁸ Glen A. Albrecht, "Psychoterratic and Somaterratic Health and Dis-ease," July 20, 2018, <https://glennaalbrecht.com/2018/07/20/psychoterratic-and-somaterratic-health-and-dis-ease/>

He describes psychoterratic dis-ease as arising "from a negative relationship to our home environment, be it at local, regional or global scales," one that triggers a "decline in well-being" (n.p.).

on spirituality, or beauty, or consolation displaces from view the all-too-real and horrible material conditions of the Romantic-era wars, industrialization, and deforestation, just to name a few. My point is that Wordsworth finds in Bernardin's Old Man the human–nonhuman alienation that some scholars have discovered in the poet's own thinking, especially as manifested in *The Ruined Cottage*.⁶⁹

Emphasizing human–nonhuman connections, Bernardin's young rambler and Armytage advocate for a productive coexistence, one that inspires belonging with what is gone, what is mourned, and what lives. The poem helps us hear how sound fills the space beneath the “shade / Of clustering elms” as the warbling linnet, the singing thrush, and “other melodies . . . peopled the milder air” (*RC*, ll. 29–30, 531–533) – the “peopled” here suggesting that the birds' descants populate a spectrum with human song. Likewise, *Paul et Virginie's* young traveler “loved to visit this place where I could enjoy at once a boundless view and the deepest solitude” (*PV*, p. 40) – that is, he strives for an inner and outer attunement. Both he and Armytage tap, as it were, into an ecological unconscious to strengthen belonging, which is necessary for ethical mourning. To recover from grief, there must be, as Corinne says, more than just a singular “me” or “you”: Grief cannot “absorb every other interest and every other thought” (*C*, p. 89). And to accomplish that, one must cultivate a physical, sensuous knowledge of the thinginess of things. Doing so, prevents one, Armytage says, from reading “[t]he forms of things with an unworthy eye” (*RC*, ll. 508–512) – reading them, that is, as abstractions or only as subjective signs. A turn toward the nonhuman, Wordsworth's thing theory urges sufferers to imprint how connecting to materiality could help them participate more actively and less statically – as when paralyzed by sorrow – in the world.

Things remind us that humans should not let grief immobilize them (as with *Paul et Virginie's* Old Man), but rather that they should work actively to observe and move toward the world's living things. Armytage, who neither descends into a trance-like state to protect himself from pain nor

⁶⁹ For example, see Jerome McGann's *The Romantic Ideology: A Critical Investigation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983). Conversely, see Jonathan Bate's ecocritical reading: *Romantic Ecology: Wordsworth and the Environmental Tradition* (London and New York: Routledge Revivals, 2013), p. 4; Morton offers a compelling interpretation: “Instead of embedding the narrator in an othered war, *The Ruined Cottage* embeds the war in our experience of reading. In its very tranquility, it is one of the most powerful antiwar poems ever written.” See *Ecology without Nature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), p. 147.

disregards the material conditions causing Margaret's demise, emphasizes such movement:

The unprofitable bindweed *spread* his bells
 From side to side and with unwieldy wreaths
 Had *dragg'd* the rose from its sustaining wall
 And bent it down to earth; the border-tufts—
 Daisy and thrift and lowly camomile,
 And thyme—had *straggled* out into the paths
 Which they were used to deck.

(*RC*, ll. 314–320; emphasis added)

As previous chapters have shown, things make other things move, compel them to spread, drag, bend, and straggle, and while these images could be read allegorically as the forces that destroy Margaret – a “rose” herself – this would be only half of the story since the Pedlar's elemental details intimately link, from the ecosystem's perspective, human–nonhuman outcomes.⁷⁰ That is, nature's vibrancy offers an *aide-mémoire* of matter's therapeutic movements; thus, although the bindweed's transgressive materiality is “unprofitable” from the gardener's viewpoint, it continues to stride, in its own way, toward *belonging with*; further, the Pedlar's attentiveness to its “bells” reveals his own striving to “move toward” since his intense sensory alertness to sonic and visual energies persists, though Margaret could not. This awareness keeps him belonging with the world.

The poem suggests that sorrow cannot be appeased until it is recognized and that attention to matter generates this restorative process:

When I stooped to drink,
 A spider's web hung to the water's edge,
 And on the wet and slimy foot-stone lay
 The useless fragment of a wooden bowl;
 It moved my very heart

(*RC*, ll. 88–92)

This passage recalls the “festive” death in life we saw in *Corinne's* Pantheon. Together, the bowl and the web signal nature's (and

⁷⁰ Paul D. Sheats argues that in this passage “particulars map two forces, natural and human, which exhibit roughly opposite physical vectors, centripetal and centrifugal with respect to the cottage”; the Pedlar, he continues, measures these forces “in terms of motion: the advance of a daisy beyond its appointed border registers not only its continued vitality, but the failure of the force that had opposed it” – Margaret, that is. For my purposes, these “particulars” do not present in opposing “vectors.” See “Cultivating Margaret's Garden: Wordsworthian ‘Nature’ and the Quest for Historical ‘Difference,’” in *Placing and Displacing Romanticism*, ed. Peter J. Kitson (Burlington: Ashgate, 2001), p. 25.

correlatively humans’) ongoing need for nourishment since the arachnid builds a silk trap for its survival, and while new vegetation renders the footstone “slimy,” its slickness intimates its liveliness, though human feet no longer walk on it. The wooden bowl has “moved” his heart, as Virginie’s coconut-shell (which Wordsworth here recycles) moved Paul. And like Paul, who feels his lover’s energies lingering on her cup, the flora and fauna still sense the vigor with which Margaret infused this bowl, though it is broken and though she is no longer there to drink from it. Her vitality resonates in the fragment (as we saw in *Corinne*’s classical statues), and this thing, in turn, drives its own animation by housing other organic creatures. When we hear that the dish is “useless,” these words project human thought onto things, while simultaneously revealing how the nonhuman accomplishes its own work as it recycles what exists for its own purposes. That is, the bowl still *belongs*.⁷¹ The poem, aware of these things’ thinginess, returns us to social reality rather than displacing it, for that bowl, juxtaposed to the spider’s feeding trap, recalls the family’s hunger and, since it is emblematic of meal sharing, the breakdown of kinship and community. Margaret imprinted herself in that bowl, and now nature does the same, though nature (and the Pedlar) alone retain the *conatus* – the striving – that Margaret so desperately tried sustaining while poverty-stricken and abandoned.⁷² Armytage, eschewing abstractions and returning to matter, shows how, after disaster, he can find consolation in the knowledge that we exist on the same continuum as these earthly things and that the dead reside as well in this orbit, even though they (and things themselves) remain mysterious, given that humans endure loss while the earth remains “calm, . . . and peace is here” (*RC*, l. 512).

The Ruined Cottage ends peacefully while *Paul et Virginie* concludes with every family member dying, and the only remaining survivor, Bernardin’s Old Man, celebrating estrangement; in this he remains in

⁷¹ Ron Broglio’s *Beasts of Burden: Biopolitics, Labor, and Animal Life in British Romanticism* (New York: SUNY University Press, 2017) argues instead that Wordsworth offers “an ecology apart from humans” (pp. 131, 129–130) and Jacques Khalip puts the bowl in the category of the “rubbishy, irreparable *ready-unnades* that block any kind of recuperating interpretation.” See “The Ruin of Things,” *Romantic Frictions*, ed. Theresa Kelley, *Romantic Circles* (September 2011), para. 16. <https://webarchive.loc.gov/all/20200209034433/https://romantic-circles.org/praxis/disaster/index.html>

⁷² I see a recognitional “ministering” here. And although I argue in Chapter 5 that nonrecognition can provide a method of self-ministering for women, here I would say that the Pedlar’s form of recognition differs dramatically from the kind humans generally offer. Khalip argues that the “thingification” of Margaret arises from “refusal of identification, a refusal of the viral nature of sympathetic co-existence” and that, in so doing, the poem forms “a different kind of non-recognitional ‘ministering’” (“The Ruin of Things,” para. 15).

keeping with the novel's adhesion to separation: Madame de la Tour uncouples Virginie and Paul, and Virginie severs herself from life itself. The Old Man's punishing agitation drives him into discord, and he contends that "[d]eath is a blessing for all men" (*PV*, p. 130). Here he experiences "solastalgia," the grief felt when humans recognize that their beloved home and sense of place can no longer provide solace but is instead "under immediate assault" and subject to "physical desolation"; causing mental and physical distress, his solastalgia does not, however – as it sometimes can – lead to "a strong desire to sustain those things that provide solace" and become "future oriented."⁷³ Instead, he chooses everlasting melancholy and dis-ease, while the Pedlar chooses to "wal[k] along my road in happiness" (*RC*, l. 525). Because the Old Man sees only disconnection, withdrawing from the young visitor, he nurtures misery, feeling "like a friend bereft of friends, . . . shedding tears," bemoaning his losses, and experiencing anguish like "a father who has lost his children, . . . a traveler left to wander over the earth alone" (*PV*, pp. 136–137). Like Oswald and ultimately Corinne, the Old Man cannot belong with either the human or the nonhuman. Wordsworth preserves Bernardin's visitor, but recycles him into his main character, Armytage, whose lesson teaches concord with rather than resentment toward the natural world – an affective state which, to return to Spinoza, helps diminish wretchedness as opposed to increasing it; logically, then, the poem can close with union rather than rupture, the two friends meditating on "that low bench" and then retiring together to "a rustic inn" (*RC*, ll. 529, 538). Wordsworth's thing theory, like *Corinne's*, prefers *belonging with*, and, in doing so, illuminates the destructive consequences of separating the part from the whole.

4.2.1.2 Belinda and Béline

Many scholars have pointed to *Belinda's* inclusion of *Paul et Virginie's* plot and characters, and most have addressed how Edgeworth incorporates it to criticize Rousseau's impact on female gender roles.⁷⁴ Others, such as

⁷³ Etymologically, the term "solastalgia," which means "pain, suffering or sickness," originates in "the concepts of 'solace,' 'desolation,' and 'algia.'" See Albrecht, who coined the term: "'Solastalgia': A New Concept in Health and Identity," *PAN: Philosophy, Activism, Nature* 3 (2005): 44–59, pp. 48, 49.

⁷⁴ Kilfeather claims that the subplot "satirizes the notion that an ideal woman is formed in ignorance of the world," a point I concur with. See "Introductory Note," vol. 2, p. xxvii. For Colin Atkinson and Jo Atkinson, the plot of *Paul et Virginie* shows "that the Rousseauian argument for preserving the 'natural' innocence and ignorance of women is absurd in a practical world." See "Maria

Isabelle Bour, argue that Edgeworth uses Bernardin's novel to "parody" French sentimental fiction, that "she projected a negative image of France in *Belinda* through the character of the woman of fashion, Lady Delacour . . . , and that "the inset story of Virginia St. Pierre" is only "loosely related" to *Paul et Virginie* itself.⁷⁵ In contrast, I hope to show that *Belinda* recycles Bernardin's novel so as to address the positive benefits of female materiality, and that it is Lady Delacour's French wit and conversational prowess that partially keeps her from being a "pattern woman." Further, while not addressing Rousseau's philosophies, I do focus on gender expectations in relation to female physicality and women's relationships with the nonhuman to provide evidence that *Belinda* diverges from Rousseau in that she claims for women a virtuous sexuality. Edgeworth's novel "rematters" Bernardin's.

Although Hervey initially attempts to educate Virginia to be his perfect – that is, dematerialized – wife, Edgeworth ultimately liberates her physically as well as freeing her from his machinations. *Belinda* first enacts this "remattering" by recorporealizing Virginie de la Tour such that its own Virginia St. Pierre (whose real name is Rachel) lives a full, carnal existence, and second by drawing on specific things – a miniature portrait and the book *Paul et Virginie* itself – so as to renounce, as Wordsworth does, that French novel's estrangements.⁷⁶ The miniature portrait, Edgeworth's source object from *Paul et Virginie*, both endorses *belonging with* between human and thing and a human separation from materiality. Though depicting St. Paul the Hermit, it looks like Paul, since his mother, while pregnant, had "contemplate[ed]" it so profoundly and so constantly, that "the baby in her womb had acquired some resemblance to it"

Edgeworth, *Belinda* and Women's Rights," *Eire/Ireland* 19.4 (1984): 94–118, p. 115. Laura Kirkley argues that the subplot responds "to the intersecting issues of French cultural politics, Rousseauvian sentimental philosophy, and women's rights." See "Translating Rousseauism: Transformations of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's *Paul et Virginie* in the Works of Helen Maria Williams and Maria Edgeworth," *Readers, Writers, Salonnières: Female Networks in Europe, 1700–1900*, ed. Hilary Brown and Gillian Dow (New York: Peter Lang, 2011), p. 96. In "Control Experiment: Edgeworth's Critique of Rousseau's Educational Theory," *An Uncomfortable Authority: Maria Edgeworth and Her Contexts*, ed. Heidi Kaufman and Chris Fauske (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004), Catherine Toal reads the Virginia plot as "a version of *Practical Education's* conception of development"; and though it "mocks the gender politics of *Émile* . . . [i] *Belinda's* intricate narrative strategies attest [that] the forms of control to which the Edgeworthian system resorts are no less calculated and complex than those for which it criticizes Rousseau" (pp. 226, 228).

⁷⁵ Bour, pp. 40, 38.

⁷⁶ Andrew McCann says this well: "Hervey's pedagogical scheme . . . is also an emphatic denial of Virginia's liberty and autonomy." See "See Conjugal Love and the Enlightenment Subject: The Colonial Context of Non-identity in Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda*," *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction* 30.1 (1996): 65–77, p. 72.

(*PV*, p. 75).⁷⁷ Here humans and things share agential power, since Marguerite and the miniature have so belonged with each other that they have triggered epigenetic changes in Paul. However, when Virginie, departing for France, asks Paul to give it to her, “the only thing in the world that [he] possessed” (*PV*, p. 75), we are reminded that desire for possession is catching. This, the first time she has required property, is evidently a habit newly learned from her mother, who, considering her as property to be disposed of for profit, exiles her. And yet, in giving the portrait to Virginie wholeheartedly and expecting nothing in return, Paul transforms it into a belonging; and when she blushes when asking for and receiving the miniature, she somatically manifests her desire for Paul. He responds in kind, trying to “embrace her,” but she runs away, “light as a bird” (*PV*, p. 76), persuaded she has no *right* to think of her body as her own or as one she could share with Paul.

In contrast, Edgeworth fleshes out this miniature, “re-mattering” it and magnifying its narrative prominence by rendering Virginia’s encounter with it as animated as that between humans. She does so by creating for her Virginia a miniature of a man the character has never met, Captain Paul Sunderland, but about whom she secretly worships and dreams. Melinda Rabb notably recognizes that “the phenomenon of scaling objects down . . . has a relationship to large-scale events (as large as financial revolution, war, globalization, and natural disaster) that challenge old modes of representation and demand new ones.”⁷⁸ In *Belinda*, the “large-scale events” presented in miniature signal the wide-ranging impacts of gender norms and highlight women’s right to command their own choices. That is, seeing the portrait as a belonging, this English heroine does not differentiate between the emotions she feels toward the man in the miniature and the nonhuman portrait itself. *Belinda* manifests this since there the thing has a potent agency: When Virginia’s grandmother first “catches” her with the portrait a well-meaning neighbor has given her, she seizes it, fearful that “the girl could be run away with by a picture,” to which her neighbor quips, “as if a picture had any sense to hurt a body”

⁷⁷ “Il était même arrivé qu’étant enceinte de lui, et délaissée de tout le monde, à force de contempler l’image de ce bienheureux solitaire, son fruit en avait contracté quelque ressemblance” (Ehrard, p. 162).

⁷⁸ *Miniature and the English Imagination*, pp. 3–4. Also see my work on miniatures in *Austen’s Unbecoming Conjunctions*, where I argue that in *Sense and Sensibility*, “sentimentalized and sexualized miniature objects both insist on and diminish a stable sense of identity”; they create tension between their naturalistic presentations and their emphasis on privacy – for example, “miniatures that illustrated only one eye both confided and withheld clues about the subject’s identity”; and “third, these objects embody the characters’ subjectivity, often hypostatizing their personal desires and fears” (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 30, 31, 33.

(*B*, p. 369). And yet the miniature's presence in Edgeworth's novel multiply underscores not just this possibility, but its inverse – the thing's capacity to benefit the characters.⁷⁹ Nonhuman effervescence leads Virginie's miniature, recycled in *Belinda*, to impact the human. While for Jennie Batchelor, Hervey, in casting himself and Rachel in Bernardin's romance, "[b]ind[s] both characters to a fiction from which they cannot extricate themselves," I claim that Virginie's interactions with the book and miniature actually emancipate them both from this romantic "fiction."⁸⁰

By sexually agitating and educating Virginie, Bernardin's novel and the miniature therein keep *Belinda's* subplot spinning. Thus, I interpret Virginie's reading as one that activates self-knowledge, rather than as Edgeworth's critique of the deleterious effects of some kinds of novels.⁸¹ Bal explains that the relationship between a text and an embedded fabula can be particularly "intense" when the latter is "presented only in part."⁸² Indeed, parts of *Paul et Virginie*, woven into *Belinda*, heat up the novel when Virginie reads her quasi-biography, which Edgeworth quotes from Daniel Malthus's translation of *Paul et Virginie*, specifically, the scene wherein the heroine feels sexual passion for Paul as she bathes in the bower:⁸³

She thought of Paul's friendship, more pure than the waters of the fountain, stronger than the united palms, and sweeter than the perfume of flowers; and these images, in night and in solitude, gave double force to the passion,

⁷⁹ Malcolm Cook argues insightfully that characters in eighteenth-century novels use miniatures to explore "the nature of imitation." See "Portraits in Eighteenth-Century French Fiction," *Australian Journal of French Studies* 35.2 (1998): 141–155, p. 143. While Egenolf discusses portraits in *Belinda* in great depth, arguing that these "yield new sets of messages as new discourse situations are generated" (p. 76), she does not discuss the miniature of Paul Sunderland or that belonging to Paul in Bernardin's novel.

⁸⁰ See *Dress, Distress and Desire: Clothing and the Female Body in Eighteenth-Century Literature* (Houndmills, Basingstoke and New York, 2005), p. 159.

⁸¹ In contrast, see Marie McAllister, who describes Rachel as "addict[ed] to romance novels" (p. 315). In "Lady Delacour's Library: Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda* and Fashionable Reading," *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 48.4 (1994): 423–439, Heather MacFadyen finds that Virginie's "unsupervised novel reading overstimulates her adolescent sexual yearnings" and that "fashionable reading and the trope of female reading present women's reading as a breach of domestic femininity" (p. 428). McCann argues that "Virginie's . . . interest in gothic and sentimental texts, . . . encourage[s] both ennui and an over-active fantasy life" (p. 72).

⁸² *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2009), p. 60.

⁸³ Malthus's translation abridges Bernardin's novel and retitles it as *Paul and Mary: An Indian Story* (London: J. Dodsley, 1789).

which she nourished in her heart. She suddenly left the dangerous shades, and went to her mother, to seek protection against herself. (*Paul and Mary*, quoted in *B*, p. 381)⁸⁴

Malthus's translation expurgates words and passages, making his translation less physically amatory than the French original, or even than other translations, by occluding the original's steamy and burning water imagery. For example, Malthus excises how, in Donovan's translation, Bernardin's Virginie "is possessed with a consuming fire" ("*un feu dévorant la saisit*"), and how the bower's waters "burn hotter than the sun" ("*eaux plus brûlantes que les soleils*" [*PV*, p. 74; Ehrard, p. 160]). Nevertheless, by quoting this scene, *Belinda* floodlights the amatory feelings Rachel-Virginia has for her miniature-man and emphasizes her ability to let a thing potently captivate her psyche. Conversely, our French Virginie must ultimately numb herself to all stimuli. Rabb asks the important question: "How are gendered assumptions about the small and delicate as feminine contradicted or reinforced by miniatures?"⁸⁵ Certainly, Virginia's small picture takes on sublime proportions in her life.

Virginia identifies with Virginie, and the book and the miniature redux in *Belinda* enable her to clarify her own desires. What she learns by embracing her new name and character is that Bernardin's heroine knows who she loves, a knowledge that, in turn, teaches Rachel-Virginia that she is not in love with Hervey.⁸⁶ Bernardin's novel, thus, functions as a highly useful thing for helping Virginia recognize the feelings she has for Sunderland and his portrait and to differentiate those emotions from her affection for Clarence: She doesn't love him *that way*. With energy and conviction uncharacteristic of her, Virginia assures Mrs. Ormond that "of this I am certain, that I had not the name [Clarence], which you were thinking of, upon my lips" (*B*, p. 381).⁸⁷ The human and nonhuman work contiguously here since the miniature offers Virginia an initiation into love

⁸⁴ Malthus, p. 130. ⁸⁵ Rabb, p. 14.

⁸⁶ In contrast, Britton argues that Virginia "struggles to articulate an identity independent of the name and image with which she has been forcibly identified" (p. 443).

⁸⁷ Although Stephanie Insley Hershinow does not discuss the authors I do, her remarks on *Clarissa's* heroine are applicable to Edgeworth's Rachel-Virginia: Readers generally pity or condemn the latter as too naïve, as too much of a "novice," to use Hershinow's language. Yet Rachel-Virginia's very innocence, as Hershinow argues about *Clarissa's*, helps sustain her. Through her intuition, her eurythmic connection to things (the miniature), and her moral sense of what is right (that she loves Paul, the man in the miniature, more than Hervey) Rachel-Virginia is able to resist the pressure to deny her feelings and, in resisting, she becomes "a moral exemplar" (to use Hershinow's phrase) who helps make her own and *Belinda's* companionate marriages ethically possible. See *Born Yesterday: Inexperience and the Early Realist Novel* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2019), p. 59.

as complete as if she had met the man himself. *Paul et Virginie*, folded inextricably into *Belinda* as an amatory manual and self-help guide, first for Clarence and then for Virginia, becomes an uncanny “neighbor” that seduces both characters, though it does not lead them to love each other, a fact which renders their “proximity” rather “traumatic.”⁸⁸

The miniature constitutes more than an abstraction for Virginia, for its image seeps into her dreams, where she says, “it speaks to me” (*B*, p. 383). *Belinda* thereby celebrates materiality by addressing Virginia’s passion as frankly as was possible and by demonstrating how fruitless it is to wrest a woman’s desires from her and thereby empty out half her being. Allegedly the “purest” and most “transparent” woman in *Belinda*, Virginia in fact nurtures secret and erotic longings; along these lines, Mary Jacobus brilliantly observes that, in the novel, “the *mise en abyme* of representation unfolds to remind us that there can never be . . . a heart empty of desire. No virgin, however sequestered, can be defended against cultural seduction; no mind, however unbookish, can be secluded from the lure of reading; no imagination, however innocent, can resist the romance of representation.”⁸⁹ However, when Jacobus suggests that *Paul et Virginie* turns out to be “a place-holder”⁹⁰ in *Belinda*, I would argue that the book exceeds such status since it and the miniature have excited Virginia’s yearnings, and these things themselves precipitate kinesthetic results – even fomenting the right marital pairings. Consequently, once recycled, Bernardin’s novel yields a newly nimble purpose, offering Virginia a template for choice and teaching her self-awareness. While one review found that “the character of Virginia seems in its final ending to outrage all probability,”⁹¹ for my purposes, when she falls in love with a picture, meets its subject in the flesh, and then is affianced to him, the novel’s plot successfully envisions how nonhuman agency rattles, influences, and heals characters’ lives. Further, Lady Delacour and the portrait, doing “real work” together, solve several enigmas: Who is the miniature man (Paul Sunderland), who is Virginia St. Pierre (Rachel), who is Virginia’s father (Mr. Hartley), who does Virginia actually love (Paul), and who does

⁸⁸ Reinhard, p. 785.

⁸⁹ “The Science of Herself: Scenes of Female Enlightenment,” in *Romanticism, History, and the Possibilities of Genre: Re-forming Literature, 1789–1837*, ed. Tilottama Rajan and Julia M. Wright (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 264.

⁹⁰ “The Science of Herself,” p. 264.

⁹¹ *British Critic and Quarterly Theological Review* (London, 1801), vol. 18, p. 85. “Edgeworth’s *Belinda*,” *Women Writers in Review*, Art. 22 (1801–1807), the Northeastern University Women Writers Project, 2016-11-16.

Clarence really love (Belinda)? Recycling Bernardin's plot and characters into socially beneficial, ethical, and happy outcomes, Edgeworth ensures that a Paul and Virginia marry.

4.2.1.3 *Bélinde*

The novel's radical efforts stimulate links between virtue, sexuality, and materiality when female characters can belong with these three simultaneously,⁹² though the French translation of *Belinda*, as I briefly show, obliterates that possibility. Chapter 3 considered a comparative approach that unveiled how Ségur's *Bélinde* effaces the original's emphasis on materiality and colonialism; here I suggest that such a juxtaposition also emphasizes Edgeworth's and Ségur's respective pedagogical and aesthetic agendas. The former's goal is to recycle Bernardin's novel and give Rachel-Virginia the right to happiness, while the latter's is to turn "*Belinda* into a moralistic narrative adapted to French consumers."⁹³ Both books try to belong with their respective ethics, as each resets (to use a jewelry analogy) their borders according to different standards of what constitutes female virtue. Specifically, the translation's Virginie comes to resemble Bernardin's protagonist more than Edgeworth's Virginia when Ségur changes (among other things) Edgeworth's ending, sidelining Lady Delacour and placing Virginie center stage.⁹⁴ His Virginie, a martyring heroine of sensibility who calculates her modesty to inspire respect, sacrifices her sexuality by refusing marriage first to Sunderland and then to Clarence, the latter because she knows that "Belinda has all of his love" (*Ségur*, vol. 4, p. 184).⁹⁵ A magnanimous response, no doubt.

Yet *Bélinde*'s Virginie has another, less magnanimous reason to dematerialize herself by refusing Sunderland's marriage proposal. Fearing slander from those who labeled her as Clarence's mistress, she wants to save her reputation. At least to a modern audience, this motivation for sacrifice seems far from virtuous and all too allied to abstractions. *Bélinde*'s Virginie begs her father, "take me with you to the Indies, let me consecrate my life to caring for my father . . .; there no one can defame me; I would

⁹² Deborah Weiss insightfully observes that "the radicalism of Edgeworth's understanding of gender has generally been overlooked owing to what scholars have taken to be the timidity of her approach to reform." See "Extraordinary Ordinary Belinda: Maria Edgeworth's Female Philosopher," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 19.4 (2007): 441–461, p. 442.

⁹³ Fernández Rodríguez, p. 109.

⁹⁴ No wonder Edgeworth and her family disliked the translation: Charlotte Edgeworth (1802) describes a meeting with Ségur, who she says has "translated Belinda not only into [F]rench language, but [F]rench taste for he has altered the story," in Colvin, pp. 16, 25.

⁹⁵ Quotations from Ségur are my translations.

like always to think about you, and, when I know you are happy, I could endure my existence. Yes, I could endure my life with pleasure if I could beautify yours, my father. Oh! Let us leave as soon as possible, I beg you” (Ségur, vol. 4, pp. 180–181). In twice repeating “I could endure my life” if he were content, her aspirations seem noble, though again, her primary concern – to escape defamation by leaving England immediately – relies on the same bodiless principles that lead to the first Virginie’s death and recalls Wollstonecraft’s bafflement as to how or why true “morality” can be “undermined by sexual notions of the importance of a good reputation” (*VRW*, p. 162).⁹⁶ When the translator returns Edgeworth’s Rachel-Virginia closer to her original state as Bernardin’s Virginie, the character must abandon her sexuality for a gendered virtue in not just one novel, but in two. As Ségur’s Virginie surrenders her future as a married woman to avoid calumny, so does Mademoiselle de la Tour when, refusing to disrobe, she willingly drowns. While it may seem here as if I were lauding the original English novel over Ségur’s translation-rewriting, in fact I find his recycling a dynamic process that reveals tense cross-cultural interlacings, a process that returns us to Staël’s statement (quoted in [Chapter 2](#)) that when we read other nations’ literature “our mind is excited by new comparisons, [and] our imagination is enlivened as much by the audacities it condemns as by those it approves.”⁹⁷

4.2.2 *Recycling Plot and Characters: After-Art*

I began this chapter by briefly analyzing Bernardin’s *Études*, and thus far I have explored how two British texts respond to the ways *Paul et Virginie* discards its own initial premises: the restorative value of human–nonhuman connections, the mindfulness that all things exist relationally with other things, and a healthy bond between women and materiality. Here I turn to how the novel’s after-things – paintings, textiles, fans, and dishes – also investigate these ethical relationships. These personal belongings of course differ from the massive public monuments Corinne and Oswald visit; yet they resemble how Corinne individually curates Nelvil’s tourism such that each object bears the stamp of what she believes will best heal her lover. The popularity and wide distribution of these artisanal objects suggest that they held the hope both of restoring the characters and

⁹⁶ For Wollstonecraft it is absurd that a woman, having lost her reputation, cannot “regain[*n*] respectability by a return to virtue” (*VWR*, p. 164).

⁹⁷ *Delphine*, p. 6.

of bringing the reader into physical, tangible intimacy with the narrative. To viewers today, however, this archive might appear problematic rather than ameliorative since some of these art objects idealize the characters, others erase colonial contexts, and many minimize enslavement's horrors. As I will show, this after-art both reflected and stimulated urgent cultural needs, such as encouraging readers to identify themselves as "curious and sensitive."⁹⁸ In turn, these artifacts nourished the novel's iconic standing. Reciprocal influencing emerges: For example, a pair of Paul and Virginie bookends, objects which presumably could be used to hold a copy of the novel itself, rouses the objects to lean on each other for mutual support.⁹⁹

What compelled readers to so yearn for *Paul et Virginie* artifacts that their desires germinated an after-art industry, a fashionable commerce that existed alongside the dazzling popularity the novel itself experienced?¹⁰⁰ As Lieve Spaas has written, "[a]t the time of the French Revolution, [the novel] was read more than any other book. More than three hundred imitations were written soon after its appearance. Between 1788 and 1799 there were fifty-six editions, twenty of them translations."¹⁰¹ And Paul Toinet has recorded the thousands of decorative objects the novel inspired, most of them now either vanished or held in private collections. First, the desire for a more enduring and concrete link to the novel's ephemerality must have stimulated this industry during the span of the novel's celebrity. As Antoine Lilti argues, the eighteenth-century "reproduction of works . . . allowed for [their] massive distribution . . . and assured [their] permanent

⁹⁸ Antoine Lilti, *The Invention of Celebrity: 1750–1850*, trans. Lynn Jeffress (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2017), p. 10.

⁹⁹ I observed this in a private collection in France. I am extremely grateful to the owners for allowing me to tour and photograph their works. They wish to remain anonymous.

¹⁰⁰ Such after-art underscores the importance of ephemeral objects in any study of French eighteenth-century history and culture. François Cheval and Thierry-Nicolas C. Tchakaloff point out that, "[i]f research in the historical aspect" of *Paul et Virginie* helps us understand its "multiple existences," it is essential also to turn to its objects: The novel "outsmarts monocular approaches, and throws off one-way studies." See their "Préface," in *Souvenirs de Paul et Virginie: un paysage aux valeurs morales*, ed. Cheval and Tchakaloff (Paris: Adam Biro, 1995), p. 14. Relationships between any representation and its original generally lead to discussions of simulacra and authenticity; see, most famously, Benjamin's "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), p. 221. Thing theorists would argue that whether mass produced or unique in their manufacture, things still have energetic intensities.

¹⁰¹ "Paul et Virginie: The Shipwreck of an Idyll," pp. 316–317. Toinet, *Paul et Virginie: Répertoire bibliographique et iconographique* (Paris: G.-P. Maisonneuve et Larose, 1963). Gabriel-Robert Thibault further notes that "*Paul et Virginie* fut un best-seller: 42 éditions entre 1816 et 1850. Chacune de ces éditions compte un tirage global supérieur à 20,000 exemplaires." See "Si le grain ne meurt . . .," in *Paul et Virginie, un exotisme enchanteur*, ed. Élisabeth Leprêtre (Paris: Nicolas Chaudun, 2014), p. 56.

presence in the public sphere.”¹⁰² Second, other cultural and psychological incentives rendered these after-things indispensable. For Festa these objects “anchor and preserve a continuously narrated self in a world whose local attachments were being unmoored by exposure to different cultures and people.”¹⁰³ Lynn Hunt’s work suggests a third alternative: If *Paul et Virginie* had been read from a revolutionary standpoint – an interpretation suggesting that the novel’s return to *ancien régime* beliefs in fact leads to tragedy – the objects could come to stand in as codes for more radical ideas, with Virginie’s death, for example, embodying the problems following from obedience to parental and governmental control.¹⁰⁴ Janine Barchas and Kristina Straub help me to articulate my fourth point. Maintaining that acquiring Shakespeare and Austen memorabilia follows a “proud” two-century “tradition . . . of fans actively participating in and shaping a culture of celebrity,” they clarify how wanting such things is “less about the crass materialism of commodity culture and more a part of a long history of holding our most beloved authors close by bringing them home.”¹⁰⁵ This desire to bring the “beloved” home enforces how readers yearned to experience the characters’ adventures far beyond the page.

Although I agree that Paul and Virginie after-things promised to keep the characters near (on plates or in clothing) and added the extra frisson of sensibility “rubbing off” on their owners via association, my larger point is that these things highlight the longing for the embodiment *Paul et Virginie* excises, and this, for a revolutionary audience, might well have resonated with the questions of the embodiment of rights. That is, what is merely abstraction and what can be counted on? These tangible objects restore the bodies – and their rights of life, liberty, and happiness – that the novel vaporizes.¹⁰⁶ Deborah Tarn Steiner, examining Greek statues that

¹⁰² Here Lilti discusses engravings, but his research applies to *Paul et Virginie* after-art, given its popular distribution (p. 57).

¹⁰³ *Sentimental Figures of Empire*, p. 3.

¹⁰⁴ “The Unstable Boundaries of the French Revolution,” in *A History of Private Life: Vol. 4, From the Fires of Revolution to the Great War*, ed. Michelle Perrot (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990). Also see Hunt’s *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), and *Eroticism and the Body Politic*, ed. Lynn Hunt (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991).

¹⁰⁵ “Collecting Will and Jane,” August 26, 2016, <http://shakespeareandbeyond.folger.edu/2016/08/26/collecting-william-shakespeare-jane-austen/>

¹⁰⁶ I argue that *Paul et Virginie* objects are recycled to improve or restore; in a fascinating essay, Laurent Châtel discusses the opposite in showing how William Beckford recycles in a way that “respects the otherness of the foreign item by making it the standard or reference of its displaying dress.” See “Recycling Orientalia: William Beckford’s Aesthetics of Appropriation,” in Fennetaux, Junqua, and Vasset, p. 62.

function as “representations of the absent and the dead,” discusses how “[a]rchaeological evidence that long predates written accounts demonstrates the role of the statue as a replacement figurine that doubles for the dead. . . . The creation of a doubling image can correct the disturbance that certain forms of death generate.”¹⁰⁷ By extension, such a practice helps explain how these “re-representations” embody a distrust of the novel’s fragmentation of sexuality and spirit, body and mind, mind and psyche.

Edgeworth’s and Wordsworth’s textual recyclings of *Paul et Virginie* thus demonstrate ways that remaking a literary scene or character dislodges that original liveliness into renewed and corporeal performances. This resembles what Robert Stam claims about cinematic adaptations: They “redistribute energies and intensities, provoke flows and displacements; the linguistic energy of literary writing turns into the audio-visual-kinetic-performative energy of the adaptation.”¹⁰⁸ Thus, I investigate how these copies on canvas or cloth might converse with an afterlife-admirer about the novel’s morphology of gender and matter. And yet, as I will show, some of these items, though embodied, replicate the novel’s dualistic principles, though how that binarism is received can contradict or befuddle any original intention. Whether reproducing or challenging ideology, after-things can baffle, and as Wendell Berry reminds us, “the mind that is not baffled is not employed. The impeded stream is the one that sings.”¹⁰⁹ I agree in the main with Judith Pascoe’s claim that objects “refuse to cooperate entirely with the collector’s . . . best-laid schemes”;¹¹⁰ yet though ultimately irrepressible, these after-things, from my viewpoint, generate radiant connections between the nonhuman and the human, even in representations that initially seem to dispute or deny the possibility.

First, some after-things that might baffle viewers who are also readers of the book are the ones that reincarnate Paul and Virginie’s sensual energies, moving viewers toward those that the novel represses. This restores that world of touch, taste, sound, and smell that the novel’s early sections so fervently manifest. For example, some after-art recaptures the hero and

¹⁰⁷ Deborah Tarn Steiner, pp. 3, 5, 7.

¹⁰⁸ “Introduction: The Theory and Practice of Adaptation,” in *Literature and Film: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation*, ed. Stam and Allesandra Raengo (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), p. 46.

¹⁰⁹ Berry, p. 205; emphasis added.

¹¹⁰ Pascoe continues: “[C]ollected objects float free of their possessors and come to exist in inscrutable isolation, defying scholars’ efforts to recast them as definitive evidence” (p. 23). While I agree in general that things ultimately remain elusive, I primarily investigate how these objects can also “float” toward each other, connecting to one another and to history.

heroine's sexual affection by depicting them as adults in scenes from the novel when they are children. Consequently, these recyclings manifest their love and validate the impassioned chemistry the novel eradicates, as we see in *The Storm* (Figure 4.1). Pierre-Auguste Cot here recycles an episode in which the children use Virginie's petticoat to protect themselves from the rain, but he intensifies the scene's eroticism by clothing the heroine in a transparent gown.¹¹¹ He further dramatizes the characters' sexuality and their mutual attraction by posing them as young adults whose bodies know each other (their feet are in perfect step), and by placing Paul's thumb familiarly under Virginie's dress, directly on the skin of her breast. By titling this *The Storm*, he also reimagines the novel's life-changing storms – those occurring when Virginie, bathing, feels passionate attraction to Paul and when a hurricane collapses the ship – as harmonious and fulfilling moments.¹¹² Jean-Frédéric Schall's *Adolescence de Paul et Virginie* conversely presents them as the novel does: little children with “two pretty heads” (PV, p. 47). That this representation would more closely mirror the novel makes sense given, as Gabriel-Robert Thibault points out, it is among “the first iconographic interpretations of the novel, which were created under the guidance of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre.”¹¹³ The children's pale innocence and Schall's static palms and serene landscape contrast to the teenagers' robust health, their intelligent eyes emphasizing amatory vitality, and Cot's animated wind, which capriciously lifts and curls Virginie's petticoat into a voluptuous rococo paradise.

Danièle Lancelle considers the novel's eroticism, an element remarkable enough to lead one 1838 French edition to “revise and purge” it, leaving out phrases describing how the children were bathed together and how they slept and played together unclothed.¹¹⁴ I would agree with Lancelle that in cases where “the illustrators . . . have influenced the text's meaning so as to produce a more titillating effect,” another, more compelling impact arises: that the “narrativity of the image is superimposed on that of reading, sometimes enhancing a feature the text includes,” but other times “making

¹¹¹ Here Cot evidently offers neoclassical verisimilitude since this era's female dress was transparent. For more on this transparency, see Rausser, p. 65.

¹¹² While art historians have discussed whether this painting portrays Daphnis and Chloe or Paul and Virginie, James Henry Rubin argues that because in *Paul et Virginie* “the sexual interest is sublimated and Bernardin consistently maintains a high moral tone,” the painting must refer to Longus's novel (second century CE), which is “overtly erotic.” See “Pierre-Auguste Cot's *The Storm*,” *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 14 (1979): 191–200, p. 196. That Cot has Bernardin's novel in mind is made evident in Rubin's essay, which includes Cot's preliminary drawings for *The Storm* which show the artist addressing the Black River episode (p. 194).

¹¹³ Thibault, p. 52. ¹¹⁴ Lancelle, in Leprière, pp. 95, 96.



Figure 4.1 Pierre-Auguste Cot, *The Storm* (1880). Courtesy of the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art.

it more seductive depending on the circumstances.”¹¹⁵ To put this in the terms *Embodied Experience* uses, things affect other things; and, once we see an eroticized illustration, we read the text as more sexual than it might be or in ways that the novel itself intimates but does not directly acknowledge. Further, any artifact that shows as fulfilled Paul and Virginie’s sensuous physical love must, in counterpoint, recall that which the novel forbids.

In contrast, some after-things prescind the human–nonhuman connection by dematerializing the characters depicted, a phenomenon seen in a textile design (Figure 4.2) which pictures the characters displaced from nature and from work. Paradoxically this is realized by rendering them as solidly statuesque, aristocratic, and classically beautiful. Indeed, except when they are depicting the protagonists as children, most artists’ illustrations recoil from the family’s impoverished conditions by embodying the characters as patricians wearing fashionable European attire (as opposed to coarse muslin) and by refining their bodies by elongating them and posing them in courtly, cultivated attitudes, a “polishing” phenomenon that becomes more prevalent as time passes from the novel’s first publication date. The design includes repeating patterns illustrating the novel’s most familiar episodes: the children returning the freedom-seeker to her enslaver and the Maroons, under Domingue’s leadership, rescuing the children, here presented anachronistically as adults. Focusing less on the storyline – the motifs are in a nonlinear order – and more on the figures’ dignity, the artist tightly wedges the bodies together within the visual field, a compression intensified by the lack of negative spaces, as the designer has used a composite overlay by placing the subjects on a floral-geometric patterned ground. As the printed cotton canvas disconnects the human from the nonhuman by physically disengaging them from their environment, so does it separate the characters from each other. Floating in stacked panels and isolated from the backdrops, the figures do not fully belong with their environment. Taken as a whole, the scenes represent formidable physiques, exuberant plant life, and sturdy architecture, revealing that neither mortality nor fragility threaten the white subjects.

Earlier I reflected on how the novel protests enslavement as well as the enslaver’s sexual abuse of the Maroon and (less horrifically) of Virginie. To address the latter first, we see that the enslaver’s visage does not reveal the eroticizing leer the novel records (*PV*, p. 54) as he “lift[s] his cane to heaven,” swearing “a dreadful oath that he would grant his pardon not for

¹¹⁵ Lancelle, in Leprêtre, pp. 95, 98.



Figure 4.2 Scenes from *Paul et Virginie*, after Charles Chasselat and Antoine Johannot (1825–1830). Courtesy of the Musées d'Art et d'Histoire, Culture et Patrimoine Ville du Havre.

the love of God but for the love of her” (*PV*, p. 52),¹¹⁶ but as he gazes at Virginie and menaces her with his weapon, prompting her startled, shocked look, his prurience is displaced in the way the image itself objectifies the heroine, shining light on her right buttocks and the curve of her calf. Shifting now to Bernardin’s objections to slavery, it is apparent that the fabric design (Figure 4.2) diminishes those. In recycling and reinterpreting his treatment of the returned slave, the designer casts the Maroon’s body as powerful and vibrant, ironically rendering her and her back a specimen of solid, well-nourished, physical perfection. The standard representations “routinely associated with Africans” were “the valiant, the erotic, and the treacherous Moor.”¹¹⁷ I suggest that the artist combines these descriptors, presenting the woman as physically “valiant” in her strength, eroticized in that she is half naked, but also “treacherous” insofar as she has liberated herself from this man’s possession. Though genuflecting before her supposed “*maitre*,” she vividly contrasts to Bernardin’s description, which portrays her as “emaciated as a skeleton” (*PV*, p. 51). Simultaneously the artist, by eradicating all scarring from her back and literally effacing her – we cannot look in her eyes or at the expression on her countenance – weakens *Paul et Virginie*’s oppositions to such torture and injustice and especially to any viewer’s understanding of enslavement.

The lower half of the image further disregards enslavement’s reality by offering a light-hearted presentation of Maroons carrying these adults (not lost children) back to their cottages, thereby reducing the journey to a pleasant experience, with Paul pointing toward their home to reassure Virginie, and the heroine, herself, depicted as complacently looking down on the Maroons, though they are risking their own lives to return them. And while the novel’s Black River episode provides a spectacle of “suffering and mutilation,” this textile reassures the viewer by depicting the Maroons as the “idealized demigod hero[es]” of the scene.¹¹⁸ The novel starkly exposes human–human abuses and protests slavery, such that readers see and feel the black woman’s anguish. Transferred onto the wall or other surfaces for decoration, this textile represses such gritty material truths, except to those who notice their absence.

¹¹⁶ Though infrequently reproduced, this violent vignette resembles those Bernardin describes on Mauritian plantations in his *Voyage à l’Île-de-France*. See Leprêtre, “Regarder l’esclavage,” in Leprêtre, p. 85.

¹¹⁷ Mallipeddi, pp. 34, 35.

¹¹⁸ Mallipeddi, p. 26. Discussing Oroonoko, Mallipeddi “utiliz[es] spectacle as a category of analysis for a variety of representations,” one being an “idealized demigod hero, whose familiar traits are courage, valor, fortitude, and generosity” (pp. 26, 36).

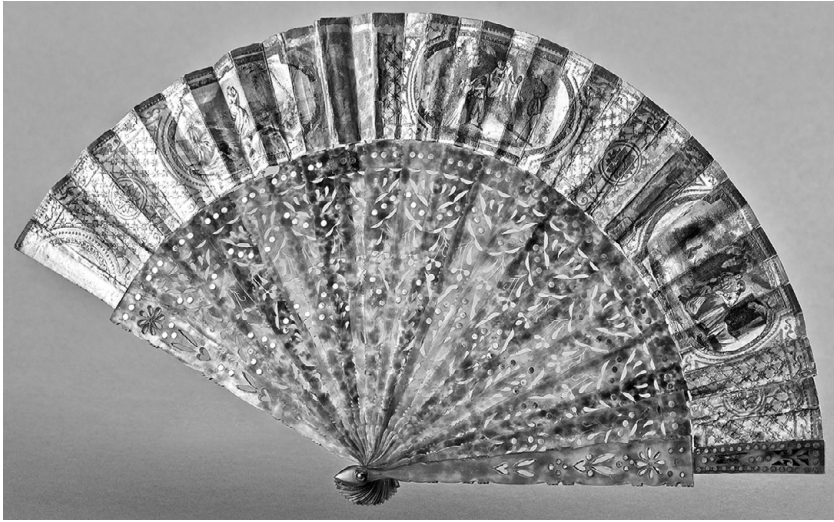


Figure 4.3 Anon., *Éventail* (c. 1860). Courtesy of the Musées d'Art et d'Histoire, Culture et Patrimoine Ville du Havre.

Decorating homes and human bodies, these representations from a novel protesting stolen labor, whippings, exile, and death portrayed humans brutally disjointed from other humans and from the nonhuman things near them. These strive to reembody beloved characters, but did intimate physical proximity with them require the kind of emptying out of blatant reality the cotton canvas realizes? It is arresting, psychologically, that the textile, as other objects do, often seems to reject *Paul et Virginie*'s initial emphasis on human–human and human–nonhuman connections and to emphasize the later part of the text, which focuses on want not need, on money not family bonds, on luxury not conservation. For example, a fan (Figure 4.3) primarily made of shell, seems initially to fit that pattern. Its paper periphery illustrates three scenes from the novel, each encased within a gold medallion and each of which is bordered on either side with elaborate embellishments. An intricate frieze of geometric and floral designs, complete with beading and rosettes, such as one would see on cotton toile or silk dress fabric, decorates the edging.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ The fan's artistic excellence reminds us that these objects were "characterized by decorative complexities and precious materials," such as "vellum, silk, lace, and paper," and that "[s]ticks and guards were made from precious materials such as mother-of-pearl, tortoiseshell and ivory." See Miriam Volmert, "Introduction," in *European Fans in the 17th and 18th Centuries: Images, Accessories, and Instruments of Gesture*, ed. Volmert and Danijela Bucher (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2020), p. 10 and note 6, p. 10.

In embodying friction between economic registers and retreating from the novel's material circumstances, the fan resembles many expensive and elegant *Paul et Virginie* things which represent the characters on and in sumptuous materials such as marble, gold, precious jewels, and select fabrics. Since these things appear to be adapting the book for stylish association, the recyclings are in some ways more in line with what Arnold Nesselrath refers to as the "re-use" of material "as a kind of cultural trophy."¹²⁰ Fans, however, are never just one thing or never do just one thing: According to Roach, they have a "meaning-making virtuosity," and because "fan-users" can "perfor[m] every conceivable behavior" with them, they make an entrance into the list of "enchanted accessories."¹²¹

This accessory, in its "enchanted" moment, performs prismatic undertakings. First, the labor of ornamentation on the fan provides an ironic counterpoint to the mothers' labors, spinning "cotton from morning to evening," while the highly wrought design apparently forgets that the novel's inhabitants were "so unfurnished . . . with the goods of civilization that they went barefoot about the settlements" (*PV*, p. 45). And yet, luxury items, a "special 'register' of consumption," have a use-value which "is *rhetorical* and *social*"; they are "goods that are simply *incarnated* signs," rich with "semiotic virtuosity" in their ability to "signal fairly complex social messages"; purchasing them is intensely linked "to body, person, and personality."¹²² Once opened, the lavish fan, juxtaposed to the family's poverty, could potentially act to remind the fan's owner and viewers of nature's moral simplicity and authenticity. Certainly, the fan embeds this memory of the nonhuman since its lower part, composed of shell (comprising about 15 of its 22 centimeters), recalls the ocean. Coalescing form, function, and meaning, the fan's folds mimic the movement of waves, and the light wind created when one opens and closes it evokes ocean breezes while also recalling Virginie's drowning at sea.

This exquisite fan embodies the book's tragedy, requiring viewers to contemplate the troubling pleasure of beauty in the presence of death, but it also adds two further levels of contemplation and paradox. First, it reintroduces the eroticism lost to the eponymous characters. "The fan, like the muff, became a symbol of female sexuality," and both, according

¹²⁰ "Venus Belvedere," p. 206. As I mentioned, the figures become more elegant as time passes, while twentieth-century depictions, no doubt freed by modernism, eradicate the characters' refinement. For example, see watercolors by Othon Friesz (1879–1949) illustrating the novel. Élisabeth Audoin, "Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, portrait de l'aventurier de la Porte Océane," in Leprêtre, p. 34.

¹²¹ Roach, p. 54; Roach draws from Andrew Sofer, *The Stage Life of Props* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003), p. 117.

¹²² Appadurai, p. 38.

to David Nokes, were “slang terms for female genitals.”¹²³ By opening and closing this object – by exposing and hiding the face – one can tragically or playfully reenact how the novel introduces sexual love, only to reject it. Second, things, as many scholars reveal, offer the displaced means by which to address contemporary political issues.¹²⁴ Though made in the nineteenth century, this fan does so by including what was no doubt the eighteenth century’s chief tragedy: enslavement. In this sense it acts as a memorial. Its miniature medallions, while offering “white-washed” representations of the Maroon, still render her – and enslavement in general – both visible and palpably present every time the fan is unfolded and in the flow of air it stimulates. Pierre-Henri Biger observes in “Introduction à l’éventail européen aux XVII et XVIII siècles,” that the “face” of the fan, the side the most ornamented (“*le côté le plus orné*”), was always “turned toward the public.”¹²⁵ This means that the scenes of enslavement are the ones facing the audience, reminding them of these horrors. Susan Stewart argues that souvenirs offer “catastrophe and *jouissance* simultaneously,”¹²⁶ and I would suggest that this fan, which represents episodes of the children’s bliss, their misfortune, and the Maroon’s enslavement, functions similarly as a memento of the reader’s journey through the novel, rendering it more than just an indulgence that only exploits the novel’s plot or frames *Virginie*’s death as a trophy.

Other objects paradoxically embody the characters, while endorsing their evanescence, a phenomenon that occurs in artifacts which emphasize, even in the happiest scenes, the novel’s ruinous conclusion, finding restorative, teleological meaning in *Virginie*’s death.¹²⁷ For example, a set of round, scalloped porcelain plates, dating from the *époque* of Napoleon III, all convey the ending’s death-by-water, by incorporating blue decoration and scalloped edging resembling tidal movements, and by representing the ground as undulating in wave-like patterns. The first plate, *La naissance de Virginie* (Figure 4.4, bottom row, far right), represents Madame de la Tour’s body as half-reclining on a stylish settee, forming a graceful arc, one the drapery falling from her bed echoes. The shimmering, Titian-like curtains billowing behind her reflect light as water

¹²³ Rabb, p. 119, n. 63; for Nokes, see *John Gay: A Profession of Friendship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 133.

¹²⁴ For Rabb “miniatures are symptomatic of a society seeking ways, through indirection and displacement, to deal with problems of the full-scale world” (p. 123). Other critics, as I mention in my Introduction chapter, argue for objects’ ability to reveal social problems in coded ways.

¹²⁵ *Seventeenth-Century French Studies* 26.1 (2014): 84–92, p. 88. ¹²⁶ Stewart, p. 135.

¹²⁷ I previously published a short part of this section. See Heydt-Stevenson, “*Paul et Virginie*: la danse du roman et de l’objet,” in Leprêtre.



Figure 4.4 Anon., set of twelve plates with scenes from *Paul et Virginie* (1849–1867). Author Photograph. Manufactured by Creil et Montereau (Oise, Seine-et-Marne). Number 1 is in the lower-right-hand corner of the bottom row; number 12 is in the far left of the top row.¹²⁸ Courtesy of the Musées d'Art et d'Histoire, Culture et Patrimoine Ville du Havre.

glitters in sunshine, but also presage the glossy pink taffeta Virginie will wear upon departure to France. Held in the Old Man's arms, the infant Virginie performs her own curving wave, which prefigures her death by drowning.¹²⁹ This image conservatively undermines the patriarchal structure by offering a patriarchal fantasy of the nuclear family, with the Old Man here posing as a father-substitute taking possession of the infant, while Marguerite is relegated to the background, crowded between Madame and the sumptuous drapery, figured not as partner but as servant. Although most apparent in the series' first plate, this typological symbolism of her death appears throughout the sequence in wave and water motifs. For example, in *Virginie Found after Her Death* (Figure 4.4, plate 11), she has become a wave, lying on her side on the sand, facing us, one

¹²⁸ As Barbier explains, there were many versions of these plates. Those he analyzes, from the Musée Historique of Saint-Gilles-les Hauts, were also made by Creil et Montereau and date to the mid nineteenth century, though his are tinted in a sepia tone and ornamented with luxurious flowers (p. 185).

¹²⁹ For Jean Barbier, the image's design makes it "a theatrical representation." See "Une histoire pour se mettre à table," in Cheval and Tchakaloff, p. 194.

leg folding into the other like breakers rising and falling. And in the last plate, *Paul sur le Tombeau de Virginie* (Figure 4.4, plate 12), the hero kneels at her tombstone, which is weathered with a waving design, an image that seals this marine motif into eternity. The designer, heralding her death in each plate, reinforces Christian redemption and salvation, presumably to spur readers to find spiritual consolation in Virginie's "virtuous" decision to drown. Manifesting the future tragedy in plates illustrating their happiness before the "fall," however, also continually calls to mind the body itself, and all of its festive exuberance and tenuous mortality.

The plates return us to my opening discussion about food, while also introducing opinions about taste and enslavement. We should remember, of course, that these objects served the utilitarian function of holding food, and that while eating from dishes representing scenes from the novel, readers could recall Paul and Virginie harvesting and exchanging nourishment. As readers devour the book, so do they devour their food, creating what Barbier calls the "correspondence cannibalesque" between the plates, book, and their contents; and though he notes playfully that "[r]e-reading' *Paul et Virginie* daily at . . . mealtimes" will "whet one's appetite!" ("*se mettre en appétit!*"),¹³⁰ this doubled activity also, in more serious ways, physicalizes reading and continues the motif of the vibrant human–nonhuman cycle I have been exploring, even if a meal is placed on *une assiette en faïence fine I* (a finely glazed earthenware plate), while the family's banquet rests on "[h]alved gourds" (*PV*, p. 78). None of these dishes depicts elements from the plot pertaining to eating, as when the children make cheeses or find honeycomb, but instead illustrate three major categories of events – early childhood (Figure 4.4, plates 1–2); the Black River episode (plates 3–7); and Paul and Virginie's parting, the shipwreck, and her death (plates 8–12). Despite the subject matter's generally grim tone, evidently those with the good "taste" to read *Paul et Virginie* would also have the good "taste" to choose dinnerware depicting the characters, thereby encouraging the owners to doubly reinforce their aesthetic choices.¹³¹

Further the dishes most likely served an abolitionist purpose similar to that which some Wedgwood merchandise advocated, such as the depiction of an enslaved man accompanied by the motto "Am I Not a Man and a Brother." Certainly, both before being served and after finishing a course if

¹³⁰ Barbier, in Cheval and Tchakaloff, p. 196.

¹³¹ Denise Gigante historicizes connections between taste both aesthetic and alimentary and traces tensions in this era between enjoying food's sensory pleasures and fearing the sensory excess associated with it.

eating from the plate that illustrates the enslaver raising his cane above the head of the kneeling Maroon, the diner would have to look directly at the cruelty perpetrated against the female maroon. In contrast to the figure in the textile above, here the enslaved woman, dressed in white, kneeling with her back to us, is rendered tiny in comparison to the man threatening her. This underscores the far more serious aspect of a “correspondence cannibalesque” insofar as the scenes remind one that enslavement “cannibalizes” human beings.

Conclusion

In conclusion, whether they offer messages about spiritual redemption, gender, abolition, the need to restore the character’s physicality or, anti-thetically, to dematerialize them both sensually and literally, I suggest that these after-things – paintings, textiles, fans, and dishes – open unseen dimensions rather than resolving them: Each of these joins an expansive and rousing conversation about human and nonhuman connections, human tolerance for others, and about fertile interlacings between literature and art. *The Ruined Cottage*, *Belinda*, *Bélinde*, and artisanal objects recycle *Paul et Virginie*, leading to what George Steiner calls “the heightening of a work’s existence when it is confronted and reenacted by alternate versions of itself.”¹³² As I have shown, some after-art, though making written words “fleshy,” ironically continues the novel’s tendency to render Virginie a celestial fantasy or decorporealize enslavement’s real abominations, thereby endorsing the tragedy that disembodiment and abstraction themselves cause in *Paul et Virginie*. This chapter has explored how Bernardin’s novel sets off a series of chain reactions wherein later poets, novelists, and artists come to have “witness-bearing” functions. Thus, the characters witness Virginie’s death, the Old Man witnesses the family’s demise, the young traveler witnesses the Old Man’s suffering, and Wordsworth, Edgeworth, and ubiquitous objects witness the damage Bernardin’s characters undergo. After-literature or after-things do not, of course, always succeed in healing the binaries found in *Paul et Virginie*, but I do believe that, in striving to repeal the idea that an entire community must be wiped out because they decide not to coalesce mind and body, virtue and sexuality, and human and nonhuman, these after-books challenge the supposed inevitability of dualistic thinking.

¹³² *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 453.

Recognizing the Right to Protection
The Scandal and Sanctuary of Hats in *Evelina*,
The Wanderer, and *Desmond*

Préambule

Previous chapters have charted the destruction caused when a woman chooses or is forced to sacrifice her relationship to her own body and, more generally, to matter itself – when she no longer belongs with her whole being but must become another’s property. Burney’s novels dramatize how difficult and uncertain a relation to property her heroines have, though she offers them the aid of things to help them assert their own rights; in doing so, they can work to reclaim their own bodies *as* belongings, thus overcoming expectations that they *should* be owned. Like all the texts I examine, *Evelina* (1778) and *The Wanderer* (1814) contemplate the electrical charges moving between humans and things: These two novels demonstrate the somatic effects arising when wearing hats: welcome shade or increased heat; impeded vision or seeing without being seen; being exposed or happily shielded.¹

Each chapter has begun with a *préambule* that briefly analyzes a text sometimes outside the time frame or national contours of my primary focus in order to demonstrate how such literary mixtures refresh entry into a known work. I do so here as well by invoking Elizabeth Bishop’s “Exchanging Hats” (1979), suggesting that both it and Burney’s novels underscore how “[c]ostume and custom are complex. / The headgear of the other sex / inspires us to experiment” (“EH,” ll. 6–8). Here, I summon

I published parts of this chapter in “Changing her gown and setting her head to rights’: New Shops, New Hats, and New Identities,” in *Women and Material Culture, 1660–1830*, ed. Jennie Batchelor and Cora Kaplan (New York and London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 52–68.

¹ For Melissa Sodeman, the act of reading *The Wanderer* constitutes a somatic experience: “By prolonging Juliet’s story, Burney not only . . . indict[s] . . . a world that consistently fails women, but also forces on the reader something like Juliet’s experience, for to read [it] is to experience narratively something like Juliet’s numb exhaustion at a world that makes no place for her.” See “Novel Anachronisms: Sophia Lee’s *The Life of a Lover* and Frances Burney’s *The Wanderer*,” in *The Sentimental Novel in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Albert J. Rivero (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), p. 199.

a poem written two hundred years later than my book's time frame to consider hats as both disguises and broadcasters, a poem which offers the disturbing evidence (if we needed it) of how curtailed one's right to "be" has remained over two centuries. Bishop's verse uncannily reiterates the same possibilities for hats that Burney mobilizes. For both authors, women and hats *perform* the contiguity between the material and the human while simultaneously linking fashion and history. Roach explicates how clothes – and this would include hats – “are not mere objects”; rather they “*perform*, . . . and by performing they carry the charismatic potential to turn personalities into events, events into occasions, and occasions into precedents. This is magic, a physical reenchancement of the social world by means of casting local spells.”² As Burney's novels do, Bishop's hat-work “[t]urn[s] personalities into events,” anatomizing how headgear can be drawn upon to assert and defend liberty, advance opportunities for experimentation, highlight perturbations between politics and gender, undercut the supposedly inevitable act of treating women as property, and offer the chance to assert the right to sustain the self. Here “objects . . . speak *for* people”³ as hats stimulate and permit those who wear them to cross gender lines and sanction those who watch the performance to “share” the wearer's “slight transvestite twist,” as “[u]nfunny uncles” try on “a lady's hat” and “[a]nandrous aunts . . . keep putting on the yachtsmen's caps / with exhibitionistic screech” (“EH,” ll. 4, 1, 2, 9, 11–12). The poem's closing quatrain describes one of the hat's great gifts: Under her “vast, shady, turned-down brim,” the “[a]unt exemplary and slim” can choose to see without being seen and can observe what others cannot (ll. 32, 29). Her “avernal eyes” (l. 30) – eyes that, like Avernus, an Italian crater lake steaming with poisonous sulfuric vapors, pernicious to birds, and mythically representing the entrance to hell – exert potent energies, which vigorously occlude her knowledge from others. The hat, more than just shade or fashion or thoughtless consumption, constitutes a vehicle for metamorphosis and even for toppling authoritarian systems, since Bishop reveals how crowns must “grow draughty” before the subject wonders if

² Roach, p. 87; emphasis original. I also found influential Esterhammer's sense that performing is “practice”: such that “doing and being, or saying and being, or becoming and being, are indistinguishable.” *The Romantic Performative: Language and Action in British and German Romanticism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), p. xii. On the “convergence of fashion, commerce, and historical specificity” see Timothy Campbell's *Historical Style: Fashion and the New Mode of History, 1740–1830*, which analyzes how fashion and commercialism participate in inventing “a new mode of history,” one that “could only have been articulated alongside commerce and its fictions” (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), pp. 1, 17.

³ Julie Park, p. xxv; emphasis original.

“a miter matter[s]” (“EH,” ll. 23, 24). Thus, here and in Burney’s novels, headgear does serious work as it authorizes personal protection and allows for exploring and manifesting gender identity.⁴

Unsurprisingly, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century novels mention hats with enthusiastic consistency, given that “women of every level of society would have worn a hat, bonnet or cap at all times during the day, whether indoors or out.”⁵ What surprises me, however, is not how suggestively this apparel provokes character and plot, but how rarely literary critics have explored this phenomenon. As I show, almost every technique for dressing the head – coiffure, hat, bonnet, and cap – impacts Burney’s characters. Her novels reveal that women’s cognizance of their material precariousness leads them to use fashion to inhabit their environments more safely. *The Wanderer* and *Evelina* dramatize how the heroines require from hats a physical superstructure to protect them as they face alarming situations, where their seemingly constant blushes expose their feelings, but also subject them simultaneously to charges of coquetry.⁶

I will parse how male resistance to a woman’s collaboration with things comprises a larger assault on women’s rights – especially what I refer to as the right to nonrecognition. Section 5.4 demonstrates how Burney’s two aforementioned novels and Charlotte Smith’s *Desmond* provide characters who fail to recognize things. This phenomenon transpires when they project onto a thing only one meaning – or no meaning at all – a mechanistic response that denies matter’s potential radiance. And yet, as Burney and Smith show, things which do the work characters should or could do, cannot help them, though things can inspire recognition for readers, telling multiple stories. Section 5.5 looks at ways that these three moves (women’s need for nonrecognition, patriarchal resistance to women’s partnership with things, and matter rendered inert) collide in *The Wanderer* when Juliet, wearing varying bonnets as she dizzyingly flees through the New Forest, is misrecognized time and time again.

⁴ Hats, calling attention to gender inequity, enjoy, like other objects, “the agency to . . . preserve political histories that many preferred to forget” (Lake, p. 53).

⁵ Althea Mackenzie, *Hats and Bonnets* (London: The National Trust, 2004), p. 5.

⁶ Deidre Lynch insightfully observes that Juliet must “negotiate the tricky codes of female self-display. At moments when this heroine is simply trying to be, she too can look as if . . . she is pandering to the public eye.” I agree, but focus more on Juliet’s ability to disguise herself, which partially ensures her self-preservation. See *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture, and the Business of Inner Meaning* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 200.

To see how things trigger recognition, I turn to Terence Cave's reading of Aristotle's *anagnôrisis*, which refers to knowing for the first time, but also to the epiphany that one has always known a certain truth or information, that one now knows "back," so to speak. He observes ways that "[r]ecognition is a scandal": first at the level of plot, in that recognitions often address such reprehensible subjects as

adultery [and] murder in the dark . . . [Second], from the critical angle, recognition is a scandal in the stronger sense preserved in the French *scandale*: it is a stumbling block, an obstacle to belief; it disturbs the decorum which makes it possible for rational readers and critics to talk about literature. And [third] it is a scandal according to the etymology of the word in that it seduces the reader into a trap or snare (*skandalon*) – hunting . . . is a metaphor endemic in the topic.⁷

In adapting Cave's ideas here, I do not focus on the novels' "classic" recognition scenes, those that bring to light hitherto unknown characters' parentage and the scandals perpetrated against them, as when we learn Evelina is the legitimate daughter of Sir John and Caroline Belmont, or that *The Wanderer's* Juliet is related to the nobility. Instead, I have zeroed in on the "stumbling blocks," those "visible signs or tokens" that Aristotle calls "the least artistic" of revelations,⁸ emphasizing how these things (whether miniatures or hats), worthy of our notice, provide shimmering human–nonhuman exchanges which aid in both recognition and nonrecognition, and thus *belonging with*. Looking back to Rachel–Virginia and her intimate relation to things, it is fitting that she is identified partly through objects: portraits and "a little mole just above her right temple" (*B*, pp. 407, 411). "Real work" enables recognition of things, and when humans practice this activity, they can help sustain nature and community. My point is that attending to these details, whether of resemblances between portraits, faces under hats, or of signs on the body, such as Virginia's mole, rejuvenates and even makes possible the relationships in these novels.⁹ For Cave, such "local and accidental details on which recognition seems to depend" – "the birthmark, the scar, the casket, the handbag" – unfold wondrous details and constitute the actual "footprint"

⁷ *Recognitions*, p. 1. ⁸ *On the Art of Poetry*, p. 53.

⁹ In contrast, Britton, discussing how Virginia St. Pierre is "conclusively identified by a mole on her forehead" and a miniature of her as a child, finds those tokens to be "implausible detections, . . . marks of identity [that exist] in an unsteady opposition with the depths of character that the expressive countenances in *Belinda* are assumed to represent" (p. 451, n. 31).

in “recognition plots.”¹⁰ Such tokens, then, work isomorphically with subjectivity and expression.

Belonging with the nonhuman’s bountiful, unstable, and multi-dimensional vigor tends not toward discovering teleological solutions, but toward acknowledging that such companionship is always subject to change and sometimes to complete mystery, since things tell secrets, but also keep others. Georg Simmel says that in clandestine societies “keeping . . . secret[s] is something unstable, [since] the temptations to betrayal are so manifold.”¹¹ Perhaps things, like subjects, cannot keep their secrets, or perhaps subjects, no matter how thoroughly they understand that they are dealing with mystery and enchantment, want to know such confidences, feeling that before recognition, things are ghostly shapes, to quote Wordsworth, that “wor[k] with a dim and undetermined sense / Of unknown modes of being.”¹² When Aristotle tells of Mitys’ statue executing that king’s murderer, he claims that this occurrence seems most remarkable since this “chance” happening has “the appearance of having been brought about by design.”¹³ The recognition scenes that seem most providential – that is, teleological – appear to Aristotle to be the most satisfying because they “do not seem to be mere accidents. So, such plots as these must necessarily be the best.”¹⁴ That is, simply the illusion of teleology is enough, for it provides emotional catharsis while restoring order, a compact the *Paul et Virginie* dinner plates exemplify in offering divine intent as a cause for the heroine’s death; in contrast, my reading argues that it is the selfish need for property that leads to carnage. Unsurprisingly, thing theorists resist teleology, concerned that it would render “individuality . . . a nondynamic thing that is unchanging, or something that only changes according to an internally programmed telos”;¹⁵ instead, they see matter dynamically interacting with other matter – what Spinoza calls conatus, an “effort or tendency . . . to maintain and affirm existence”;¹⁶ given this, and the fact that Spinoza denies that “God’s power” can be compared “with the power or right of kings” (*Ethics*, IIP3S), no wonder revolutionaries relied on him. Nonhuman

¹⁰ For Cave, “Aristotle and his more recent emulators have quite literally effaced the footprints and other embarrassing signs. In doing so, he distorts or represses a distinctive mark of recognition plots” (*Recognitions*, p. 253).

¹¹ “The Sociology of Secrecy and of Secret Societies,” *American Journal of Sociology* 11.4 (1906): 441–498, p. 473.

¹² *The Prelude*, 1805, I, ll. 392–393. ¹³ *On the Art of Poetry*, p. 45.

¹⁴ I prefer this translation of Aristotle for this quotation. *The Poetics*, 1452a [1] *Perseus Digital Library*, ed. Gregory R. Crane.

¹⁵ Pheng Cheah, “Non-Dialectical Materialism,” in Coole and Frost, p. 86. ¹⁶ Deleuze, p. 99.

energies can baffle us, but to ignore them is to engage in a real “*scandale*,” one which arises when characters cannot recognize the nonhuman as contiguous with human life – when they overlook radiant matter as a means of *belonging with*, whether in the moment, throughout, or retrospectively, and when, in doing so, they thereby endanger their own beings.

5.1 The Right to Pursue Nonrecognition

Chloe Wigston Smith argues that *The Wanderer* “betrays a deeply pessimistic view of the practical possibilities of clothes. Juliet’s clothes and labor provide the materials for only a fleeting resistance, not a full recalibration, of the compromising and coded apparel of . . . characters like Roxana, Syrena, Fanny, and Elinor.”¹⁷ And while I acknowledge and carefully explore the moments when Juliet’s bonnets incriminate her, I advocate in the main for a more optimistic reading of how hats spotlight circumstances in which fashion and need coexist fluidly. This chapter, then, asserts that things can protect heroines from assault, ownership, or even death. In such cases, consumption does not threaten to appropriate a woman’s individual identity through “psychic colonization by the commodity,”¹⁸ but rather expedites how such merchandise fends off the ways that social systems threaten to colonize *her*. A woman’s body, no doubt, is taught to manifest cultural fantasies and interdictions; nevertheless, certain heroines use hats to shift power relations, subjugating threats that want to render them mere property.

Humans and things can generate intimate connections – especially when things are worn on or touch the skin – imprinting impressions on each other. I have chosen to focus on hats (say, as opposed to shawls or any other potentially obscuring form of dress) since as things, they carry both a personal and social charge that is different from most apparel.¹⁹ When

¹⁷ *Women, Work, and Clothes in the Eighteenth-Century Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 178–179.

¹⁸ Mackie, p. 48.

¹⁹ Hats overlap with or depart from veils, which sometimes conceal. I concentrate on hats because *Evelina* and *The Wanderer* cite them extensively; veils appear only four times in these two novels: Elinor “cast[s] off her veil” (*W*, p. 580); Juliet must “lift up the veil of secrecy” (*W*, p. 738); Mrs. Ireton sarcastically chides Juliet: “You won’t forget a veil, I hope, to preserve your white skin?” (*W*, p. 40); and Evelina exclaims, “let me draw a veil over a scene too cruel” (*E*, p. 52). Veils were popular from the 1790s in England, their lengths varying from screening part to all of the face (Carl Köhler, *A History of Costume*, ed. and augmented by Emma von Sichart (1928; rpt., Harper: New York, 1963), p. 449. In contrast to veils “tainted” with Catholic associations, a type of veil called the “Roman,” would have had positive classical connotations, but, as Aileen Ribeiro explains, it was

rendering the face unrecognizable, hats serve special framing functions by surrounding, hiding, and altering its shape, and, unlike clothes worn next to the body, they can be and sometimes are removed in public places. Since women who wear hats can interact with such headgear in order to fashion how the world receives them, these things provide remarkable examples of the way matter not only fulfills social expectations but also frustrates them. *Evelina* and *The Wanderer* highlight how hats and clothes construct an aesthetic and gendered world resonating with political, psychological, and discursive meanings: Hats work literally to border the face, but also to provide “homes” for deploying historical matters and social ideologies.²⁰ Finally, these things’ often extraordinary success in helping women achieve nonrecognition relates inversely to these objects’ very ordinariness – their culturally necessary and thus seemingly ignorable presence.

Insofar as hats fulfill social expectations, they have been deemed necessary, from ancient times, as a covering for the hair, which itself allegedly signals a woman’s inherently shameful nature and her status as property. As Paul says in Corinthians, “[f]or a man indeed ought not to cover *his* head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man.”²¹ Such an injunction renders hats compulsory, a reminder that women are subordinate and that they require a mediating device between them and God, with whom they cannot, according to this religious dogma, directly connect – they don’t belong with themselves or even with a supreme being. And yet in the eighteenth century, the very need to cover her head functions at times to increase a woman’s vulnerability to the very men for whom she is supposed to be a “glory.” For example, *The*

“transparent” and thus would not have masked the face like a large hat would have. See *The Art of Dress: Fashion in England and France 1750–1820* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press), p. 118.

²⁰ Interpretations of the feminist and political implications of Burney’s heroines’ travails range from seeing her politics as conservative, radical, ambiguous, or contradictory. I find Tara Ghoshal Wallace’s reading compelling: “Burney’s reiteration of the wrongs of woman, articulated as pervasive cruelty visited upon virtuous femininity, makes revolutionary feminism both urgent and palatable to a patriarchal regime plagued by its own sense of futility and eager to construe itself as chivalrous defender of justice.” See “Rewriting Radicalism: Wollstonecraft in Burney’s *The Wanderer*,” *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 24.3 (2012): 487–508, p. 508. Chloe Wigston Smith insightfully argues that “Mrs. Hill, Gabriella, and Juliet persist and resist the collusion of patriarchy and the marriage marketplace, making a feminist claim to their rights to contribute to urban trade and placing pressure on conventional portraits of women’s roles in the marketplace as sexualized consumers.” See “The Haberdasher’s Plot: The Romance of Small Trade in Frances Burney’s Fiction,” *Tulsa Studies in Women’s Literature* 37.2 (Fall 2018): 271–293, p. 288.

²¹ *King James*, I *Corinthians* 11: 7–8; emphasis original.

Wanderer's rakish Sir Sycamore threatens Juliet, but she cannot flee from her house – and from him – without her hat and cloak, which are shut up in her room (*W*, p. 442). In James Kenney's *Matrimony: A Petit Opera* (1804), a scene embodies Paul's dictates: Clara says that if she were to "change [her] gown, and set her head to rights" she would be happy to present herself to company.²² Though she refers to her fashionable appearance here, the play, through repeated references to her head and hat, reveals that to save her marriage, she must "set her head to rights" by not challenging her husband so much.

In contrast to essentializing women's allegedly shameful inferiority, hats can allow fictional characters to dispute that naturalization while guarding themselves from it. *The Wanderer* and *Evelina* belong with hats in ways diverging from Pauline doctrine, for when they cover or frame the face, they not only provide remarkable transformations, but also literally and symbolically eclipse these early religious and otherwise ideological assumptions. Burney's novels divulge the vulgar truth that for women to be, according to Paul, men's "glory," is primarily to be vulnerable to personal and institutional cruelty. These characters require such protection given that they occupy "an inconceivable position" (*W*, p. 348), one where the only identity that exists for any woman lacking family or marital security – whether in Paris, London, or the New Forest – is that of the felon or prostitute. When Juliet's elderly advocate, Sir Jaspar, gives her a "white chip bonnet of the most beautiful texture," she reluctantly accepts the gift, averse to being indebted to him, but longing wistfully for "its umbrageous succour" since her face is "now exposed to every eye" (*W*, p. 769). Tara Czechowski argues that only once Juliet is known to be an aristocrat and not a criminal adventurer, does "her body becom[e] an object worthy of protection, not of exposure as in the earlier chapters"; hence Sir Jaspar gives her a "white chip bonnet . . ."²³ I show, instead, that the heroine, herself, makes her body "worthy of protection" throughout the novel by using hats to guard herself from recognition.

The Wanderer offers multiple examples charting Juliet's use of a hat to wield what would conventionally be called masculine independence. As in Bishop's poem, where "[t]he headgear of the other sex / inspires us to experiment," Juliet escapes her supposed husband, the commissary, by cross-dressing in "a man's great coat, . . . a black wig, and a round hat"

²² (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1804), p. 12.

²³ "Black, Patched and Pennyless": Race and Crime in Burney's *The Wanderer*, *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 25.4 (Summer 2013): 677–700, p. 699.

(*W*, p. 747). Later, she accomplishes her exodus to England “lodged” in the sanctuary of a large French nightcap, which “completely hid[es]” her face (*W*, p. 50).²⁴ Once in London, she draws “a large black bonnet . . . over her eyes” to escape Mr. Riley’s gaze and then “shad[es] her face . . . still lower with her large bonnet” to elude being “recollected” by Sir Jasper (*W*, pp. 624, 625). She subsequently flees the city, “[h]er head bowed low; her bonnet drawn over her eyes” (*W*, p. 655). Hats, when used for autonomy, constitute for their wearer an “emotional empiricism” that offers insight into structures between politics and gender.²⁵ And in each of these circumstances, the hat permits Juliet to avoid becoming another’s possession.

Cultural history reinforces how headgear became associated with emancipation. For example, the liberty cap, a potent symbol during the French Revolution,²⁶ suggests that *The Wanderer* forges links between women’s fashionable hats as liberating devices and the liberty cap itself. Indeed, as we saw in the *préambule*, Bishop reveals that “if the opera hats collapse / and crowns grow draughty,” people could begin to wonder, “what might a miter matter?” (“EH,” ll. 23, 24). Certainly, Burney’s novel uses the lexicon of freedom throughout as something the heroine strives for, but also at the text’s end when the heroine is emancipated from her alleged husband who sees her as nothing more than property: Harleigh exclaims to Lord Melbury that Juliet “is free!” (*W*, p. 855). Burney would have also noted the hat’s place in visual revolutionary rhetoric. For example, a set of dinner plates in faïence (highly glazed, decorated earthenware) entitled the *Hats of Liberty* depicts, in the middle of each plate, three identical hats, one for each estate; below these, a scroll reads “*Bonnet de la liberté*.” Each *bonnet* is tinted brilliant orange by the sun, which appears radiantly on the top rim; round the rim of the plates are delicate orange flowers in the same hue, signifying rebirth. Rolf Reichardt and Hubertus Kohle describe this as a “a holy trinity of liberty beneath the rising sun of a new era.”²⁷ Additionally, because cultural history reveals that the liberty cap was used

²⁴ A hat forms part of her larger disguise, which includes black-face. Czechowski’s important essay “historicizes Juliet’s criminalization within metropolitan alarm about the alien black population of former African slaves living in Britain” (p. 677).

²⁵ James Chandler’s phrase in “The Question of Sensibility,” *New Literary History* 49.4 (2018): 467–492, p. 485.

²⁶ The antecedent to the liberty cap – the Phrygian cap – has from ancient times symbolized freedom in multiple cultures.

²⁷ *Visualizing the Revolution: Politics and Pictorial Arts in Late Eighteenth-Century France* (London: Reaktion Books, 2007), p. 122. Weber carefully highlights how Marie Antoinette used hats to express political clout (p. 106).

to safeguard art works or other objects, I draw a parallel between this function and that of the hat shielding women: Citizens would often place these caps on “statues of the Virgin Mary” which thereby “transformed” the objects “into allegories of liberty”; in doing so, “many artworks were saved, albeit somewhat altered, when they might otherwise have been destroyed.”²⁸ *The Wanderer* indicates a connection between recycling liberty caps by placing them on statuary, thereby resuscitating monuments so they can continue to live, and the ways a woman can resuscitate herself by placing a hat on her own head to alter her identity.

One of Burney’s letters reinforces how important nonrecognition is when it ratifies how hats help their bearers exercise the right to privacy and protection and how these things participate in a network of devices that activate mobility. She writes to Georgiana Waddington in 1795 that it was “*not my Health [that] enabled me to go to Town*” and “alight to the Theatre,” but the fact that she was secured, partially by a hat, “snug and retired and wrapt up in a Bonnet and immense Pelice, in Mr Sheridan’s Box.”²⁹ Further, in her preface to *Evelina*, Burney’s complex double-talk of modesty and agency mirrors the novel’s allusions to hats, recalling their protective and persona-building functions:³⁰ She articulates how the novel is “presented to the public . . . with a very singular mixture of timidity and confidence” and because she does not “fear . . . being involved in” the novel’s potential “disgrace,” since she publishes anonymously, she remains “happily wrapped up in a mantle of impenetrable obscurity” (*E*, p. 7).³¹ Here a woman must know the marketplace in order to move about the social milieu without being provoked or endangered. Women, pursuing nonrecognition with hats, announce their knowledge that these objects in both their public and privatizing functions can protect them from possession. Discussing *The Wanderer*, Lynch shows us that if “social transformation can take place in a communal or collective sense,” we must “think about how the subject is already socialized, rather than

²⁸ Reichardt and Kohle, p. 122.

²⁹ *Frances Burney: Journals and Letters*, ed. Peter Sabor and Lars E. Troide, with Stewart Cooke and Victoria Kortes-Pap (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2001), p. 582.

³⁰ Mark Vareschi, analyzing Burney’s preface, writes that it is this “‘very singular mixture of timidity and confidence’ [that] speaks to the creation of the anonymous persona, ‘the editor,’” and that it is this editor “that creates a gap between the biographical person Burney with her ‘timidity’ and the anonymous narrator with her ‘confidence’ about the novel.” See “Motive, Intention, Anonymity, and *Evelina*,” *ELH* 82.4 (2015): 1135–1158, p. 1148. I would add to this that a woman who protects herself with a hat creates a persona separate from her externally imposed identity.

³¹ Of course, neither Burney’s “mantle” of anonymity nor the novel’s hats can provide an ultimate, “impenetrable” concealment, since her authorship is ultimately revealed and since an assault can rip a bonnet from a woman’s head, as I will show when I discuss *The Wanderer*.

external to the world she enters, and to think about how the market is, for better or worse, a social site.”³² This statement applies as well to a woman’s relation to things in the novel, since in harnessing hats not merely for stylistic glamor, but for human necessity, Juliet has acknowledged her socialization as well as the fact that the agora, a public gathering place – whether in London, Brighthelmstone, or the New Forest – too often terrorizes its people, especially its women.³³

My largest point, then, is that women’s ability to hide underneath their hats sanctions the characters’ capacity to declare their right to belong with their selves and others.³⁴ Scott Juengel argues that

The Wanderer tacitly reconstructs the historical moment of the 1789 *Déclaration des Droits de l’Homme*, narrativizing the shift from particularized rights of the citizen to universally applicable rights of humankind. . . . [However, for] the individual in need of ethico-judicial protections, the essential speech act is the “claiming” of rights, an enunciation that replicates in miniature the tautology of “declaring” a human reciprocity presumably constituted by the “human condition” itself.³⁵

While I admire Juengel’s thoughtful essay, I see Juliet as “claiming” both particularized and “universally applicable rights” not only in speech acts, but in the embodied exchange she has with hats. And though this applies to *Evelina* as well, in *The Wanderer*, to be unwillingly recognized is to be “dreadfully . . . involved” in the “misery of helplessness! —What is woman, —with the most upright designs, the most rigid circumspection, —what is woman unprotected? She is pronounced upon only from outward semblance: —and, indeed, what other criterion has the world?” (*W*, p. 344). Here the heroine sums up one hope for the hat: that in a world where women are constantly on display, it can help them assert their individual and human right to shelter.³⁶

³² *The Economy of Character*, pp. 205–206; she quotes Rey Chow, “Postmodern Automaton,” in *Feminists Theorize the Political*, ed. Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 110.

³³ For Kathleen Anderson, Juliet “effectively represents her ‘feminine’ roles, and thereby succeeds in the ‘unfeminine’ roles necessary to her survival.” See “Frances Burney’s *The Wanderer*: Actress as Virtuous Deceiver,” *European Romantic Review* 10.4 (Fall 1999): 424–447, p. 446.

³⁴ Ingrid Horrocks shrewdly observes one reason for the negative reception of *The Wanderer*: “It is essentially a belated 1790s novel set at the height of the French Revolution and embroiled in Revolutionary-era debates about rights, national identity, the politics of movement, and women’s situation.” See *Women Wanderers and the Writing of Mobility: 1784–1814* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), p. 169.

³⁵ “The Novel of Universal Peace,” *Cultural Critique* 79 (Fall 2011): 60–93, pp. 72–73.

³⁶ Christoph Heyl notes that an early-eighteenth century “German visitor” to England observed that “[w]omen here . . . turn out in a Morning with a black velvet Mask on their Faces, a Coif on in

5.2 “No Advocate for Hats”

In *Evelina*, issues of female freedom, national identity, and fashion’s metamorphic underpinning propel the hermeneutics of the hat. As Bishop acknowledges that “the tides of fashion never lag. / Such caps may not be worn next year” (“EH,” ll. 15–16), Madame Duval announces that “[i]t’s quite a shocking thing to see ladies come to so genteel a place as Ranelagh with hats on: it has a monstrous vulgar look: I can’t think what they wear them for. There’s no such a thing to be seen in Paris” (*E*, p. 59). She claims that the incorrect regalia sends a message that flaunts vulgarity, but she also reveals her national prejudices, since in wearing the correct Parisian accoutrement she “warmly refuses” to confirm “the superiority of the English in every particular” (*E*, p. 57). (Her torturous relationship with British style is one I return to later in this chapter.) Though herself British, Madame Duval wears no hat or bonnet – they are “too *English* and barbarous” (*E*, p. 89), but instead evidently complies with the teased, upswept, and powdered hairstyle – called a headdress – decorated with jewels, flowers, ribbons, and other ornamental matter, including hair-pieces.³⁷ Her opinion indicates that she is unaware of current French fashions, since by 1778, the time of *Evelina*’s publication, headdresses were starting to include hats perched atop these peaks that championed the American Revolution, such as the “*Chapeau à la Nouvelle Angleterre*” (1778) and the “*coiffure à l’insurgente*,” which “resembl[ed] a Native American feathered headdress” and may also have inspired “the feathered *chapeau à la Bostonienne*.”³⁸ Though these were not large hats, ones that could hide a woman’s face, Madame’s omission of this aspect of French headgear reveals some fashionable and political ignorance. Given that the

Form of a Hat, with the Brims down . . . , and in this Trim they go . . . where . . . they please.” See “The Metamorphosis of the Mask in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century London,” *Masquerade and Identities: Essays on Gender, Sexuality and Marginality*, ed. Efrat Tseëlon (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 124. Heyl quotes *The Memoirs of Charles-Lewis, the Baron de Pollnitz*, 2 vols. (London: Daniel Browne, 1737), vol. 2, p. 461.

³⁷ By 1774, the famous *marchande de modes*, Rose Bertin, had transformed the simpler upswept style into the “pouf,” an extravagant headdress built “on scaffolding made from wire, cloth, gauze, horsehair, fake hair, and the wearer’s own tresses” (quoted in Weber, p. 104). For the quotation, see Madeleine Delpierre, “Rose Bertin, les marchandes de modes et la Révolutions,” in *Modes et Révolutions: Musée de la mode et du costume*, ed. Catherine Join-Dieterle and Madeleine Delpierre (Paris: Éditions Paris-Musées, 1989), pp. 23–24. Madame Duval’s precise hairstyle is, without doubt, difficult to determine, given Delpierre’s observation that “by 1780 . . . the variety of head-dresses was infinite” (quoted in Weber, p. 104).

³⁸ Kimberly Chrisman-Campbell, *Fashion Victims: Dress at the Court of Louis XVI* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), pp. 158, 159. These hats perched atop the headdress were not of course the large hats English women wore.

court of Louis XVI supported the American Revolution since it shared with the colonists a hatred of England – an opinion one would expect Madame Duval, loyal to the French, to support – her critique of hats intimates that she is either oblivious to current events or these fashions.

Not only are her sense of the chic and her political sentiments doubtful, but she places these stylistic connections above love for her granddaughter, going so far as to put Evelina in jeopardy. Feeling improperly dressed for the theater, and extremely unwilling “to be so conspicuous amongst” the Branghton family, the heroine asks Madame Duval to “borrow a hat or bonnet” from them. Her grandmother refuses (*E*, p. 88), unable to belong with her granddaughter’s need to belong with her longings; Evelina thus goes out with her hair dressed, but with her face exposed. As a result, Sir Clement recognizes her, though “high and distant as I was from him. Probably he distinguished me by my head-dress” (*E*, p. 92), which plainly exposes her face. The text then connects her *inability* to be *unrecognizable* to his *ability* to imprison her in his carriage, profess love, “passionately” kiss her hand, and take her in the wrong direction, leading Evelina to break “forcibly from him,” put her head out of the window, and call for the coachman to stop: “Never, in my whole life, have I been so terrified” (*E*, p. 99). Indeed, as was all too common, if raped or even thought to have been, Evelina would have been rendered his sexual property, and she would thereafter have been seen as unfit to be the property of any “respectable” man. In such circumstances, there is no *belonging with*, but only an “omnipresent anxiety of potential violation and ruin.”³⁹ Thus, when Burney includes a hat or bonnet – or the absence of one – it almost always espouses a value that exceeds its conventional practical function in order to embrace another, more pressing purpose: nonrecognition. This need for protection is no joke.

For reasons of fashion, not gender equity, Madame Duval, as we saw, finds it “shocking” to see English women wearing such unfashionable headgear; in contrast, Sir Clement and the Captain dislike large hats because they give women agency: the right to occlude or change their faces.⁴⁰

³⁹ Barbara Zonitch, *Familiar Violence: Gender and Social Upheaval in the Novels of Frances Burney* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1997), p. 36.

⁴⁰ Though not discussing hats, Kristina Straub similarly argues that *The Wanderer* “deploys a sort of running analogy between Juliet’s bodily and her verbal disguises as parallel means to female survival.” See *Divided Fictions: Fanny Burney and Feminine Strategy* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1987), p. 204.

“Indeed,” cried Sir Clement, “I must own myself no advocate for hats; I am sorry the ladies ever invented or adopted so tantalizing a fashion; for, where there is beauty, they only serve to shade it, and where there is none, to excite a most unavailing curiosity. I fancy they were originally worn by some young and whimsical coquet.” (*E*, p. 59)

Sir Clement envisages the hat as a barrier liberating women from male control, one which serves no purpose other than to excite or foil men’s sexual desires. George Romney’s portrait, *Catherine Brouncker Adye* (Figure 5.1), though slightly later, captures the ways a large hat, as Clement describes, can erotically clothe the face. The lemon-colored straw, decorated with pink bows, dips over the face, creating a chiaroscuro effect that reveals part of the countenance but withholds in obscurity the sitter’s eyes from view.⁴¹ Something equivalent to the calash (*calèche*), also called the “bashful bonnet,” would have covered even more of a woman’s face. Mackenzie explains that these had “a collapsible construction made from whalebone or cane hoops covered with fabric” which could cover a woman’s “head, or head and hat combined”: The *London Magazine* of 1772 explains that this hood-like hat, rather like a window curtain, had a ribbon that one could pull and thereby “entirely cover the face.”⁴² Even *The Gentleman’s and London Magazine or Monthly Chronologer* criticized the calash for its power to shield, emphasizing only its ability to give “our young misses and old maids” the chance “to bury their empty heads.”⁴³

The Captain registers his complaint against large hats: These protective shelters are merely ways to manipulate vulnerable men, and older women, in concert with their hats, transgress boundaries. When he responds to Sir Clement’s grievance (“I must own myself no advocate for hats”), the Captain says that it is “[m]ore likely” that hats “were invented by some wrinkled old hag, who’d a mind for to keep the young fellows in chace, let them be never so weary” (*E*, p. 59). As Bishop writes, these women take on “avernal eyes” (“EH,” l. 30), eyes that mythically represent the entrance to

⁴¹ As Georgine de Courtais shows in *Women’s Hats, Headdresses and Hairstyles* (New York: Dover 1986), “by the end of the 1770s, [English] hats had become very large, with heavily trimmed crowns and brims turned up at the back” (p. 86). During the 1780s, the *coiffure* – which had been increasing in altitude – sometimes reaching “more than 50 cm. in height” was often replaced by simpler hair styles (Köhler, p. 370). Rousseau’s emphasis on simplicity contributed to this, as did the French queen’s hair loss (1778), which impeded her ability to wear these elaborate sculptures. Thus, a slighter style emerged, “dubbed the *coiffure à l’enfant*”; and in a cross-cultural inspiration, large French hats, influenced by the Duchess of Devonshire, were, by 1780, “ubiquitous in Paris” (Chrisman-Campbell, pp. 182, 222).

⁴² Quoted in Mackenzie, p. 16. For more on the calash, see Turner R. Wilcox, *The Mode in Hats and Headdresses: A Historical Survey with 198 Plates* (New York: Dover, 2008), p. 57.

⁴³ Quoted in Mackenzie, p. 16.



Figure 5.1 George Romney, *Catherine Brouncker Adye, later Catherine Willett* (1784–1785). Courtesy of the Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens.

hell – for these male viewers, at least. Using her hat to negotiate living on the edge of matrimony and spinsterhood, happiness and misery, and the desirable and undesirable, the older woman becomes a trickster. *The Wanderer* presents a parallel situation, one in which a woman can exert sway by “misrepresenting” her appearance, when the aging beauty Miss

Brinville, “adroitly shaded, through a becoming skill in the arrangement of her head-dress, appeared nearly in [her] first lustre,” a phenomenon which confuses Sir Lyell Sycamore, who in candlelight “fall[s] desperately enamoured of her beauty” until he sees her the next “frosty” morning, “a caricature of herself” (W, pp. 234, 235).⁴⁴ When men can no longer hold women as their property and are prevented from being able to control them absolutely, they posit themselves as the alleged victims of women’s machinations and the “misconduct” hats participate in.

Intolerance for female clout is doubled in John Wilson Croker’s infamous review of *The Wanderer*, where his scandalous attack on Burney – one resembling Sycamore’s criticism of Miss Brinville and the Captain’s assault on “wrinkled old” women – mirrors in general male fear of female metamorphic power: He quarrels with *The Wanderer*, and, by association, Burney, denominating her “an old coquette who endeavours, by the wild tawdriness and laborious gaiety of her attire, to compensate for the loss of the natural charms of freshness, novelty, and youth.”⁴⁵ The novel may make us dislike Miss Brinville, but we cannot forget that she, Juliet, and Evelina, as well as Burney, herself, must, to secure themselves in perilous social circumstances, interact with whatever things – including hats – might help them triumph over those conditions.⁴⁶ As Devoney Looser argues, “[p]roper older women were supposed to be asexual, and a sexualized older woman might be perceived as grotesque.”⁴⁷ The issue here is not only that a “hag” masquerades as a sexy young thing, but that she claims power generally held by men. Since males have the right verbally or physically to violate, these hat-disguises provide a material barrier that laws and cultural mores should themselves be enforcing. The *Lady’s Magazine* of 1799 claims that “[i]t was the observation of a very great

⁴⁴ This quotation is somewhat confusing given that generally the term headdress refers to an elaborate hairstyle, rather than a hat, though later I quote from John O’Keefe, a nineteenth-century writer who calls the Nivernois hat a “head-dress.” Perhaps Burney is using this term broadly. At any rate, a headdress with the hair swept back would have exposed rather than shaded Miss Brinville’s face. In that case, perhaps it is merely candlelight that would have “softened” her face.

⁴⁵ John Wilson Croker, “D’Arblay’s *Wanderer*,” *The Quarterly Review* 11 (London: April–July, 1814), p. 126.

⁴⁶ In *Women, Sociability and Theatre in Georgian London*, Gillian Russell makes a parallel point, though she focuses on architecture and eroticization in *Evelina*, arguing that “[a]lthough the men presume to speak for the women in discussing the merits of the [Pantheon], it is clear that [it] allows women to participate as spectators too, and not just as objects of male scrutiny” (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 102.

⁴⁷ *Women Writers and Old Age in Great Britain, 1750–1850* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), p. 26.

person, that every [person] may be known by his dress,”⁴⁸ yet, insofar as hats can provide nonrecognition, women can claim the right – without laws – to frustrate such a dictum.

Hats commit “crimes” in their capacity to unsettle gender expectations, for they enable cross-dressing and embolden women: First, as Bishop’s poem elucidates, they can give an individual seeking to express an alternate gender the opportunity to do so. Allying female gender power to cross-dressing, Richard Cumberland claims that the only way he can fathom the “Amazonian figures” he encounters in “slouched hats, great-coats and half-boots” is that men are choosing “their wives, as they do their friends, for their manly achievements and convivial talents.”⁴⁹ The “transvestite twist” Bishop focuses on emerges in Elinor’s disguise, uncannily resembling Cumberland’s description: “a large scarlet coat” and a “slouched hat . . . that covered [her] forehead and eye-brows, and shaded [her] eyes” (*W*, p. 357).⁵⁰ Sarah Salih perceptively argues that “Elinor, cross-dressed as a foreigner, constitutes . . . the uncanny double of the brutish Frenchman Juliet has been forced to marry, while also shadowing Juliet’s *own* cross-dressing experiences . . . in which she has been compelled to engage as a matter of self-survival.”⁵¹ For those who feel more comfortable in a different gender identity – “[u]nfunny uncles who insist / in trying on a lady’s hat” (“EH,” ll. 1–2) – headgear becomes indispensable. And when the goal is self-preservation, a female must often take on the costumery of male sovereignty. Additionally, these things, like King Mity’s statue who commits a crime to champion his original, could inadvertently help women – via concealment or alteration – to seek redress for wrongdoings, in this case, a male’s ability to stare and leer. For George Colman (1754) hats simply exert too much sway because they have “undergone more alterations” and “metamorphoses” than any other kind of “female dress” – that is, headgear has changed too much and too fast and, as women transfigure with it, both have undergone suspicious conversions.⁵²

⁴⁸ *The Lady’s Magazine* 30 (October 1799), p. 461. Quoted in Campbell, p. 25.

⁴⁹ *The Observer* (London, 1786), vol. 3, p. 329.

⁵⁰ The OED defines the slouched hat (1779–1870) as “one worn in such a manner that the brim hangs over the face.” Though not discussing hats, Marcie Frank makes the political link that “Elinor is dressed in the style of the fashionable young men of the *Directoire* known as the *Incroyables*”; “Frances Burney’s Theatricality,” *ELH* 82.2 (2015): 615–635, p. 628 and, as Ribeiro explains, this mode was less a “positively royalist” expression than “a dislike of the Jacobins” and a “desire for the freedom to be provoking in dress and manners.” See *Fashion in the French Revolution*, p. 117.

⁵¹ “*Camilla* and *The Wanderer*,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Frances Burney*, ed. Peter Sabor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 49.

⁵² George Colman, *The Connoisseur*, 4 vols., no. XXXVI, October 3, 1754 (New York: Abraham O. Stansbury, 1803), vol. 2, p. 4.

Further, he claims, hats might preoccupy women by turning their attention on themselves. This offends him, since the hats now in fashion – “decorated with two waving pendants of ribband, hanging down from the brim on the left side” – distract women from coquetry. “These streamers,” he believes, might “spoil the charming eyes of my pretty country-women, which are constantly provoked to cast a glance at them; and I have myself often observed an obliging ogle or ravishing leer intercepted by these mediums; so that, when a lady has intended to charm her lover, she has shocked him with an hideous squint.”⁵³ Apparently, the gaze a woman should be manufacturing solely for the man’s pleasure, even though he does “leer,” is substituted for something more self-directed – her ribbons engross and “provok[e]” her – and he, subsequently, is “shocked” by seeing a look on her face not prepared for his gratification.

The hat and the woman’s transformational talents provoke charges of political and social nonconformity – and even of “suprahuman” magical qualities. Riley, one of Juliet’s pursuers, attributes her transmutations to sorceress-like powers, when really her headgear primarily effects this enchantment. Resembling Sir Clement and the Captain, he reveals in his references to her as an actress, a performer, and a “devilish fine creature” his apprehension about the hat’s capacity for occluding and destabilizing social boundaries between the fashionable and the vulgar, the noble and the commoner, and the private and the public. Clearly, Juliet has not organized her façade for his pleasure:

What a rare hand you are, Demoiselle . . . at hocus pocus work! Who the deuce, with that Hebe face of yours, could have thought of your being a married woman! . . . But you metamorphose yourself about so, one does not know which way to look for you. . . . Now she turns herself into a vagrant . . ., and now, into a fine player and singer that ravishes all ears . . . and now, again, as you see, you can’t tell whether she’s a housemaid or a country girl! . . . Look but what a beautiful head of hair she’s displaying to us now! . . . But I won’t swear that she does not change it, in a minute or two, for a skull-cap! (*W*, p. 771)

Juliet in companionship with her things, to requote Roach, performs “a physical reenchantment of the social world by means of casting local spells.”⁵⁴ “The prominent borders of a French night-cap,” her “ordinary attire,” and her black-face (*W*, p. 12) first make possible her change into a “vagrant.” Conversely, in the role of a fine player, dressed in “Grecian” design and simple ornaments, she becomes “pure and noble”; and posing

⁵³ Colman, vol. 2, p. 5.

⁵⁴ Roach, p. 87.

as a single woman, but exposed as married, Juliet is hatless, her “disordered, . . . luxuriously curling hair” undraped and announcing her availability to any passing huckster (*W*, pp. 358, 763, 761).⁵⁵ Riley foresees that when she puts on a “skull-cap” (a light, close-fitting cap), she will take on another identity. And he will be right.

Riley’s comments to Julia: “But you metamorphose yourself about so, one does not know which way to look for you” (*W*, p. 771), which possibly allude to Burke’s *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, recall the reasons why Burney wages a feminist and political critique of women’s persecution and the requirement that they be retained as property. Burke complains that “[t]he great object in these [revolutionary] politics is to *metamorphose* France, from a great kingdom into one great play-table; to turn its inhabitants into a nation of gamesters; . . . and to divert the whole of the hopes and fears of the people from their usual channels, into the impulses, passions, and superstitions of those who live on chances.”⁵⁶ Underneath Riley’s accusations against Juliet – that her knack for metamorphosis in adding or extracting clothing and hats makes her a “gamester” – lies the pernicious threat that her transformative proficiencies give her independence, and that this liberty implies that she has returned from France with the same goals that that country harbors. Though contending that Juliet’s bewitching mutations “divert” her from “usual channels,” Riley implicitly recognizes her creative force, one which confounds those customary rules that keep men like him dominant. Liberty and creativity: These are the hallmarks of *belonging with* – whether for artists like Corinne and Burney or the more ordinary Juliet.

5.3 Excessive Shelter for Measured Protection

The woman who enters into a partnership with the nonhuman rather than simply becoming an object *of* or one enthralled *by* possessions, demonstrates her own agency. Belonging with hats for physical protection reveals how matter’s somatic power helps women prevent other, unwanted

⁵⁵ G. Gabriella Starr argues that Riley “misreads Juliet and Ovid as jingling frippery,” yet “he cannot escape the material logic” that “Juliet’s beauty” is “beyond mere fashion.” See “Burney, Ovid, and the Value of the Beautiful,” *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 24.1 (2011): 77–104, p. 91.

⁵⁶ *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, ed. Conor Cruise O’Brien (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986), p. 310; emphasis added.



Figure 5.2 Aaron Martinet, *Les Invisibles en Tête-à-Tête* (c. 1810). No. 16 in the series, “Le Suprême Bon Ton.” Courtesy of the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Credit: The Katharine Shepard Fund.

somatic flares, such as blushes or tears, from showing.⁵⁷ That spectators were aware of women’s frequent desire to shield themselves becomes clear in the caricature, *Les Invisibles en Tête-à-Tête* (Figure 5.2). This print satirizes the “excessively” shielding bonnet, the Poke, which appeared early in the nineteenth century, offering almost complete camouflage. Ridiculing the hat and collaterally the women who want to be invisible, the caricature illustrates the violent reactions levied against those who use hats for nonrecognition, and its aggressive criticism of a woman’s ability to liberate herself by going underground suggests that this female longing will be met with reprisal. That is, the print warns that in trying to be unrecognized, a woman might face greater punishment than from a gaze peering at

⁵⁷ For Helen Thompson, the blushes penetrating Juliet’s “dark” skin demonstrate “the deeper somatic capacities of the wanderer’s body.” See “How *The Wanderer* Works: Reading Burney and Bourdieu,” *ELH* 68.4 (2001): 965–989, p. 970.

her exposed face, since the image insinuates that for men to assert their “right” to ogle women, they would have to enter these bonnet-portals forcefully. The woman on the right is practically falling backwards as she attempts to free herself from the man’s grasp. And though the woman on the left is less agitated, the image also disturbs given that she clasps her hands over her fan as if poised in prayer. And in both encounters, the sexual innuendo of male anatomy (a knee) or male possessions (an umbrella and his large hat) edging between the women’s legs intensifies the invasion. Conversely, the female figures in the distance who practice nonrecognition via the Poke can communicate serenely regardless of their bonnets’ size, and without needing to enter them violently.

The Wanderer lays bare the consequences of being unable to render oneself unseen when political, familial, and cultural institutions forbid Juliet’s right to nonrecognition and self-belonging. In France, the commissary abuses his power in order to wed her so as to seize her £6,000, “vociferously order[ing] that the ceremony should be hurried on”; the French mayoralty “obey[s]” him; the Marchioness’s family ties to the Bishop initially make her willing to sacrifice Juliet for the Bishop’s sake; and the nuptials are “dreadful, dreadful!” performed, as Juliet says, in a “place,—I had nearly said of execution!”; one “in the midst of the buz of business, the clamour of many tongues, the sneers of contempt, and the laughter of derision” (*W*, pp. 740, 745). When the commissary is luckily “forced immediately away” after the marriage is officiated (*W*, p. 746), Juliet escapes; but he pursues her, hiring hunters to track her as she bolts from one house to another, crosses the Channel, and sequesters herself among the wealthy British. Finally hiding in the New Forest, living with peasants, farmers, and poachers, her conatus leads her, as I show in [Section 5.5](#), to disguise herself in hats.

The Wanderer overtly critiques the absence of women’s rights in Britain compared to the supposed presence of human rights there by differentiating between the two. The understanding that *les droits de l’homme* refer only to men and only to certain men, emerges in a dialogue between the commissaire and Harleigh after the former has roughly pushed Juliet, leading the latter to challenge him:

“Infernal monster! By what right do you act.” . . .
 “*De quel droit me le demandez vous?*” (“By what right do you enquire?”) cried the man.
 “By the rights of humanity!” replied Harleigh; “and you shall answer me by the rights of justice! . . . Are you her father?”

“*Non!*” he answered, with a laugh of scorn; “*mais il y a d’autres droits!*” (“but there are other rights”).

“There are none!” cried Harleigh, “to which you can pretend; none!”

“*Comment cela? n’est-ce pas ma femme? Ne suis-je pas son mari?*” (“How so? Is she not my wife? Am I not her husband?”)

(*W*, p. 727)

This, of course, stops Harleigh since the “rights of humanity” and the “rights of justice” do not apply to married women.

Burney connects the English failure to offer rights to women and the French refusal to extend them to those living under the Terror through the linked image of the hat and head – both torn away, one by a “husband’s” hand and the other by the guillotine. In France, having imprisoned Juliet, the commissary “rudely and grossly” pushes her onto a balcony, forcing her to view “[a] scaffolding,—a guillotine,—an executioner,— . . . and in the hand of that hardened executioner, was held up to the view of the senseless multitude, the ghastly, bleeding head of a victim that moment offered up at the shrine of unmeaning though ferocious cruelty!” (*W*, p. 743). Enforcing women’s rights by placing them within the larger historical context, this scene thus *belongs with* the later one in England, in which the commissary again assaults Juliet. The people of the inn watch and listen as English law authorizes her “husband” to demonstrate that because she is his property, he can, without her consent, display her face to the crowd: “[A]dvancing by large strides, [he] roughly seized her arm, with one hand, while, with the other, he rudely lifted up her bonnet, to examine her face” (*W*, p. 726). This scene physicalizes Juliet’s link to the citizens under the Terror – both lack rights – rendering contiguous the commissary’s corporeal attack on the heroine and the guillotine’s lacerating work; in doing so, the scene manifests the heroine’s pain in the most material way.⁵⁸ As Juliet describes the guillotine – that “shrine of unmeaning though ferocious cruelty” (*W*, p. 743) – it doubles as the commissary himself. Because this “husband,” the one from whom she has been hiding, can “rudely lif[t] up her bonnet, to examine her face,” so can he “advertis[e] a description of [her] person, and set a price upon [her] head; publicly

⁵⁸ While I spotlight this moment’s materiality, Emily Hodgson Anderson turns to theatricality: Burney’s “novels tackle . . . how a woman’s feelings could or could not be publicly presented – staged.” See “Staged Insensibility in Burney’s *Cecilia*, *Camilla*, and *The Wanderer*: How a Playwright Writes Novels,” *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 17.4 (2005): 629–649, p. 630. On this encounter’s gothic nature, see Laure Blanchemain, “The Dagger, the Shroud, the Gravestone: Gothic Motifs in Fanny Burney’s *The Wanderer*,” *Anglophonia: French Journal of English Studies* 15 (2004): 163–170.

vowing that [she] should be made over to the guillotine, when found, for an example” (W, pp. 726, 749). Thus, by exposing her face, he recreates the scene Juliet had witnessed from the balcony, and reembodies the ritual of displaying the severed head to the audience so that they could recognize that the deed was done. When Juliet cries out, “[o]h reign so justly called of terror!” (W, p. 749), her proclamation refers simultaneously to the subjugation of women’s and of human rights, themselves.⁵⁹

Burney surely claims her place in the political sphere throughout the novel, but especially in this junction between losing the hat and the head.⁶⁰ The guillotine, repetitive, unquestioned, and unstoppable, functions as a metonym for marriage customs and laws that “decapitate” women’s rights. For Ronald Paulson, this machine, with its “basis in ‘reason,’ . . . suggested not only the rationalism of the *philosophes*, . . . but the factory of the Industrial Revolution and mass production.”⁶¹ Indeed, patriarchal society misuses reason to justify claiming women as property, mass “producing” their females as possessions. When the commissary, treating Juliet as such, compels her to accompany him to jail, “her head was bowed down with shame,” but still she does not “escap[e] [Sir Jasper Herrington’s] eye”; for when she had fainted earlier, her “straw-bonnet [had] fallen off” and “her head was wholly without shade” (W, p. 735). Juliet, exposed and owned, without recourse to law or justice, her head “bowed down” as if already separated from her neck, underscores that for rights to be rights, they must be embodied.

Some readers find Juliet’s secrecy excessive – a too-long cloak-and-dagger skit. Yet, in claiming what she feels is her ethical right, she resists exposing and thus violating herself and the Bishop – in part by sheltering anonymously under the hat. This challenges her society’s binding rule that a woman has no right to resist; that she has no right to respect; and that she must be some man’s property. Simmel observes that social life in groups such as the aristocracy depends upon each person knowing “something

⁵⁹ As Wallace deftly observes, “Burney’s narrative about [a] hunted wife and [a] predatory husband links domestic and political tyranny, emphasizing the vulnerability of women to forces beyond their control” (p. 497).

⁶⁰ Juengel insightfully reasons that the guillotine, which “looms throughout” *The Wanderer*, decries “its author’s claims [that] ‘political topics [are] without my sphere, or beyond my skill’” (p. 80; W, p. 5). He quotes Burney’s Preface to *The Wanderer*.

⁶¹ “The Severed Head: The Impact of French Revolutionary Caricatures on England,” in Cuno, p. 58. Neil Hertz links the “showing” of the decapitated head to representations of the Medusa’s severed head, as in Canova’s *Perseus Triumphant*, linking that to the 1793 print *Matière à Réflexion pour les Jongleurs Couronnés*. See *The End of the Line: Essays on Psychoanalysis and the Sublime* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985). Hertz points out in his psychoanalytic reading of the Phrygian cap that “if caps can be removed, so can heads” (p. 189).

more of the other than the latter voluntarily reveals to him,” an interchange providing a necessary “condition” for “existing closeness and vitality . . . , yet the legal boundary of this invasion upon the spiritual private property of another is extremely difficult to draw.”⁶² *The Wanderer*’s English aristocracy may require this kind of indenture from its members, but in Juliet’s case, it fails since she ultimately succeeds in forging her own boundary. While she stays “invisible,” this is a boundary “difficult to draw,” though one she persists in, since, in asserting her right to nonrecognition, she will protect her “spiritual private property” – the Bishop’s life and her own being.⁶³ Evelina, for example, also resists, forced to implement thing-tools rather than rely on laws or social decency when she finds herself the object of “every eye” in the Bristol Hotwells pump room: “I pulled my hat over my face, and, by the assistance of Mrs. Selwyn, endeavoured to screen myself” (*E*, p. 326). Here she struggles, using what human and nonhuman companionship is present to curtain herself from “an offensive inquisitiveness” (to quote Kant), one he says, “which everyone can resist *with right* as a violation of the respect due him” – and her.⁶⁴

5.4 Failing to Recognize the Secrets Things Tell

Thus far I have been discussing women characters who, experiencing unwanted and scandalous recognition, transform themselves into nonrecognizable entities while observing the world and, in doing so, resemble Bishop’s wise and terrifying aunts who see “slow changes” as they hide beneath “their vast, shady, turned-down brim” (“EH,” ll. 31, 32). This section examines the inverse: circumstances in which characters fail to notice “changes” and repel the work of recognizing things as having multiple dimensions; yet while they contest or ignore things, the objects themselves propel readers toward recognition of their layered meanings. I have argued throughout that belonging with the nonhuman has ecological and other ethical benefits. As readers, we practice this by attending

⁶² “Secret Societies,” p. 455.

⁶³ For Zonitch, *The Wanderer*, searching for “alternatives to male-dominated forms of protection,” rightly suggests that “women can create a form of self-protection through their own industry” (pp. 122–123).

⁶⁴ *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, ed. and trans. Mary Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 258; emphasis added. The context in this passage regards the “mania for spying on the morals of others.” Many thanks to David L. Clark for this quotation. See “Kant’s Aliens: The Anthropology and Its Others,” *CR: The New Centennial Review* 1.2 (2001): 201–289, p. 222.

to the nonhuman in literature, especially when it discloses what fictional personages cannot perceive or willingly refuse to acknowledge. The following investigates how a subject's ability to witness things is related to her ability to secure justice for them and for herself.

5.4.1 *Evelina and a "great quantity of hair, in such a nasty condition"*

In April, 1775, "M^{lle}. Duthé," an opera dancer, was attacked at Longchamp during Holy Week by young men, "either to amuse themselves or to avenge good morals"; she was punished for riding in "*une voiture élégante*" and perhaps for breaking "rank" by having a *liaison* with a count, and though these youths did not drag her, shake her, or tie her up – they "only" jeered at her – the incident evokes Madame Duval's experience of being kidnapped, her working-class origins, her pretensions, and the suspicion that she is illicitly involved with Monsieur du Bois (Longchamps was situated "*près du bois de Boulogne*").⁶⁵ It also broadly, cross-nationally actually, reinforces how a man like *Evelina's* Captain and *les jeunes gens* believe they have the right to humiliate the nonconforming female body. That is, believing that women do not deserve to "belong," except in the muck, is not merely a local conviction. Captain Mirvan's mock-robbery-kidnapping of Madame Duval ends with her lying in a ditch, having gone through a nonconsensual metamorphosis, one reducing her to sordid matter:

Her head-dress had fallen off; her linen was torn; her negligee had not a pin left in it; her petticoats she was obliged to hold on; and her shoes were perpetually slipping off. She was covered with dirt, weeds, and filth, and her face was really horrible, for the pomatum and powder from her head, and the dust from the road, were quite *pasted* on her skin by her tears, which, with her *rouge*, made so frightful a mixture, that she hardly looked human. (*E*, p. 148; original emphasis)

In its slick slide of linen, pins, shoes, pomatum, and powder, one that mirrors the era's and the novel's *mise en abyme* imagery linking loss of headdress or hat and loss of reputation, this episode manifests recognition as exposure. Madame Duval has lost her head via "be-head-dressing," if

⁶⁵ François Métra et al. *Correspondance secrète politique & littéraire, ou mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des cours, des sociétés & de la littérature* (London: John Adamson, 1787), April 15, 1775, vol. 1, pp. 313, 314. Chrisman-Campbell cites this story and others from wealthy working-class women who were prohibited from joining in this *promenade de Longchamp*, an "exercise in "conspicuous consumption masquerading as religious devotion" during Lent (pp. 116, 122). She mentions Duthé's possible affair but does not discuss *Evelina*.

you will. Having become the unwilling victim of a “joke,” she morphs from woman to almost undifferentiated matter, the human-made powder and pomatum blending effortlessly with the dust, the petticoats wanting to join nature as they slither downward, and the vegetable world reclaiming her as its own, covering her with compost as if she were a seed meant to germinate.⁶⁶ For Straub, “Mirvan’s attack on [Madame Duval] . . . reveals the sadism of the prankster more effectively than the filth and fragmentation of his victim”;⁶⁷ indeed, the scene does reveal that brutality, but for my purposes, it is the very filth and fragmentation that Madame is thrown into that underscores the sadistic consequences of rendering women as wholly matter while paradoxically expecting them to be pure spirit.

Madame’s reaction to this “interment” offers some guiding thing theory, as it demonstrates her inability to belong with either the human or nonhuman and her willingness to harm both, a move that ricochets, making her unable to seek justice. She recounts how the Captain forces her “in the ditch, and he tied my feet together, . . . and then, as if he had not done enough, he twitched off my cap” (*E*, p. 150), a gesture embodying a virtual rape since a woman without a hat was considered sexually disreputable. But more is to come: Once returned to the carriage, she “discovers the loss which her head had sustained” – “[m]y God! what is becomed of my hair?—why the villain has stole all my curls!” Ordered to find her property, the servant brings her from the ditch a “great quantity of hair, in such a nasty condition” that Evelina is “amazed she would take it” (*E*, p. 149). When the servant laughs at her, she in turn angrily flings “the battered curls in his face,” thereby “battering” them, him, and ultimately herself, though later she regrets hurting them, realizing that she needs this thing in order to make human connections: “Why, I can’t see nobody without them: —only look at me,—I was never so bad off in my life before” (*E*, p. 149). She thus penalizes herself when she betrays human–nonhuman belonging given that her attack on and disposal of the curls lead her to believe (according to her skewed logic) that without them she must quarantine herself, which, in turn, thwarts her ability to tell her story to the authorities and thus seek justice: “I can’t go out, because I’ve got no curls, and so [the villain will] be escaped, before I can get to the Justice to stop him” (*E*, p. 151). The hairpiece bequeaths “a surplus or an excess” that identifies her as stylishly French, as it, like all fashion supplements, performs “an oblique yet significant instrumentality (as in an ‘accessory

⁶⁶ Starr also sees Madame Duval metamorphosing here (p. 94).

⁶⁷ Straub, p. 103.

after the fact’).⁶⁸ Here Madame Duval’s “accessory after the fact” becomes a thing that assists her own crime; she colludes with its loss to obstruct justice for herself.⁶⁹ The tangible curls tell the reader what is intangible to the character – things “bite” back when they are mistreated, recalling how, “when you separate mind from . . . human relationship, the human society, or the ecosystem, you thereby embark . . . on a fundamental error, which in the end will surely hurt you.”⁷⁰ We have seen this phenomenon varying times throughout *Embodied Experience*: when an earthquake and drought punish those who mine for diamonds; when the *Venus de’ Medici* “conquers” those who consider her a seducer; when diamonds “dull” themselves, thereby unmasking betrayal; and of course, when King Mity’s statue kills a murderer.

In possessing rather than belonging with her curls, as indicated by how willingly she harms them, Madame exploits this thing to forge an identity as a French aristocrat; as she betrays her curls, so does their absence betray her: They “bite” back, first revealing how possession separates the human from the nonhuman and second exposing how unstable is her disguise, one masking the fact that she is a woman from the English working class. Thus, it is not just her arrogant contempt that English style is “barbarous” that makes her instantly refuse to wear one of Lady Howard’s caps – even though it would enable her to go into public to see the Justice and, theoretically, obtain her rights – but fear that she would be seen as English: “[D]o you think I’d wear one of her dowdies? No, I’ll promise you, I sha’n’t put on no such disguisement” (*E*, p. 151). “Disguisement” links the English word “disguise” and the French “*déguisement*,” which itself can mean “disguise” but also “fancy dress.” This mélange of languages, as well as the French word’s definition, hints that sans her French curls and wearing a “dowdie,” she would be known as the “waiting-girl at a tavern” (*E*, p. 13) she once was, who now masquerades herself in French “fancy dress.” After the attack, “[h]er dress was in such disorder,” that “her figure [was] exposed” (*E*, p. 148). Neither the Captain nor Madame can belong with the human or nonhuman. This leads me to suggest that this episode *belongs with* the earlier one in which Madame Duval refuses to let Evelina borrow a bonnet that will shield her face from view, rendering the heroine visible to Sir Clement and thus vulnerable to him: As Evelina was

⁶⁸ Roach, p. 52.

⁶⁹ Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law School. www.law.cornell.edu/wex/accessory_after_the_fact

⁷⁰ Bateson, p. 493.

exposed, so too is she herself now recognizable as she once was, an identity she resists and a resistance that keeps her from belonging with either or both nations.

That Madame fears that the kidnapping could expose her origins might partly explain her frenzied response to the kidnapping – “her sobbing nay, almost roaring,” her “agony of rage and terror” that so shocks Evelina (*E*, p. 147); if so, it inadvertently (from a position of class prejudice) reveals how “ungenteel” she is, but it also enlightens us as to how desperately she requires the French “aristocratic” personality she has tried to cultivate. We recall that the “great quantity of hair” was “in such a nasty condition” that Evelina is “amazed she would take it” (*E*, p. 149). The heroine’s revulsion intimates a link to the fact that although the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries made a cult of hair, placing it in jewelry and hairpieces, they also exhibited anxiety about its provenance, since the hair sent to the jeweler was often not the hair included in that finished piece, but had uncertain and disturbing origins.⁷¹ Here, however, the alarm is not the hair’s suspect origin, but what her own provenance is. Discussing wigs, of which hairpieces are a subset, Festa demonstrates that, if

[i]dentity depend[s] upon what one wears – as well as what one does not wear – the wig attests to the fragility of the very self-sufficiency it was once meant to proclaim. It ceases to be a sign of . . . autonomy, and becomes instead a humbling intimation that we may be possessed as much by things as things are possessed by us.⁷²

Similarly, Madame is possessed by and possesses her “great quantity” of curls. Her agon of ownership, to place this in the terms of my own argument, prevents her from belonging with the human or nonhuman: In a state of separation, she can neither be secure in the identity the curls give her nor can she enter a relationship of mutuality. In using a thing’s help (French fancy dress) to be unrecognized as English, she does so not to declare her rights and anchor her just place in material society, but to exploit the curls for her purposes. Though we cannot forget the unsettling energies human–thing contact generates, belonging with the nonhuman evidently encourages characters to behave more ethically than do those who make things their property.

⁷¹ Heydt-Stevenson, *Unbecoming Conjunctions*, pp. 41, 43. I discuss this regarding Austen’s *Sense and Sensibility*. Festa perceptively argues that the eighteenth-century trend of making wigs from the hair of “many classes” and suspect nations, “suggests a threatening collapse of social distinctions.” See “Personal Effects: Wigs and Possessive Individualism in the Long Eighteenth Century,” *Eighteenth-Century Life* 2 (2005): 47–90, p. 65.

⁷² “Personal Effects,” pp. 49, 83.

5.4.2 Desmond and the Nivernais, a “little skimming dish of a hat”

Drawing also on clothes and hats, Charlotte Smith’s *Desmond* dramatizes characters, who, like Madame Duval, deny their own rights when they fail to connect to their own material circumstances. In muting the nonhuman’s whispers, separate from but also infused with cultural intimations, characters disaffect themselves from social and ecological environments. While in France, Desmond sees the Count de Hauteville’s “idle valet,” Le Maire, who Montfleuri ironically denominates a “tremendous aristocrate . . . miserable at the loss of dignity which he believes he has sustained” (*D*, pp. 128, 126).⁷³ The servant strides through his master’s fallow fields wearing on his back a patchwork of 150 years of French despotism and on his head a “*Chapeau à le Nevernois*”:

Under a full dress coat, of a reddish brown, and which had once been lined with satten, appeared a waistcoat of gold-flowered brocade, the flaps reaching to his knees, and made, I am persuaded, in the reign of Louis *ci-devant le Grand*.—What appeared of his breeches, under this magnificent *juste au-corps*, was of red velveret, forming a happy contrast to a pair of black worsted stockings.—The little hair which grew on each side of his temples had been compelled . . . to assume the form of curls, but they seemed to have fled *d’un manière plus opiniatre du monde*, from his ears. A little hat, like what I recollect having seen in caricature prints, under the name of *Chapeau à le Nevernois*, covered the rest of his head . . . (*D*, p. 126)⁷⁴

As opposed to having *le droit au corps* – the right to ownership of one’s body – he reduces himself merely to a material entity, a *justaucorps*, a long coat worn over a vest and shirt that was in the past someone else’s property.⁷⁵ His recycled wardrobe, embodying a battlefield on which the Revolution is being fought, in part for his actual class and not the aristocratic one he identifies with, offers, as Cynthia Wall contends for recycled goods, the possibility of “trading up” and “the apparent possibility of transmission of class.”⁷⁶ Because “trading up” to aristocratic power is outside this valet’s realm of personal possibility, given the year 1792, his

⁷³ Here and elsewhere, I transcribe Smith’s French (and English spellings and capitalizations), which Blank and Todd’s edition replicates.

⁷⁴ “Nivernais” is the French spelling; the English modified this to “Nivernois” and sometimes to “Nevernois.”

⁷⁵ “The royal riding habit was called the *justaucorps* [‘just on the body’] for a reason; its smartly tailored silhouette, comprising a fitted jacket worn open over a matching waistcoat, cleaved closely to the body” (Weber, p. 81).

⁷⁶ “The English Auction: Narratives of Dismantlings,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 31.1 (1997): 1–25, p. 21. She quotes Stewart, *On Longing*, p. 29. Wall does not discuss *Desmond*.

outfit provides a recognition scene for the reader, telling what the servant cannot acknowledge: His “waistcoat of gold-flowered brocade” from the era of Louis XIV foretells absolutism’s end, not its perpetuation; his *justaucorps* does not, like the style of the day, imitate the English riding coat (representing liberty), and his hair, like the third estate, is fleeing from the compulsion to curl “in the most willful manner” (*D*, p. 126). This character, unable to observe “slow changes” or even revolutionary ones – that “crowns must “grow draughty” before the subject wonders if “a miter matter[s]” (“EH,” ll. 31, 23, 24) – cannot recognize his own scandal, trapped as he is in his own snare.⁷⁷

His little hat, the Nivernais, offers the reader another recognition scene, one that the servant fails to see but that speaks as much to the French condition as it does to the English. The invention of Louis-Jules Barbon Mancini-Mazarini, Duc de Nivernais, this tricorne, fashionable in both England and France from the 1760s, was “a little skimming dish of a hat—the brim not four inches deep, two of which [were] covered with silver lace and immensely wide in front.”⁷⁸ As French ambassador to London, Nivernais helped negotiate the Treaty of Paris (February 10, 1763), which ended the Seven Years’ War and allowed the British to expand their global power extensively. The dramatist John O’Keeffe relates that when he “heard the unpopular peace of 1763 proclaimed at Temple Bar,” he saw the “Duke of Nivernais, the French ambassador on that occasion, . . . a very little man, dressed in blue velvet richly embroidered,” wearing “the small hat” that “came into fashion. It was called the Nivernais.”⁷⁹ Mrs. Elizabeth Harris, writing to her son, Lord Malmesbury (September 29, 1764), describes the hat as the “new little Nivernois, which is at present the high taste of all pretty gentlemen,” though “’tis past description how very ridiculous it looks.”⁸⁰ In *The New Bath Guide* (1766), Christopher Anstey mocks the Nivernais hat as a pretentious British style when he limns his satirical target, Simkin Blunderhead, a north-country innocent visiting

⁷⁷ *Desmond* describes a man dressed in the habit of a Frenchman around the year 1715, though that style changed repeatedly throughout the eighteenth century. Le Maire’s *justaucorps* (*l’habit à la française*), lavishly decorated with trim and lace, would have reached down to his knees; more politically fashionable than Le Maire’s waistcoat would have been the 1790s version, called *le frac* (the swallowtail coat), an imitation of the English riding coat, which was far more tapered, less ornamented, and cut away at the abdomen (Köhler, pp. 306–308, 354–355). On the notion that English dress in France “had helped to undermine authority” and was “inimical to the traditional French perception of elegance” see Ribeiro, *Fashion in the French Revolution*, pp. 39, 41.

⁷⁸ William Hickey, *Memoirs*, 4 vols. (London, 1775), vol. 1, pp. 139–140.

⁷⁹ *Recollections* (London, 1825), p. 101.

⁸⁰ *Letters of the Earl of Malmesbury and His Contemporaries* (London: Richard Bentley, 1870), p. 112.

Bath for the first time, who, in a letter to his mother, brags that “[b]ut what with my Nivernois Hat can compare, / Bag-Wig, and laced Ruffles, and black Solitaire?”⁸¹ Smith’s use of the hat, a caricature of aristocratic arrogance familiar to the British, rouses them to associate Le Maire with English absurdity and artifice, thereby rendering pretense a quality worthy of critique in both nations. More radically, it promotes Jacobin sentiment in its association between affectation and the valet’s royalist convictions.

The hat triggers another cross-cultural conversation in invoking historical memories not only of the Treaty, but also of the Seven Years’ War itself (1756–1763), which “unfolded in theatres on four continents,” and “can without exaggeration be called ‘The First World War.’”⁸² The conditions of the peace treaty were highly disadvantageous for France, yet, as the historian Esmat Zenab Rashed explains, the nation needed and indeed celebrated concord, a paradox the Count of Choiseul summarized: “We know perfectly well that this peace will not be glorious or useful for France or for Spain; but unhappily the circumstances do not allow us to obtain better terms.”⁸³ And though some British opposed the treaty, William Pitt in particular, most considered the war, in John Carteret, Lord Granville’s words, the “most glorious” and the peace the “most honourable” the nation had ever witnessed, confirming England’s “maritime supremacy” and establishing the nation “in the position of the foremost colonial power in the world.”⁸⁴ Demonstrating such triumphant spirits, Richard Lovell Edgeworth, having observed the Duc de Nivernais in Bath, gloats that “[a]mong other witticisms of the day, it was said, that the [very small] size of his hat was diminished by the loss of the Canada fur trade” – that is, the French loss to Britain in this war.⁸⁵

Finally, this was a war, as most are, about property, so a hat associated with those battles and its treaties belongs with a character who seeks to

⁸¹ ed. Annick Cossic (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010), pp. 134–135, ll. 59–62. Blank and Todd’s edition includes Anstey’s poem (p. 425, note 103).

⁸² Frans de Bruyn and Shaun Regan, “Introduction,” in *The Culture of the Seven Years’ War: Empire, Identity, and the Arts in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World*, ed. de Bruyn and Regan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), p. 3. They quote Winston Churchill.

⁸³ Quoted in *The Peace of Paris, 1763* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1951), p. 186.

⁸⁴ Rashed, pp. 201, 202, 204. Pitt opposed the Treaty because the terms for France were too liberal. Franz A. J. Szabo shows that “[m]ore than any other conflict in the more than century-long confrontation with France . . . the Seven Years’ War laid the foundation of the . . . British Empire,” and the “financial infrastructure developed to finance the war . . . laid the capital market groundwork for the Industrial Revolution.” See *The Seven Years War in Europe: 1756–1763* (Harlowe: Pearson Education, 2008), p. 433.

⁸⁵ *Memoirs; begun by Himself and Concluded by his Daughter, Maria Edgeworth*, 3rd ed. (London: Richard Bentley, 1844), p. 60.

possess, not to *belong with*. As Linda Colley observes, the British “conquered Canada. They drove the French out of most of their Indian, West African and West Indian possessions. They tore Manila and Havana from the Spanish. Their navy devastated its European rivals. And they assumed for themselves the reputation of being the most aggressive, the most affluent and the most swiftly expanding power in the world.”⁸⁶ Though England’s spoils were magnificent, the nation did concede some of its possessions to France and Spain, doing so “in the vain hope” that future wars could be avoided.⁸⁷ And although the British were the victors, this unprecedented war’s triumphs negatively changed England and altered its values – the empire’s “colossal new dimensions . . . challenged . . . long-standing British mythologies”: that the country was “the land of liberty because [it was] founded on Protestantism and commerce.”⁸⁸ Thus, Smith may have specifically identified the valet’s hat as a Nivernais to criticize the new and unlikeable British military and imperial potency post-Seven Years’ War, a hypothesis that fits with her political sentiments.

Desmond, resembling *Belinda* and *Paul et Virginie*, links political decisions to social and ecological ones, and to questions of possession of property, demonstrating that community awareness of and belonging with things enables a whole life for both the human and nonhuman. When the hero and Montfleuri find Le Maire, he is hunting partridges too young to eat so he can prevent “those beggarly rogues of the village, who have the infamous liberty of killing the birds of my lord’s grounds [from] taking game; and, if I met them . . . I might fire a few shot among those scoundrels” (*D*, p. 127). Refusing to foster conatus and thereby experience joy (Spinoza), he also eschews a “fundamental sociality,” one which “is lived in our inner as well as outer world,” and is one “written on our bodies in terms of flourishing or . . . illness.”⁸⁹ In killing young birds and humans to maintain a political hierarchy, he confirms that he can see neither his own nor the community’s existence as coextensive with the proper care of and respect for life itself. When the Marquis reminds him of the punishment for such action – “[y]ou have, then, a decided call for exhibiting on the lanthorn post” – Le Maire only replies, “be it so; I had rather be hanged than live where those fellows are my equals, and have the liberty of hunting” (*D*, pp. 127, 128).⁹⁰ In other words, instead of recognizing

⁸⁶ *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), p. 101.

⁸⁷ Colley, p. 101. ⁸⁸ Colley, pp. 101–103. ⁸⁹ Wheeler, p. 12.

⁹⁰ The novel renders most of this in French, which Smith translates (*D*, pp. 127–128).

others' right to food, he would rather his slumped head dangled from a post – an abject and iniquitous mode of nonrecognition.

While I would not agree with Simmel's notion that property "obeys our wills,"⁹¹ it seems clear that Le Maire does hope for such an outcome: His clothes are his possessions and the means by which he endorses the political system that denies him real rights and that in fact makes him its own property. Wearing this hat reflects the valet's loyalty, given that a member of that "old order" designed it, but more fatefully, from a historical outlook, his sporting of a Nivernais is highly ironic, for the Treaty the duke crafted triggered the financial conditions for the French Revolution itself, that is, the conditions leading to Le Maire's own "fall" from apparent greatness as a nobleman's "idle valet" (*D*, p. 128).⁹² The servant thereby commits himself to abstractions in aping regimes that had not taken and would never take his welfare into consideration. Simply put, in striving to belong *to* the aristocracy, he abandons the opportunity to belong *with* other living beings. Here he betrays the understanding Spinoza articulates: that all beings "should strive together, as far as they can, to preserve their being; and that all, together, should seek for themselves the common advantage of all" (*Ethics*, IVP183iii). The valet participates in his own failure to recognize and his own failure to thrive. Resembling Madame de la Tour and Madame Duval (though more hateful), the valet "strives" toward social and ecological destruction.

Le Maire prefers the past, but in 1792 his ragged clothes presciently materialize the *ancien régime's* torn outcome and expose his illusions; in doing so, his Nivernais becomes "a transition stadium between being and non-being,"⁹³ since, as for Madame Duval as well, a certain class identification alone gives them the possibility for fulfillment. Yet, simultaneously, these nonhuman things provide readers access to recognizing its opposite, for, as Juliet demonstrates, belonging with the nonhuman helps one claim the right to nonrecognition and thus protection. In contrast, Le Maire's failure to recognize things or feel them sizzle against his skin (like *Corinne's* preacher who puts "Jean Jacques" on his head while denying his presence) diminishes the capacity to ensure integrity for the self or for those things. Wearing his *ancien régime* Nivernais, he metonymizes the old order, as well as the moderate Enlightenment's inability to see, smell, and *listen* to

⁹¹ Simmel on *Culture*, p. 210.

⁹² Thomas E. Kaiser, "The Diplomatic Origins of the French Revolution," in *The Oxford Handbook of the French Revolution*, ed. David Andress (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 110, 111.

⁹³ Simmel, "Secret Societies," p. 472. Nivernais, himself, chose to stay in France and was subject to revolutionary punishment.

sufferings that religious intolerance, perpetual enslavement, archaic laws, and gender tyranny caused.⁹⁴ Like Mity's statue, this clutch of curls and a Nivernais demand that readers acknowledge what the character cannot: that without human–nonhuman connection, one cannot secure justice for either. When the servant would rather hang than coexist, he instantiates the separation that we saw in *Corinne's* Oswald and *Paul et Virginie's* Old Man.

5.5 Colliding Recognitions

I have discussed some ways that female characters house themselves in hats; in seeking refuge they burrow in what Gaston Bachelard calls the paradoxical “daydreams of nests”:

A nest—and this we *understand* right away—is a precarious thing, and yet it sets us to *daydreaming of security*. . . . In a sort of naïve way, we relive the instinct of the bird, taking pleasure in accentuating the mimetic features of the green nest in green leaves. We definitely saw it, but we say that it was well hidden. . . . And so when we examine a nest, we place ourselves at the origin of confidence in the world, we receive a beginning of confidence, an urge toward cosmic confidence.⁹⁵

Taking flight in the New Forest to flee from those sent by the *commissaire de police* to kidnap her, Juliet momentarily experiences the ability to see without being seen – a moment for her of almost “cosmic confidence” in which she can confidently claim her being as her own. Thinking she has found “security and privacy” with “fine air, pleasant country, and worthy hosts,” she feels “[a] ray of pleasure [break] through [her] gloomy forebodings” and “there seemed to her an opening to an asylum . . . fortunate beyond her hopes” (*W*, p. 659). When she “mount[s] a hillock to take a general survey of the spot,” she can enjoy “undisturbed repose” since her location secures her from visual invasion (*W*, p. 676). In mimetically living as “the green nest in green leaves,” she takes “pleasure” in nonrecognition.

Juliet is only “daydreaming of security,” however, since she unwittingly chooses the wrong disguise, failing to understand the complex nature of mimesis. She grasps that her expensive chip bonnet will instantly identify her as Juliet, but not that the coarse straw hat she borrows will pigeonhole her as well – though in another way altogether. Nevertheless, as the *Venus*

⁹⁴ Israel explores these in detail in *Democratic Enlightenment*.

⁹⁵ *The Poetics of Space: The Classic Look at How We Experience Intimate Places*, trans. Maria Jolas (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1994), pp. 102–103.

de' Medici tries to hide beneath her hands, the only things available to her for protection, so does Juliet hide underneath hats, trading her bonnet, "which was of white chip, for one of the most coarse and ordinary of straw," owned by the poor, rural Debby Dyson (*W*, p. 665). Initially this hat exchange forestalls danger, for when one of the commissary's spies asks a couple if the woman they met had been wearing "a white chip-hat," the woman tells him that her hat "was nothing but a straw-bonnet as coarse and ordinary as he might wish to set eyes on" (*W*, p. 673).⁹⁶ That they have not seen the "genteel" runaway disappoints her would-be kidnappers and protects Juliet momentarily from them. She must immediately worry again, though, since "[w]hat now was [her] consternation" to find that the "Mounseer" had represented her as a swindler, and then, not long after, to discover that she is betrayed into recognition by the self-same armament that has just saved her – her straw bonnet (*W*, p. 673).

The Wanderer imperils herself by failing to see that this thing might have its own life and that mere difference – coarse straw versus elegant white chip – does not ensure nonrecognition. This straw hat has its own context, its own relationship with other human and nonhuman things, but for the desperate Juliet, the bonnet is merely a disguise, one that differs from her usual, more refined attire; however, in donning it, the heroine – finding herself pursued by Debby's admirer – learns that she has also unexpectedly slipped on her hostess's "light . . . character" (*W*, p. 666).⁹⁷ Debby's admirer, a carter, recognizing Juliet's "new" hat as his lover's old one also recognizes *her* as Debby and accosts Juliet when she does not recognize him. Though Juliet says not a word, wearing this bonnet so unequivocally broadcasts her identity as "Debby," that she might as well be one of Bishop's aunts, who "keep putting on the yachtsmen's caps / with exhibitionistic screech" ("EH," l. 11–12). At this point, the precarious shelter becomes a perilous site when the carter accuses "Debby" (though he unwittingly addresses Juliet) of ignoring him, exclaiming "[w]hy if there ben't Deb Dyson! O the jeade! if I ben't venged of un! a would no' know me this very blessed morning"; he vows he will make her pay for "this trick" (*W*, p. 677). Neither the hat nor the woman who wears it exists in hermetic seclusion from the other. This young man, though apparently

⁹⁶ Horrocks rightly argues that when "movement is coerced," as in Juliet's case, "it generates economic and social deprivation and exclusion" (p. 172). I underscore, however, that Juliet's mobility and her bonnets also allow her to escape life-threatening and devastating situations.

⁹⁷ The hat's ability to reassign identity shatters what historian Claire Hughes calls the "nostalgia for rural simplicity . . . evident in the increasing taste for round straw and willow chip headgear." See *Hats* (London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2017), p. 216.

having known Debby his whole life, cannot distinguish between her and Juliet, since he bases knowing Debby on the fact that he has seen her wearing “that seame bonnet,” and in doing so he offers an extraordinary example of the notion that “the body is an optical effect accomplished by clothing.”⁹⁸ The carter’s frantic need for “Debby” to recognize him springs a trap on Juliet, who, thinking she inhabits one reality suddenly recognizes she populates another: a scandal. Recycling the straw bonnet becomes, as all recycling does, “an operative, cyclical process of valuation, devaluation, and re-evaluation.”⁹⁹ In this moment, the reutilized bonnet further recycles Juliet, leading her to gain a “value” in the carter’s eyes, one which simultaneously “devalues” her in her own, a process that urges the reader to re-evaluate what multiple and dynamic potentialities she might find in literary belongings.

Prismatically, the carter’s perceptions seem to evince an almost magical sense of human–nonhuman connections; in another way, however, his frantic attempt to possess Debby smacks of the consistent claim on women as property in a consumer world. His sense that women *are* their things, and nothing more, dulls the gleaming, energetic belonging between them and their hats. As Abigail Solomon-Godeau points out, “[o]ne of the most conspicuous features of commodity culture is its sexualization of the commodity, its eroticization of objects, which in turn inflects, if not determines, the psychic structures of consumer desire.”¹⁰⁰ Thus, even though the carter’s friend observes that this woman cannot be Debby since Juliet is “too slim. . . . Debby’d outweigh the double o’ un,” he persists in his conviction, claiming that Debby can “make herself fat or lean as a wull,” but the hat is “her bonnet of old” (*W*, p. 677). In a scene paralleling the one in which Riley simultaneously fears and admires Juliet’s metamorphic skills, the carter recognizes Debby’s transformative potential, and in trying to find some anchor in this shifting world, he lights on the hat as stable, not understanding that as a thing it is as charismatic in its identity as the woman who wears it, and that now that it houses another woman, it cannot be the “seame bonnet.” He wants the thing to be one thing and to assign to it one identity. According to the carter’s logic, if Debby owns the bonnet, it too owns her, locking them together in an unyielding contract. Confident that he knows it is Debby because she wears the bonnet he watched Johnny Ascot give to her “at our fair, two

⁹⁸ *W*, p. 677. Alexandra Warwick and Dani Cavallaro, *Fashioning the Frame: Boundaries, Dress and Body* (Oxford: Berg, 1998), p. xxii.

⁹⁹ Fennetaux, Junqua, and Vasset, p. 3. ¹⁰⁰ Solomon-Godeau, p. 113.

years ago,” he suggests that in watching Johnny offer this gift, he also watched Johnny know her body, one that he too “know[s] . . . well enough, I [warrant] me” (*W*, p. 677). In asserting this, he confirms that the bonnet not only embodies their mutual erotic knowledge but also, presumably, the material exchange of Debby’s favors to Johnny for the bonnet, ones she now confers on the carter.

The carter’s association between his lover and her straw bonnet emphasizes both the thing’s power and his unconscious and mechanistic response when he misrecognizes not just Juliet, but yet another girl wearing Debby’s hat. The Wanderer, hoping now to be unrecognizable as Debby to the carter, exchanges the straw hat for one “plainer, and yet more coarse” (*W*, p. 693) belonging to the daughter of another family from whom she seeks refuge. The poor carter, caught in mimetic replication – thinking the hat and face are one, like Bachelard’s “green nest in green leaves” – now thinks that this other girl, Bet, is Debby. He focuses on a thing, but not on a human–hat interaction, which in turn leads Bet’s furious mother to “reproach Juliet that she had caused her daughter to be taken for that bold hussy” (*W*, p. 702). When this country lover asserts that the bonnet makes Debby legible and that the bonnet itself is fully decipherable as Debby, he perverts “belonging with” and resembles Captain Mirvan and Sir Clement Willoughby, who themselves want women to wear hats that easily permit them to read the woman’s body as a cultural type. All three males – the military man, the aristocrat, and the laborer – want to document things and humans robotically: The bewildered lover cannot see the thing as partaking in its own existence, separate from but connected to the one who wears it, and Mirvan and Willoughby fulminate when a woman claims the right to nonrecognition, when she declares the right to her own life. The carter, unbendingly bound by assumptions he draws around himself and Debby, collapses the person into the thing, rather than granting each entity its own energy and integrity. For him, there is no “interlacing [‘l’entrecroisement’] of strands whose extremities remain separate even at the very center of the knot” (*BSP*, p. 5; emphasis original). And yet, ironically this is what Juliet has done in assuming the bonnet is neutral, untouched by human energies and lacking its own conatus.

Conclusion

At the end of the novel, after all the recognition scenes that establish family relationships have played out, *The Wanderer* adds one more that forges

belonging with among human and human and human and nonhuman. Harleigh, hoping Juliet will accept his marriage proposal,

ventured to bend his head below her bonnet; and saw, then, that the blush which had visited, flown, and re-visited her face, had fixed itself in the deepest tint upon her cheek. He gazed upon her in ecstatic silence, till, looking up, and, for the first time, *suffering* her eyes willing to meet his . . . [a] smile . . . beamed over her features, so radiant, so embellishing, that Harleigh wondered he had ever thought her beautiful before. (*W*, pp. 860–861; emphasis added)

The nonhuman – this bonnet that Harleigh bends to peer into – reminds us of the Wanderer’s difficulties. It also renders the moment more gratifying, since Juliet participates when Harleigh uncovers her face, revealing reciprocal affection and erotic longings, ones that transform the pain she has hitherto experienced into painful pleasures, for she “*suffer[s]* her eyes to meet his,” a gesture that simultaneously recalls how strenuous her transition from nonrecognition to recognition has been. Further, he does not touch her hat, but respects her protective superstructure’s borders. Juliet’s relationship to her hats thus embodies a larger Romantic-era theme, that is, the individual and dialectical forms of public and private experience, whether in poetry or politics, and the prolific attempts to separate and/or join the two, which remain in flux throughout this age.

This triumphant moment of *belonging with* – brought to fruition in part by a bonnet – also contrasts to the arbitrary, vicious way recognition has heretofore functioned in the novel as a tyrannical assault rather than as a democratic exchange. Juliet asserts her rights in choosing to participate in Harleigh’s gaze;¹⁰¹ and his delicacy in “ventur[ing] to bend his head below her bonnet” (*W*, p. 860) provides a startling juxtaposition to the commissary’s ferocity when he had “rudely lifted up her bonnet” (*W*, p. 749). That violent act, which bleeds through like a palimpsest, adds some friction to Harleigh’s loving gesture, emboldening us to hold both gestures in our memory simultaneously. In doing so, it tempers the full idealization of this ecstatic moment, reminding us not only that the novel could have ended very differently, but that the marriage plot itself is a vulnerable device for securing a happy ending since it relies on belonging with things and on human–nonhuman companionship. Cave illuminates how “recognition narratives characteristically juxtapose two moments of fictional

¹⁰¹ Thompson asserts that “Burney’s invocation of ‘rights’ . . . loses its impetus at the close of the novel” when Juliet’s uncle provides a codicil to his will, one which “legitimizes the wanderer’s rank” (p. 984).

biography . . . , sketching the structure of a life and in many cases suggesting the precariousness of the structure, its proneness to collapse.”¹⁰² How easily might this blissful resolution have buckled beneath the weight of secrets untold and wartime crimes.

Some scholars have argued that, in recognizing Juliet as an heiress and marrying her happily, the novel abandons its radical agenda and turns protection over to patriarchal powers.¹⁰³ My goal here has been to suggest that when laws guaranteeing rights for women do not exist, any shelter remains precarious – especially a patriarchal one – and that in the face of this, Evelina and Juliet, belonging with their hats, can work to hold their own against authoritarian muscle. Further, *The Wanderer* surprisingly reverses conventional expectations about materiality and consumption in a patriarchal world: The nonhuman thing can authorize a woman in this culture to share in the extraordinary possibilities for fluidity and indeterminacy of meanings that things themselves embody. This is because Juliet, like things themselves, evades in dazzling ways others’ attempts to exert power over her when they try to diminish what she and those things signify. Both character and things exceed their typical use-value. Juliet’s enemies and even her friends find her demands for privacy scandalous, and though this impenetrability intensifies her loneliness, it also provides an internalized “hat” empowering her to remain to some extent inviolable. Here Patricia Meyer Spacks identifies how Burney “explores” a “kind of privacy” that “consists in . . . subtle forms of self-protection.”¹⁰⁴ Rather than ending with a sharp “turn-around” and reverting to a conservative position on women as property, *The Wanderer* throughout provides

¹⁰² *Recognitions*, p. 23.

¹⁰³ For Claudia L. Johnson, “the political necessity of upholding established customs involves hedging the wish to ameliorate the plight of women so severely that *The Wanderer* ends up blaming women for everything.” In *Equivocal Beings: Politics, Gender, and Sentimentality in the 1790s: Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe, Burney, Austen* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 171. Elizabeth Heckendorn Cook argues in “Crown Forests and Female Georgic: Frances Burney and the Reconstruction of Britishness” that *The Wanderer* “provides an ‘all-pervasive fantasy . . . of a return to patriarchal protection.’” See *The Country and the City Revisited: England and the Politics of Culture, 1550–1850*, ed. Gerald Maclean, Donna Landry, and Joseph P. Ward (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 205. For Kandice Sharren “*The Wanderer* ultimately capitulates to those conventions that it protests against.” See “The Texture of Sympathy: Narrating Sympathetic Failure in Frances Burney’s *Camilla* and *The Wanderer*,” *European Romantic Review* 28.6 (2017): 701–727, p. 722.

¹⁰⁴ *Privacy: Concealing the Eighteenth-Century Self* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), p. 97. In contrast, Suzie Asha Park argues that “both models of female expression – silence and direct expression – actually are compelled versions of each other.” See “All Agog to Find Her Out’: Compulsory Narration in *The Wanderer*,” in *Recognizing the Romantic Novel: New Histories of British Fiction, 1780–1830*, ed. Jillian Heydt-Stevenson and Charlotte Sussman (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2008), p. 131.

dynamic notions of identity, ones that contrast to phatic, predictable constructions so often levied against women in this culture. Western civilization tends to oppose the physical and intellectual, to see the human and nonhuman corpus as inimical to reason – and even to social and spiritual progress. Conversely, Burney's novels have revealed how effectively and prismatically women's bodies and things can belong with each other in the everyday world, which is, indeed, far from ordinary.

Conclusion

Living in a Material World

Embodied Experience in British and French Literature has folded together thing theory, history, feminism, and comparatism to analyze how travel accounts, novels, and poetry by authors such as Edgeworth, Staël, Diderot, Bernardin, Wordsworth, Bishop, Ségur, Burney, and Smith explore the possibility that binary structures which render women and matter mutually debased could be brought into the open, investigated, and even sometimes remedied in concrete ways such that literary characters and things might, in concord, salubriously manifest their physical and intellectual aspects. Since women too often are treated as things, and things, as a whole, are treated badly, I found it crucial to study these two together, and to ponder the cultural history that reinforces or tries to mend dualistic thinking. This book has affirmed that literary belongings matter, and that it matters when readers connect to the sensuous qualities of these things as well as to the knowledge that they harbor. Only such connection can enable both women and things to achieve their right to exist fully.

Given the sensory contact vital to human–nonhuman *belonging with*, each chapter has explored the necessary and fundamental role haptic, auditory, and visual experiences play for characters and readers alike, enabling them to feel and perceive each other’s presence: a traveler’s skin tingles as she caresses the *Venus de’ Medici*’s; Juliet feels the prickling from her straw hat, which no doubt smells like Debby’s hair, but also reeks of her reputation; the lava’s brilliant red, liquid heat gliding from Vesuvius’s mouth opens Oswald’s, igniting him to speak; journeying to the cottage, the Pedlar is “beaten by Autumn winds,” and Margaret feels the icy wind “ruffl[ing] [her] “tattered clothes . . . Even at the side of her own fire” (ll. 435, 485–486); a diamond’s glitter unseals Lady Delacour’s eyes, propelling her first to violence and then to atonement, and a tart Morello cherry her gardener has nurtured will remind her of human–nonhuman companionship. Once *belonging with* awakens them, these

things are, in Herbert Marks's words, "bleeding representations."¹ Today, however, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literary belongings too often sleep, and sleep alone. Tourists now cannot enter the Tribuna, let alone measure the *Venus de' Medici's* proportions, and visitors stand in long lines, with tickets, to enter St. Peter's rather than having the leisure to pause and then relish a slow move through the leather curtain at the basilica's portal. And it is doubtful that many women today could experience what many nineteenth-century hat wearers could: the specific kind of shade that a white chip bonnet like Juliet's offers. Opening the senses and intellect to things initiates belonging with them, rather like the Pantheon's open oculus, which enables sun, rain, and wind to illuminate and darken marble, welcoming indoors a sense of belonging outdoors.

To spotlight things contemporary readers may have missed or have no access to, I have delved into literary thing-life archaeologically, "entering into '*vallées délicieuses*'" to trace the vestiges of some literary objects to find prismatic exchanges between and among texts, characters, and readers – an approach intimated in my *Introduction's* opening epigraph from Gustave Sobin.² And such a process – finding the thing and unearthing its meanings – is much like excavating something and then tackling its riddle-properties. Here, influential scholars have inspired me in this approach. In *Infidel Poetics: Riddles, Nightlife, Substance*, Daniel Tiffany detects collaborations between objects and literature, explaining how "archaeological evidence reveals that the earliest poetry in English displays an affinity for objects whose rarity and eccentricity were signaled by a peculiar verbal disposition," rendering "it possible to claim that lyric poetry first emerged in English as the enigmatic voice of certain highly wrought objects."³ By engaging in this interpretive labor of "archaeological forensics," Charles Rzepka discovers that things "assum[e] a critical, and not just an illustrative, function."⁴ And Cave's archaeological approach – the study of "pre-histories" – invites one "to return constantly to the object, to listen to it attentively and to follow its coded message right down to its inner folds (*ses replies internes*')."⁵ Digging deep, recognizing things, and then being baffled by riddles – only to begin again: This is the fluid story of *belonging with*.

¹ Gross cites this in *The Dream of the Moving Statue*, as "a letter to the author" (p. 90). Here Marks refers to statues.

² *Luminous Debris*, p. 38. ³ (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2009), p. 35.

⁴ "From Relics to Remains," n.p.

⁵ *Pré-Histoires: Textes troublés au seuil de la modernité* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1999), pp. 12–13. My translation.

These literal and metaphoric excavations of unearthed things, however, rarely proceed in a clear, linear fashion. As Byron states so well, “I leave the thing a problem, like all things.”⁶ Of course, characters and texts must find the thing and discover at least some of what it generates before they can let it stay a problem, before, that is, they can let that thing “baffle” them; they will find, too, that doing this “real work”⁷ slows down their reading process and extracts them from swift-page-turning absorption, propelling them to more questions than they can answer. For example, a pleasurable pause could lead one to ask why *Evelina* and *The Wanderer* so consistently allude to hats, while *Belinda* rarely refers to them. And yet the “problems” things spark when we listen to them reap the far greater reward of belonging with them. Engaging in this archaeological expedition to see “into the life of things,”⁸ I have surveyed their histories and landscapes, excavated some, and then gathered together how those flesh out meanings-in-connection available only in companionship with those things. This book has demonstrated how certain things and certain characters in texts inspire each other to move toward and listen to each other. In these acts of connection readers palpably gain new knowledge of the ways things belong in literature.

In quarrying things, I have found Spinoza’s *Ethics* beneficial, especially his idea that there is greater joy in activity than passivity and that each thing strives to live: “When the mind considers itself and its power of acting, it rejoices” (*Ethics*, IIIp 53). This idea has led me to explore in these literary texts the consequences of human–nonhuman separation, passivity toward the self and others, and immovable grief: ecosystems disarticulated; women disbarred from power and body; rights never levied or too often forgotten. My primary emphasis, though, has been on the ways in which moving toward the nonhuman and belonging with it creates more action, more energy, and more joy. And though this experience is sometimes fleeting, in these radiant moments, exchange becomes fruitful, and humans and things elude the proprietary “belonging to” of possession.

My archaeological journeys have highlighted three large concepts: how ornaments, plants, statues, monuments, and other things might manifest their physical and intellectual rights to expression; second, how interfusing historical, comparative, and feminist contexts uncovers the myriad ways

⁶ *Don Juan*, in *Poetical Works*, XVII.13, p. 858. ⁷ Berry, pp. 204, 205.

⁸ Wordsworth, “Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey, On Revisiting the Banks of the Wye during a Tour. July 13, 1798,” in *Lyrical Ballads and Other Poems, 1797–1800*, ed. James Butler and Karen Green (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), l. 50; pp. 116–120.

things ambulate between and among their temporal, generic, national, and disciplinary borders; and, third, how women in literature who accept that their physical bodies and mental abilities work as one poise themselves to claim the right to strive and to live – to claim the right to virtue. That is, it is a “virtue” to connect to things outside of ourselves and to acknowledge that we are part of a living ecosystem that requires such *belonging with* so that we can all persevere. In the texts I have examined, such a *belonging with* offers a potential relationship between humans and the environment that does not require transcending temporality, does not mire the subject in the material, does not abandon the individual to her own alienating subjectivity, and does not require the martyrdom of female energy and volition.

Many of the authors I address have themselves already initiated a theory and praxis of human–nonhuman camaraderie; they have embodied the radiant impact of choosing to *belong with*, and they do so in their representations. I have shown instances of where and how they do this, and I have suggested that readers should emulate them in discovering human–nonhuman interrelations. Levi Bryant warns that we must interrogate whether, in our representations, we are accessing an object “in its *reality*” or whether we are “distort[ing]’ the object.”⁹ While such an interrogative kind of check and balance is positive, I would say that we will inevitably “distort” the object because we are human and because we are always in the realm of mediation. Inevitably things will baffle us. But this is not all bad: “The impeded stream” after all, “is the one that sings”;¹⁰ and Morton has suggested that perhaps “humanness is encapsulated precisely in [the] attempt sensitively to attune to things that are not me.”¹¹ In short, characters’ interactions with things become more potent, more evocative, and more meaningful if we trace these objects’ “recycled” histories, finding their antecedents in the pre- and post-textual realms. Humans live, quite plainly, in a material world and in material bodies, regardless of whatever kinds of transcendence they may strive for; likewise, things in books have or had physical correlatives: Recognizing such registers makes a difference in our intellectual and physical experience of what we read and attunes us ethically to listening to the things and bodies in the world we inhabit.

⁹ Bryant, *The Democracy of Objects* (Open Humanities Press, 2011), p. 14; emphasis original.

¹⁰ Berry, p. 205.

¹¹ “Queer Green Sex Toys,” in *Secure Sites: Empire and the Emergence of Security*, ed. Jeffrey N. Cox, Jill Heydt-Stevenson, and Paul Youngquist, *ELN* 54.1 (Spring/Summer 2016): 15–25, p. 22.

I have returned throughout *Embodied Experience* to images of and the interpretive potential of prismatic refraction. Excavated from the earth and then cut into polished facets, a diamond prismatically disperses fiery sparkles when light enters its being, driving it to brilliantly flash the colors of the spectrum. When these stones meet light and – especially – when they move, they scintillate, causing more movement. And like all things, a diamond's milieu transforms its dazzle, with candlelight or sunshine electrifying it in singular ways. Since prisms refract rather than moving through substance, as light passes through a plain, flat glass window, I have argued that steering toward and then listening to the material can spark radiant, prismatic moments wherein things glimmer out new sensations and refract new knowledge, rousing humans to experience fleetingly the astonishment of *belonging with*. And since humans and nonhumans share a distant consanguinity, this idea of turning toward, rather than advancing through things, seemed particularly apt, for neither entity can completely penetrate the other – that is, know the other completely. Yet in my explorations into literary belongings, I have found a place for optimism in discovering characters and readers who can belong with the nonhuman.

Bibliography

- Addison, Joseph. *Interesting Anecdotes, Memoirs, Allegories, Essays, and Political Fragments*. London, 1797.
Remarks on Several Parts of Italy, in the years 1701, 1702, and 1703. 2nd ed. London: J. Tonson, 1718.
- Adkins, Nelson F. "Wordsworth's *Margaret; Or the Ruined Cottage*." *Modern Language Notes* 38.8 (1923): 460–466.
- Alaimo, Stacy. *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010.
- Alaimo, Stacy and Susan Hekman. "Introduction: Emerging Models of Materiality in Feminist Theory." In Alaimo and Hekman, 1–19.
- Alaimo, Stacy and Susan Hekman, eds. *Material Feminisms*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2008.
- Albrecht, Glen A. "Psychoterratic and Somaterratic Health and Dis-ease." July 20, 2018. <https://glennaalbrecht.wordpress.com/2018/07/20/psychoterratic-and-somaterratic-health-and-dis-ease/>
- "Solastalgia': A New Concept in Health and Identity." *PAN: Philosophy, Activism, Nature* 3 (2005): 44–59.
- Allison, April. "Transnational Sympathies, Imaginary Communities." In *The Literary Channel: The Inter-national Invention of the Novel*, ed. Margaret Cohen and Carolyn Dever, 133–148. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002.
Virtue's Faults: Correspondences in Eighteenth-Century British and French Women's Fiction. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996.
- Amphlett, Hilda. *Hats: A History of Fashion in Headwear*. New York: Dover Publications, 2003.
- Anderson, Emily Hodgson. "Staged Insensibility in Burney's *Cecilia*, *Camilla*, and *The Wanderer*: How a Playwright Writes Novels." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 17.4 (2005): 629–649.
- Anderson, Kathleen. "Frances Burney's *The Wanderer*: Actress as Virtuous Deceiver." *European Romantic Review* 10.4 (1999): 424–447.
Annual Register, or a View of the History, Politics, and Literature, for the Year 1777. London: printed for J. Dodsley, 1778.
- Anon. *The Discovery of the Vital Principle, or Physiology of Man*. London, 1838.

- Anon. *The Monthly Review; Or, Literary Journal Enlarged*, ed. Ralph Griffiths, vol. 37, art. IV, 368–369. London: A. Strahan, 1802.
- Anstey, Christopher. *The New Bath Guide*, ed. Annick Cossic. Bern: Peter Lang, 2010.
- Appadurai, Arjun. "Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value." In *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Appadurai, 3–63. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- Aravamudan, Srinivas. "Talking Jewels and Other Oriental Seductions." In *Diderot and European Culture*, ed. Frédéric Ogée and Anthony Strugnell, 15–34. Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2006.
- Arendt, Hannah. *The Human Condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958.
- Aristotle, *On the Art of Poetry*. In *Aristotle, Horace, Longinus: Classical Literary Criticism*, trans. T. S. Dorsch, 30–75. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965.
- The Poetics*. Perseus Digital Library, ed. Geoffrey R. Crane. Leipzig, 1885.
- Åsberg, Cecilia, Kathrin Thiele, and Iris van der Tuin. "Speculative before the Turn: Reintroducing Feminist and Materialism Performativity." *Cultural Studies Review* 21.2 (2015): 145–172.
- Asendorf, Christoph. *Batteries of Life: On the History of Things and Their Perception in Modernity*, trans. Don Reneau. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993.
- Atkinson, Colin and Jo Atkinson. "Maria Edgeworth, *Belinda* and Women's Rights." *Eire/Ireland* 19.4 (1984): 94–118.
- Austen, Jane. *The Novels of Jane Austen: Vol. III, Mansfield Park*, ed. R. W. Chapman. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.
- Sense and Sensibility*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Bachelard, Gaston. *The Poetics of Space: The Classic Look at How We Experience Intimate Places*, trans. Maria Jolas. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1994.
- Baker, Malcolm. *Figured in Marble: The Making and Viewing of Eighteenth-Century Sculpture*. Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2000.
- Bal, Mieke. "Introduction." In Bal, Crewe, and Spitzer, vii–xvii.
- "Memories in the Museum: Preposterous Histories for Today." In Bal, Crewe, and Spitzer, 171–190.
- Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*. 3rd ed. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009.
- Bal, Mieke, Jonathan Crewe, and Leo Spitzer, eds. *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present*. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1999.
- Balayé, Simone. *Corinne ou l'Italie. Les carnets de voyage de Madame de Staël*. Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1971.
- "Corinne en spectacle." *Littératures* 41 (1999): 97–109.
- "Corinne et la ville Italienne ou l'espace extérieur et l'impasse intérieure." In *Mélanges à la mémoire de Franco Simone, III: France et Italie dans la culture européenne (XIXe et XXe siècles)*. 33–50. Geneva: Slatkine, 1984.
- "Madame de Staël et la statue intérieure." In *Autobiography, Historiography, Rhetoric*, ed. Evans Donaldson, Mary Frappier, Lucienne Mazur, and Gerald Prince, 17–34. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994.

- “Plotting with Music and Sound in Corinne.” In Szmurlo, 69–83.
- “Politique et société dans l’œuvre staëlienne: l’exemple de *Corinne*.” *Cahiers de l’Association internationale des études françaises* 46 (1994): 53–67.
- Balfour, Ian. *Famous Diamonds*. Woodbridge: Antique Collectors Club, 2009.
- Barad, Karen. *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007.
- Barber, Benjamin. “Constitutional Faith.” In Joshua Cohen, 30–37.
- Barbier, Jean. “Paul et Virginie, une histoire pour se mettre à table.” In Cheval and Tchakaloff, 182–197.
- Barchas, Janine and Kristina Straub. “Collecting Will and Jane.” August 26, 2016. <http://shakespeareandbeyond.folger.edu/2016/08/26/collecting-william-shakespeare-jane-austen/>
- Baretti, Joseph. *A Guide through the Royal Academy*. London, 1781.
- Barrell, John. “‘The Dangerous Goddess’: Masculinity, Prestige, and the Aesthetic in Early Eighteenth-Century Britain.” *Cultural Critique* 12 (Spring, 1989): 101–131.
- Barrett, Estelle and Barbara Bolt, eds. *Carnal Knowledge: Towards a “New Materialism” through the Arts*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2013.
- Batchelor, Jennie. *Dress, Distress and Desire: Clothing and the Female Body in Eighteenth-Century Literature*. Houndmills and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- Bate, Jonathan. *Romantic Ecology: Wordsworth and the Environmental Tradition* (1991). London and New York: Routledge Revivals, 2013.
- Bateson, Gregory. *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
- Baudrillard, Jean. *The System of Objects*, trans. James Benedict. New York: Verso, 2005.
- Beattie, James. *Dissertations Moral and Critical*. London: W. Strahan, 1783.
- Beenstock, Zoe. “Reforming Utilitarianism: Lyric Poetry in J. S. Mill’s ‘Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties.’” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 81.4 (2020): 599–620.
- Behar, Katherine. “An Introduction to OOF.” In Behar, 1–36.
ed. *Object-Oriented Feminism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016.
- Benedict, Barbara M. “Encounters with the Object: Advertisements, Time, and Literary Discourse in the Early Eighteenth-Century Thing-Poem.” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 40.2 (2007): 193–205.
- Benjamin, Walter. “The Concept of Criticism in German Romanticism.” In *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings: Vol. 1, 1913–1926*, ed. Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings, 116–200. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996.
Illuminations: Essays and Reflections, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn. New York: Schocken Books, 1969.
- Bennett, Jane. *Vibrant Matter*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010.

- Bennett, John. *Letters to a Young Lady; on a Variety of Useful and Interesting Subjects*. 6th American ed. Vermont, Brattleboro: William Fessenden, 1811.
- Berg, Maxine. "Luxury, the Luxury Trades, and the Roots of Industrial Growth: A Global Perspective." In *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption*, ed. Frank Trentmann, 173–191. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Berman, Carolyn Vellenga. *Creole Crossings: Domestic Fiction and the Reform of Colonial Slavery*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006.
- Berman, Douglas. "Reading Wordsworth with Hegel and Deleuze." *Comparative Literature and Culture* 14.5 (2012): 1–8.
- Bermingham, Ann. "Elegant Females and Gentlemen Connoisseurs: The Commerce in Culture and Self-Image in Eighteenth-Century England." In Bermingham and Brewer, 489–513.
- Bermingham, Ann and John Brewer, eds. *The Consumption of Culture, 1600–1800: Image, Object, Text*. London: Routledge, 1995.
- Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, Jacques-Henri. *Études de la Nature*. Paris: De L'imprimerie de Monsieur, 1788.
- Paul and Mary: An Indian Story*, trans. Daniel Malthus. London: J. Dodsley, 1789.
- Paul and Virginia*, trans. Helen Maria Williams. London: G. G. & J. Robinson, 1795.
- Paul et Virginie*, ed. Jean Ehrard. Paris: Gallimard, 2004.
- Paul and Virginia*, trans. John Donovan. London and Chester Springs: Peter Owen Publishers, 2005.
- Bernstein, Harry. *The Brazilian Diamond in Contracts, Contraband and Capital*. Lanham: University Press of America, 1988.
- Berry, Wendell. *Standing by Words*. San Francisco: North Point Press, 1983.
- Betz, Dorothy M. "Bernardin's *Paul et Virginie*." *Explicator* 53.3 (1995): 138–141.
- Biger, Pierre-Henri. "Introduction à l'éventail européen aux XVII et XVIII siècles." *Seventeenth-Century French Studies* 26.1 (2014): 84–92.
- Binhammer, Katherine. "The Sex Panic of the 1790s." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 6.3 (1996): 409–434.
- Bird, James Barry. *Original Precedents of Settlements, Drawn by the Most Distinguished Conveyancers of the Present Day*. London: W. Hughes, 1800.
- Birkett, Jennifer. "Speech in Action: Language, Society, and Subject in Germaine de Staël's *Corinne*." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 7.4 (1995): 393–408.
- Bishop, Elizabeth. "Exchanging Hats." *Elizabeth Bishop: Poems, Prose, and Letters*, ed. Robert Giroux and Lloyd Schwartz, 198–199. New York: Library of America, 2008.
- Blanchemain, Laure. "'The Dagger, the Shroud, the Gravestone': Gothic Motifs in Fanny Burney's *The Wanderer*." *Anglophonia: French Journal of English Studies* 15 (2004): 163–170.
- Bongie, Chris. *Islands and Exiles: The Creole Identities of Post/colonial Literature*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998.

- Bonifacio, Mariella. "Venezia e il tempo sospeso in *Corinne ou l'Italie*." *Quaderni veneti* 35 (2002): 9–27.
- Bour, Isabelle. "What Maria Learned: Maria Edgeworth and Continental Fiction." *Women's Writing* 18.1 (2011): 34–40.
- Braunmühl, Caroline. "Beyond Hierarchical Oppositions: A Feminist Critique of Karen Barad's Agential Realism." *Feminist Theory* 19.2 (2018): 223–240.
- British Critic*. "Edgeworth's *Belinda*." *Women Writers in Review*. Art. 22. 1801–07. Northeastern University Women Writers Project, 2016–11–16.
- British Critic*. *British Critic and Quarterly Theological Review*. Vol. 18. London, 1801.
- Britton, Jeanne M. "Theorizing Character in Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda*." *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 67.4 (2013): 433–456.
- Brogan, Stephen. "A 'monster of metamorphosis': Reassessing the Chevalier / Chevalière d'Éon's Change of Gender." In Burrows, Conlin, Goulbourne, and Mainz, 81–96.
- Broglio, Ron. *Beasts of Burden: Biopolitics, Labor, and Animal Life in British Romanticism*. New York: SUNY University Press, 2017.
- Brown, Bill. *Other Things*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015.
- "The Secret Life of Things: Virginia Woolf and the Matter of Modernism." In *Aesthetic Subjects*, ed. Pamela R. Matthews and David McWhirter, 397–430. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003.
- The Sense of Things: The Object Matter of American Literature*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
- "Thing Theory." In *Things*, ed. Brown, 1–22. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004.
- Brown, Catherine. "What Is 'Comparative' Literature?" *Comparative Critical Studies* 10.1 (2013): 67–88.
- Bruschini, Enrico and Alba Amoia. "Rome's Monuments and Artistic Treasures in Mme de Staël's *Corinne* (1807): Then and Now." *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 22.3/4 (1994): 311–347.
- Bryant, Levi R. *The Democracy of Objects*. Open Humanities Press, 2011.
- Burke, Edmund. *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, ed. Adam Phillips. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Reflections on the Revolution in France*, ed. Conor Cruise O'Brien. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986.
- Burney, Frances. *Frances Burney: Journals and Letters*, ed. Peter Sabor and Lars E. Troide, with the assistance of Stewart Cooke and Victoria Kortess-Pap. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2001.
- Evelina; or the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World*, ed. Edward A. Bloom. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.
- The Wanderer; or, Female Difficulties* (1814), ed. Margaret Anne Doody, Robert L. Mack, and Peter Sabor. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Burrows, Simon, Jonathan Conlin, Russell Goulbourne, and Valerie Mainz, eds. *The Chevalier d'Eon and His Worlds: Gender, Espionage, and Politics in the Eighteenth Century*. London and New York: Continuum, 2010.

- Butler, Marilyn. "Edgeworth's Stern Father: Escaping Thomas Day, 1795–1801." *Tradition in Transition*, ed. Alvaro S. J. Ribeiro and James G. Basker, 75–94. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.
- Maria Edgeworth: A Literary Biography*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972.
- Butler, Marilyn and Christina Colvin. "Maria Edgeworth et Delphine." *Cahiers Staëliens* (1979): 26–27 and 77–91.
- Byron, George Gordon. *Poetical Works*, ed. Frederick Page and John Jump. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Campbell, Timothy. *Historical Style: Fashion and the New Mode of History, 1740–1830*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016.
- Camper, Petrus. *The Works of the Late Professor Camper*. London: C. Dilly, 1794.
- Canuel, Mark. *Justice, Dissent, and the Sublime*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012.
- Capra, Fritjof. *The Hidden Connections: Integrating the Biological, Cognitive, and Social Dimensions of Life into a Science of Sustainability*. New York: Doubleday, 2002.
- The Web of Life: A New Scientific Understanding of Living Systems*. New York: Anchor Books, 1996.
- Carey, Daniel and Lynn Festa, eds. *Postcolonial Enlightenment*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Cass, Jeffrey. "Fuseli's Milton Gallery: Satan's First Address to Eve as a Source for Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda*." *ANQ* 14.2 (2001): 15–23.
- Cave, Terence. *Pré-histoires: Textes troublés au seuil de la modernité*. Geneva: Droz, 1999.
- Recognitions: A Study in Poetics*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988.
- Chandler, James. "The Question of Sensibility." *New Literary History* 49.4 (2018): 467–492.
- Châtel, Laurent. "Recycling Orientalia: William Beckford's Aesthetics of Appropriation." In Fennetaux, Junqua, and Vasset, 49–67.
- Chatterjee, Partha. *The Black Hole of Empire: History of a Global Practice of Power*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012.
- Chaumeix, Abraham-Joseph. *Préjugés légitimes et réfutation de l'Encyclopédie avec un examen critique du livre de l'esprit* ("Bruxelles," 1758–1759), vol. 1.
- Cheah, Pheng. "Non-Dialectical Materialism." In Coole and Frost, 70–91.
- Cherpack, Clifton. "Paul et Virginie and the Myths of Death." *PMLA* 90.2 (1975): 247–255.
- Cheval, François and Thierry-Nicolas C. Tchakaloff. *Souvenirs de Paul & Virginie, un paysage au valeurs morales*. Paris: Adam Biro, 1995.
- Chow, Rey. "Postmodern Automaton." In *Feminists Theorize the Political*, ed. Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott, 101–120. New York: Routledge, 1992.
- Chrisman-Campbell, Kimberly. *Fashion Victims: Dress at the Court of Louis XVI*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015.
- Clark, David L. "Kant's Aliens: The Anthropology and Its Others." *CR: The New Centennial Review* 1.2 (2001): 201–289.

- Clark, T. J. *The Sight of Death: An Experiment in Art Writing*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.
- Cohen, Joshua, ed. *For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism*. Martha C. Nussbaum with respondents. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1996.
- Cohen, Margaret. "Melancholia, Mania, and the Reproduction of the Dead Father." In Szmurlo, 95–113.
- Cohen, William A. "Trollope's Trollop." *Novel* 28 (1995): 235–256.
- Colley, Linda. *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837*. 2nd ed. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005.
- Colman, George [the elder; Mr. Town] *The Connoisseur*. XXXVI, 4 vols., vol. 2 (October 3, 1754). New York: Abraham O. Stansbury, 1803.
- Colvin, Christina, ed. *Maria Edgeworth in France and Switzerland*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979.
- ed. *Maria Edgeworth: Letters from England, 1813–1844*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1971.
- Colwil, Elizabeth. "Sex, Savagery, and Slavery in the Shaping of the French Body Politic." In Melzer and Norberg, 198–223.
- Condillac, Étienne Bonnot de. *Treatise on the Sensations*, trans. Geraldine Carr. Los Angeles: University of Southern California Press, 1930.
- Conway, Alison. "Nationalism, Revolution, and the Female Body: Charlotte Smith's *Desmond*." *Women's Studies* 24 (1995): 395–409.
- Cook, Elizabeth Heckendorn. "Crown Forests and Female Georgic: Frances Burney and the Reconstruction of Britishness." In *The Country and the City Revisited: England and the Politics of Culture, 1550–1850*, ed. Gerald Maclean, Donna Landry, and Joseph P. Ward, 197–212. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Cook, Malcolm C. *Bernardin de Saint-Pierre: A Life of Culture*. Oxford: Legenda, MHRA, and MANEY, 2006.
- "Harmony and Discord in *Paul et Virginie*." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 3.3 (1991): 205–216.
- "Portraits in Eighteenth-Century French Fiction." *Australian Journal of French Studies* 35.2 (1998): 141–155.
- Cooke, William. *The Elements of Dramatic Criticism. Containing An Analysis of the Stage under the following Heads, Tragedy, Tragi-Comedy, Comedy, Pantomime, and Farce. With a Sketch of the Education of the Greek and Roman Actors; Concluding with Some General Instructions for succeeding In the Art of Acting*. London: G. Kearsly and G. Robinson, 1775.
- Coole, Diana. "The Inertia of Matter and the Generativity of Flesh." In Coole and Frost, 92–115.
- Coole, Diana and Samantha Frost, "Introducing the New Materialisms." In Coole and Frost, 1–43.
- Coole, Diana and Samantha Frost, eds. *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010.
- Cooper, James Fenimore. *Excursions in Italy*. Vol. 1. London: Richard Bentley, 1838.

- Coquery, Natacha. "The Social Circulation of Luxury and Second-Hand Goods in Eighteenth-Century Parisian Shops." In Fennetaux, Junqua, and Vasset, 13–24.
- Courtenay, Florence. *Physical Beauty: How to Develop and Preserve It*. New York: Social Culture Publications, 1922.
- Croker, John Wilson. "D'Arblay's *Wanderer*." *The Quarterly Review* 11 (April–July 1814): 123–130. London: C. Roworth.
- Cumberland, Richard. *The Observer*. Vol. 3. London: C. Dilly, 1786.
- Cumming, Valerie, C. W. Cunnington, and P. E. Cunnington. *The Dictionary of Fashion History*. Oxford and New York: Berg, 2010.
- Cunnington, Cecil Willett and Phillis Cunnington. *Handbook of English Costume in the Eighteenth Century*, 4 vols., vol. 3. London: Faber & Faber, 1957.
- Cuno, James, ed. *French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789–1799*. Los Angeles: Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts, Wight Art Gallery, UCLA, 1988.
- Czechowski, Tara. "Black, Patched and Pennyless': Race and Crime in Burney's *The Wanderer*." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 25.4 (2013): 677–700.
- Daly, Suzanne. "Indiscreet Jewels: *The Eustace Diamonds*." *Nineteenth Century Studies* 19 (2005): 69–81.
- Damrosch, David. *Comparing the Literatures: Literary Studies in a Global Age*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020.
- D'Arcy Wood, Gillen. *The Shock of the Real: Romanticism and Visual Culture, 1760–1860*. New York and London: Palgrave, 2001.
- Darwin, Erasmus. *Zoonomia; or the Laws of Organic Life*. Vol. 2. London: J. Johnson, 1796.
- de Bolla, Peter. *The Architecture of Concepts: The Historical Formation of Human Rights*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2013.
- de Bruyn, Frans and Shaun Regan. "Introduction." In *The Culture of the Seven Years' War: Empire, Identity, and the Arts in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World*, ed. de Bruyn and Regan, 3–22. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014.
- de Courtais, Georgine. *Women's Hats, Headresses and Hairstyles, with 453 Illustrations, Medieval to Modern*. New York: Dover Publications, 1986.
- de Grancourt, Bergeret. *Voyage d'Italie, 1774–1774*. Paris: Éditions Michel de Romilly, 1948.
- d'Éon, Charles d'Éon de Beaumont. *The Maiden of Tonnerre: The Vicissitudes of the Chevalier and the Chevalière d'Éon*, ed. and trans. Roland Champagne, Nina Claire Ekstein, and Gary Kates. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.
- de Grazia, Victoria. "Changing Consumption Regimes." In de Grazia and Furlough, 11–25.
- de Grazia, Victoria and Ellen Furlough, eds. *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.
- Deleuze, Gilles. *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. Robert Hurley. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1988.

- Delpierre, Madeleine. "Rose Bertin, les marchandes de modes et la Révolutions." In *Modes et Révolutions: Musée de la mode et du costume*, ed. Catherine Join-Dieterle and Madeleine Delpierre, 21–26. Paris: Éditions Paris-Musées, 1989.
- de Luppé, Robert, ed. *Madame de Staël et J.-B.-A. Suard: Correspondance Inédite (1786–1817)*. Geneva: Droz, 1970.
- Deneys-Tunney, Anne. "The Novel, Philosophy and Obscenity in Diderot's *Les Bijoux Indiscrets*." *Diderot Studies* 31 (2009): 83–95.
- Derrida, Jacques. *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, trans. Simon Critchley and Richard Kearney. London and New York: Routledge, 2001.
- Desan, Suzanne. *The Family on Trial in Revolutionary France*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.
- Diaz, José-Luis, ed. *Madame de Staël, Corinne ou l'Italie: 'L'Âme se mêle à tout.'* Paris, France: SEDES, 1999.
- Diderot, Denis. *On Art and Artists: An Anthology of Diderot's Aesthetic Thought*, ed. Jean Seznec, trans. John S. D. Glaus. London, New York, Dordrecht, Heidelberg: Springer, 2011.
- Les Bijoux indiscrets*. In *Œuvres complète de Diderot*, ed. J. Assézat and M. Tourneux, 20 vols., vol. 4. Paris: Librairie Garnier Freres, 1875–1877.
- The Indiscreet Jewels*, trans. Sophie Hawkes. New York: Marsilio, 1993.
- Oeuvres de Denis Diderot: Salons*. Vol. I. Paris: 1821.
- Salon de 1763*. http://obvil.sorbonne-universite.fr/corpus/critique/diderot_salon-1763/. Université Paris-Sorbonne, LABEX OBVIL, 2013, license cc. ATILF, Frantext, Ro29.
- Didier, Béatrice. "Paroles et silences dans *Corinne ou l'Italie*." *Op. cit.* 13.11 (1999): 161–166.
- Dirks, Nicholas B. *Scandal of Empire: India and the Creation of Imperial Britain*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006.
- Dolphijn, Rick and Iris van der Tuin. *New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies*. Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press, 2012.
- Dow, Gillian. "Women Readers in Europe: Readers, Writers, Salonnières, 1750–1900." *Women's Writing* 18.1 (2011): 1–14.
- Duncan, Carol. *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums*. New York and London: Routledge, 2005.
- Durkheim, Emile. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912), trans. Karen E. Fields. New York: Free Press, 1995.
- Edgeworth, Maria. *Belinda* (1802), ed. Kathryn J. Kirkpatrick. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- The Life and Letters of Maria Edgeworth*, ed. Augustus J. C. Hare. 2 vols. Boston, MA and New York: Riverside Press, 1895.
- Edgeworth, Richard Lovell. *Memoirs; begun by Himself and Concluded by his Daughter, Maria Edgeworth*. 3rd ed. London: Richard Bentley, 1844.
- Egenolf, Susan B. *The Art of Political Fiction in Hamilton, Edgeworth, and Owenson*. Burlington: Ashgate, 2009.
- Ellis, Markman. *The Politics of Sensibility: Race, Gender and Commerce in the Sentimental Novel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004 reprint.

- Emanuel, Harry. *Diamonds and Precious Stones: Their History, Value, and Distinguishing Characteristics*. 1st and 2nd ed. London: John Camden Hotten, 1865, 1867.
- Ernst, Wolfgang. "Frames at Work: Museological Imagination and Historical Discourse in Neoclassical Britain." *The Art Bulletin* 75.3 (1993): 481–498.
- Esterhammer, Angela. *The Romantic Performative: Language and Action in British and German Romanticism*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.
- _____. *Romanticism and Improvisation, 1750–1850*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- _____. "Translating the Elgin Marbles: Byron, Hemans, Keats." *The Wordsworth Circle* 40.1 (2009): 29–36.
- Eustace, John Chetwode. *A Classical Tour through Italy*. 6th ed. Vol. 2. Paris: Baudry's European Library, 1837.
- Eyre, George and Andrew Strahan. *A Collection of Statutes Relating to the East India Company*. London, 1810.
- Farington, Joseph. *Diary*. Vol. 34. (December 15, 1804). London: Hutchinson & Co., 1924.
- Faubert, Michelle. "The Fictional Suicides of Mary Wollstonecraft." *Literary Compass* 12.12 (2015): 652–659.
- Fennetaux, Ariane, Amélie Junqua, and Sophie Vasset, eds. *The Afterlife of Used Things*. New York and London: Routledge, 2015.
- Fennetaux, Ariane, Amélie Junqua, and Sophie Vasset. "Introduction: The Many Lives of Recycling." In Fennetaux, Junqua, and Vasset, 1–10.
- Fenwick, Eliza. *Secresy; or, the Ruin on the Rock*, ed. Isobel Grundy. 2nd ed. Ontario: Broadview, 1998.
- Ferguson, Olivia. "Venus in Chains: Slavery, Connoisseurship, and Masculinity in *The Monk*." *Gothic Studies* 20.1 (2018): 29–43.
- Festa, Lynn. *Fiction without Humanity: Person, Animal, Thing in Early Enlightenment Literature and Culture*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019.
- _____. "Personal Effects: Wigs and Possessive Individualism in the Long Eighteenth Century." *Eighteenth-Century Life* 29.2 (Spring 2005): 47–90.
- _____. *Sentimental Figures of Empire in Eighteenth-Century Britain and France*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006.
- Forsyth, Joseph. *Remarks on Antiquities, Arts and Letters, during an Excursion in Italy, in the Years 1802 and 1803*. 4th ed. London: John Murray, 1835.
- Frank, Marcie. "Frances Burney's Theatricality." *ELH* 82.2 (2015): 615–635.
- Free, Melissa. "Dirty Linen": Legacies of Empire in Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone*." *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 48.4 (2006): 340–371.
- Freedgood, Elaine. *The Ideas in Things: Fugitive Meaning in the Victorian Novel*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006.
- Frow, John. "A Pebble, a Camera, a Man Who Turns into a Telegraph Pole." *Critical Inquiry* 28.1 (2001): 270–285.
- Fulford, Tim. "Romanticizing the Empire: The Naval Heroes of Southey, Coleridge, Austen, and Marryat." *MLQ* 60.2 (June 1999): 161–196.

- Gamble, Christopher N., Joshua S. Hanan, and Thomas Nail. "What Is New Materialism?" *Angelaki, Journal of the Theoretical Humanities* 24.6 (2017): 111–134.
- Gamer, Michael. "Maria Edgeworth and the Romance of Real Life." *Novel* 34.2 (2001): 232–266.
- Garber, Marjorie, Paul B. Franklin, and Rebecca L. Walkowitz, eds. *Field Work: Sites in Literary and Cultural Studies*. New York and London: Routledge, 1996.
- Gasché, Rodolphe. *The Honor of Thinking: Critique, Theory, Philosophy*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007.
- Gatens, Moira, ed. *Feminist Interpretations of Benedict Spinoza*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009.
- Gell, Alfred. "The Technology of Enchantment and the Enchantment of Technology." In *Anthropology, Art, and Aesthetics*, ed. Jeremy Coote and Anthony Shelton, 40–63. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992.
- Gennari, Geneviève. *Le Premier Voyage de Madame de Staël en Italie, et la Genèse de Corinne*. Paris: Boivin & Co., 1947.
- Gentleman's Magazine: Historical Chronicle* 47. London, 1777.
- Gibbon, Edward. *The Autobiographies of Edward Gibbon*, ed. John Murray. London: John Murray, 1897.
- Gibbon's Journey from Geneva to Rome*, ed. Georges A. Bonnard. London, 1961.
- Gidal, Eric. "Melancholy, Trauma, and National Character: Mme de Staël's *Considérations sur les principaux événements de la Révolution française*." *Studies in Romanticism* 49.2 (2010): 261–292.
- Giedion, Siegfried. *Mechanization Takes Command: A Contribution to Anonymous History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1948.
- Gigante, Denise. *Taste: A Literary History*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005.
- Gilpin, William. *Observations on the Western Parts of England*. London: T. Cadell, 1808.
- Ginzburg, Carlo. *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method*, trans. John and Anne C. Tedeschi. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.
- Godfrey, Sima. "Rien que ton costume, on te met à la porte: The Importance of Being Fashionable in 19th-Century French Literature." *Cardozo Studies in Law and Literature* 7.2 (1995): 245–256.
- Goldberger, Avriel H. "Germaine de Staël's *Corinne*: Challenges to the Translator in the 1980s." *The French Review* 63.5 (1990): 800–809.
- Gottlieb, Evan. *Romantic Realities: Speculative Realism and British Romanticism*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016.
- Gray-Rosendale, Laura and Gil Harootunian. "Introduction." In *Fractured Feminisms: Rhetoric, Context, and Contestation*, ed. Gray-Rosendale and Harootunian, 1–27. Albany: SUNY University Press, 2003.
- Greenfield, Susan C. "'Abroad and at Home': Sexual Ambiguity, Miscegenation, and Colonial Boundaries in Edgeworth's *Belinda*." *PMLA* 112.2 (1997): 214–228.

- Greenhalgh, Michael. *Marble Past, Monumental Present: Building with Antiquities in the Mediaeval Mediterranean*. Leiden and Boston, MA: Brill, 2009.
- Gregoriotti, Guido. *Jewelry through the Ages*, trans. Helen Lawrence. London: Hamlyn, 1973.
- Grieg, Hannah. *The Beau Monde: Fashionable Society in Georgian London*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Gross, Kenneth. *The Dream of the Moving Statue*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992.
- Grosz, Elizabeth. "Darwin and Feminism: Preliminary Investigations for a Possible Alliance." In Alaimo and Hekman, 23–51.
The Incorporeal: Ontology, Ethics, and the Limits of Materialism. New York: Columbia University Press, 2017.
- In the Nick of Time: Politics, Evolution, and the Untimely*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004.
- Volatile Bodies*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.
- Grusin, Richard, ed. *The Nonhuman Turn*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015.
- Gustafson, Susan E. *Absent Mothers and Orphaned Fathers: Narcissism and Abjection in Lessing's Aesthetic and Dramatic Production*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995.
- Gutwirth, Madelyn. "The Engulfed Beloved: Representations of Dead and Dying Women in the Art and Literature of the Revolutionary Era." In Melzer and Rabine, 198–227.
Madame de Staël, Novelist: The Emergence of the Artist as Woman. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978.
- "Seeing *Corinne* Afresh." In Szmurlo, 26–33.
The Twilight of the Goddesses: Women and Representation in the French Revolutionary Era. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992.
- Gutwirth, Madelyn, Avriel Goldberger, and Karyna Szmurlo, eds. *Germaine de Staël: Crossing the Borders*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1991.
- Guyard, Marius-François. "Lamartine et *Paul et Virginie*." *Revue d'Histoire littéraire de la France* 89.5 (1989): 891–899.
- Hale, J. R. "Art and Audience: The *Medici Venus*, c. 1750–c. 1850." *Italian Studies: An Annual Review* 31 (1976): 37–58, ed. T. G. Griffith, C. Grayson, U. Limentaini, F. Haskell, and C. P. Brand. Leeds: Maney & Son.
- Haley, Bruce. *Living Forms: Romantics and the Monumental Figure*. Albany: SUNY Press, 2003.
- Harriman-Smith, James. "Une tragédie possible: *Corinne, ou l'Italie et Roméo et Juliette*." *Études françaises* 51.1 (2015): 125–140.
- Harris, Mrs. Elizabeth. "Mrs. Harris to Her Son," September 29, 1764. In *Letters of the Earl of Malmesbury and His Contemporaries*. London: Richard Bentley, 1870.
- Hartop, Christopher. *Royal Goldsmiths: The Art of Rundell & Bridge, 1797–1843*. London: John Adamson for Koopman Rare Art, 2005.

- Harvey, Alison. "West Indian Obeah and English 'Obee': Race, Femininity, and Questions of Colonial Consolidation in Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda*." In *New Essays on Maria Edgeworth*, ed. Julie Nash, 1–30. Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2006.
- Haskell, Francis and Nicholas Penny. *Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture 1500–1900*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998.
- Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *Passages from the French and Italian Note-Books*. New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1883.
- Haydon, Patrick. "Gilles Deleuze and Naturalism: A Convergence with Ecological Theory and Politics." *Environmental Ethics* 19.2 (1997): 185–204.
- Hazlitt, William. *The Complete Works*, ed. P. P. Howe, 21 vols., vol. 10. London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1930–1934.
- Hekman, Susan. *The Material of Knowledge: Feminist Disclosures*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008.
- Heller, Deborah. *Literary Sisterhoods: Imagining Women Artists*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005.
- "Tragedy, Sisterhood, and Revenge in *Corinne*." *Papers in Language and Literature* 26.2 (1990): 212–232.
- Henderson, Ian. "Reading Lessons: A New Appreciation of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's *Paul et Virginie*." *SVEC* 12 (2003): 303–329, ed. Jonathan Mallinson. Oxford: Voltaire Foundation.
- Herder, Johann Gottfried. *Sculpture: Some Observations on Shape and Form from Pygmalion's Creative Dream*, ed. and trans. Jason Gaiger. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.
- Hershinow, Stephanie Insley. *Born Yesterday: Inexperience and the Early Realist Novel*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2019.
- Hertz, Neil. *The End of the Line: Essays on Psychoanalysis and the Sublime*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1985.
- Heydt-Stevenson, Jillian. "'Amber does not shed so sweet a perfume as the veriest trifles touched by those we love': Engaging with Community through Things in Bernardin de St. Pierre's *Paul et Virginie*." In *Engaging Romanticism*, ed. Mark Lussier and Bruce Matsunaga, 22–40. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2008.
- Austen's Unbecoming Conjunctions: Subversive Laughter, Embodied History*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- "Changing her gown and setting her head to rights': New Shops, New Hats and New Identities." In *Women and Material Culture, 1660–1830*, ed. Jennie Batchelor and Cora Kaplan, 52–68. New York and London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- "*Paul et Virginie*: la danse du roman et de l'objet." In Leprière, 80–84.
- "Sexualities." *The Cambridge Companion to Women's Writing in the Romantic Period*, ed. Devoney Looser, 198–212. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Heydt-Stevenson, Jillian and Charlotte Sussman, eds. *Recognizing the Romantic Novel: New Histories of British Fiction, 1780–1830*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2008.

- Heyl, Christoph. "The Metamorphosis of the Mask in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century London." In *Masquerade and Identities: Essays on Gender, Sexuality and Marginality*, ed. Efrat Tseëlon, 114–134. London: Routledge, 2001.
- Hickey, William. *Memoirs*. 4 vols. London: 1775.
- Higgins, Ian. "Introduction." *Le Parti pris des choses*, ed. Ian Higgins, 1–36. London: Athlone Press, 1979.
- Higonnet, Margaret. "Introduction." In *Borderwork: Feminist Engagements with Comparative Literature*, ed. Higonnet, 1–16. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994.
- Hillard, George Stillman. *Six Months in Italy*. 21st ed. Boston, MA: Riverside Press, 1881.
- Hobson, Marian. "Measuring Statues, or, Special Neutrality." *Paragraph* 27.1 (2004): 33–49.
- Hogarth, William. *The Analysis of Beauty*. London: W. Strahan, 1772.
- Hogsett, Charlotte. *The Literary Existence of Germaine de Staël*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987.
- Holcomb, Melanie, ed. *Jewelry: The Body Transformed*. Catalog to the Exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018.
- Holcroft, Thomas. *The Road to Ruin: A Comedy*. 8th ed. London: J. Debrett, 1792.
- Holland, Anna and Richard Scholar. "Introduction." In *Pre-Histories and Afterlives: Studies in Critical Method for Terence Cave*, ed. Holland and Scholar, 1–13. London: Legenda, Modern Humanities Research Association and Maney Publishing, 2009.
- Honour, Hugh. "Canova's Statues of Venus." *The Burlington Magazine* 114.835 (1972): 658–671.
- Horkheimer, Max and Theodor Adorno. *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1944; English trans, 2002.
- Horrocks, Ingrid. *Women Wanderers and the Writing of Mobility, 1784–1814*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.
- Hughes, Claire. *Hats*. London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2017.
- Hunt, Leigh. *Autobiography*. London, 1860.
Leigh Hunt's Dramatic Criticism: 1808–1831, ed. Lawrence Huston Houtchens and Carolyn Washburn Houtchens. New York: Columbia University Press, 1949.
- Hunt, Lynn, ed. *Eroticism and the Body Politic*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991.
The Family Romance of the French Revolution. New York and London: Routledge, 1992.
 "Freedom of Dress in Revolutionary France." In Melzer and Norberg, 224–251.
Inventing Human Rights: A History. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2007.

- “The Political Psychology of Revolutionary Caricatures.” In Cuno, 33–40.
Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.
- “The Unstable Boundaries of the French Revolution.” In *A History of Private Life: Vol. 4, From the Fires of Revolution to the Great War*, ed. Michelle Perrot, 13–44. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990.
- Ianetta, Melissa. “‘She Must Be a Rare One’: Aspasia, *Corinne*, and the Improvisatrice Tradition.” *PMLA* 123.1 (2008): 92–108.
- Ingen, Robert, ed. *The Collected Works of Percy Shelley: Letters, 1803–1818*. London: Sir I. Pitman, 1909.
- Introna, Lucas D. “Ethics and the Speaking of Things.” *Theory, Culture & Society* 26.4 (2009): 25–46.
- Isbell, John. “Introduction.” In *Germaine de Staël’s Corinne, or Italy*, trans. and ed. Sylvia Raphael, i–xx. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Israel, Jonathan I. *Democratic Enlightenment: Philosophy, Revolution, and Human Rights, 1750–1790*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity, and the Emancipation of Man, 1670–1752*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650–1750*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Jacobus, Mary L. *Romantic Things: A Tree, a Rock, a Cloud*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012.
- “The Science of Herself: Scenes of Female Enlightenment.” In *Romanticism, History, and the Possibilities of Genre: Re-forming Literature 1789–1837*, ed. Tilottama Rajan and Julia M. Wright, 240–269. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Jager, Colin. “Can We Talk about Consciousness Again? (Emergence, Natural Piety, Wordsworth).” In *Romantic Frictions*, ed. Theresa M. Kelley, *Romantic Circles* (September 2011, para. 6). <https://webarchive.loc.gov/all/20220831125402/https://romantic-circles.org/praxis/frictions/HTML/praxis.2011.jager.html>
- James, Ian. *The Fragmentary Demand: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Jean-Luc Nancy*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006.
- Jeffries, David. *A Treatise on Diamonds and Pearls. In which their importance is considered; and plain rules are exhibited for ascertaining the value of both; and the true method of manufacturing diamonds*. 3rd ed. C. Clarke, 1800.
- Jenson, Deborah. *Trauma and Its Representations: The Social Life of Mimesis in Post-Revolutionary France*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.
- Johnson, Barbara. “The Lady in the Lake.” *A New History of French Literature*, ed. Denis Hollier, 627–632. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994.
- “Ode on a Public Thing.” In Garber, Franklin, and Walkowitz, 137–143.
- Johnson, Claudia L. *Equivocal Beings: Politics, Gender, and Sentimentality in the 1790s: Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe, Burney, Austen*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

- Johnson, Samuel. *A Dictionary of the English Language: in which the words are deduced from their originals, explained in their different meanings, ... Abstracted from the folio edition, by the author, Samuel Johnson, A. M. To which is prefixed, A grammar of the English language*. Vol. 2. London: 1786.
- Jones, Jennifer. "Coquettes and Grisettes: Women Buying and Selling in Ancien Régime Paris." In de Grazia and Furlough, 25–53.
- Jones-Rogers, Stephanie E. *White Women as Slave Owners in the American South*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019.
- Juengel, Scott J. "The Novel of Universal Peace." *Cultural Critique* 79 (Fall 2011): 60–93.
- Jullien, François. *The Propensity of Things: Toward a History of Efficacy in China*, trans. Janet Lloyd. New York: Zone, 1996.
- Kaiser, Thomas E. "The Diplomatic Origins of the French Revolution." In *The Oxford Handbook of the French Revolution*, ed. David Andress, 109–127. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, ed. and trans. Mary Gregor. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose." In *Kant: Political Writings*, ed. Hans Reiss, trans. H. B. Nisbet, 41–53. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Kates, Gary. *Monsieur D'Eon Is a Woman: A Tale of Political Intrigue and Sexual Masquerade*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.
- Kavanagh, Thomas M. "Language as Deception: Diderot's *Les Bijoux indiscrets*." *Diderot Studies* 23 (1988): 101–113.
- Keats, John. *The Poems of John Keats*, ed. Miriam Allott. London and New York: Longman and Norton, 1970.
- Kelly, Gary. *Women, Writing, and Revolution: 1790–1827*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.
- Kemper, Rachel H. *Costume*. New York: Newsweek Books, 1979.
- Kenney, James. *Matrimony: A Petit Opera*. London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1804.
- Khalidi, Omar. *Romance of the Golconda Diamonds*. Ahmedabad: Mapin Grantha, 1999.
- Khalip, Jacques. "The Ruin of Things." In *Romantic Frictions*, ed. Theresa Kelley. *Romantic Circles* (September 2011). <https://webarchive.loc.gov/all/20200209034433/https://romantic-circles.org/praxis/disaster/index.html>
- Kilfeather, Siobhán. "Introductory Note." In *The Works of Maria Edgeworth*. Vol. 2, vii–xiv. New York: Routledge, 2003.
- King, C. W. *The Natural History of Precious Stones and of the Precious Metals*. Bell & Daldy, 1867.
- King James Bible*.
- Kingsley, Charles. "The Life of Saint Paul." In *The Hermits*. London and New York: Macmillan, 1891.
- Kirby, Vicki. *Telling Flesh: The Substance of the Corporeal*. New York: Routledge, 2014, first pub. 1997.

- Kirkley, Laura. "Translating Rousseauism: Transformations of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's *Paul et Virginie* in the Works of Helen Maria Williams and Maria Edgeworth." In *Readers, Writers, Salonnières: Female Networks in Europe, 1700–1900*, ed. Hilary Brown and Gillian Dow, 93–118. New York: Peter Lang, 2011.
- Kirkpatrick, Kathryn J., ed. "'Gentlemen Have Horrors upon This Subject': West Indian Suitors in Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda*." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 5.4 (1993): 331–348.
- "Note on the Text." In Maria Edgeworth, *Belinda*, xxvi–xxxii. 1802 ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Klancher, Jon. "Discriminations, or Romantic Cosmopolitanisms in London." In *Romantic Metropolis: The Urban Scene of British Culture, 1780–1840*, ed. James Chandler and Kevin Gilmartin, 65–82. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Köhler, Carl. *A History of Costume*. 1928. Ed. and augmented by Emma von Sichart. Reprint. New York: Dover Publications, 1963.
- Kotzebue, Augustus von. *Travels through Italy in the Years 1804 and 1805*. Vol. 1. London: T. Gillet, 1806.
- Kowaleski-Wallace, Elizabeth. "Home Economics: Domestic Ideology in Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda*." *The Eighteenth Century* 29.3 (1988): 242–262.
- Kripal, Jeffrey J. *Roads of Excess, Palaces of Wisdom: Eroticism & Reflexivity in the Study of Mysticism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001.
- Kwass, Michael. "Consumption and the World of Ideas: Consumer Revolution and the Moral Economy of the Marquis de Mirabeau." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 37.2 (2004): 187–213.
- Labio, Catherine. "Reading by the Gold and Black Clock; Or, the Recasting of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's *Paul et Virginie*." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 16.4 (2004): 671–694.
- Lafrance, Geneviève. "De la reconnaissance comme aveu: anagnorisis et sacrifice mémoriel dans *Corinne ou l'Italie* de Mme de Staël." *SVEC* 12 (2006): 261–267, ed. Edward Nye. Oxford: Voltaire Foundation.
- Lake, Crystal B. *Artifacts: How We Think and Write about Found Objects*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2020.
- Lamartine, Alphonse de. *Raphael; or, Pages of the Book of Life at Twenty*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1868.
- Lamb, Jonathan. *The Things Things Say*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011.
- Lancelle, Danièle. "Paul et Virginie : un livre sulfureux?" In Leprêtre, 95–101.
- Landes, Joan B. "Representing the Body Politic: The Paradox of Gender in the Graphic Politics of the French Revolution." In Melzer and Rabine, 15–37.
- Langley, Susan. *Vintage Hats & Bonnets: 1770–1970*. Kentucky: Collector Books, 1998, 2004.
- Laskey, John C. *A Description of the Series of Medals Struck at the National Medal Mint by Order of Napoleon Bonaparte*. London: H. R. Young, 1818.

- Latour, Bruno. *Politics of Nature: How to Bring the Sciences into Democracy*, trans. Catherine Porter. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004.
- Laver, James. *Costume and Fashion: A Concise History*. Rev. Amy de la Haye. London and New York: Thames and Hudson, 1969, 1995.
- Law-Sullivan, Jennifer. "Civilizing the Sibyl: Staël's *Corinne ou l'Italie*." *French Forum* 32.1–2 (2007): 53–71.
- Le Coat, Nanette. "Places of Memory: History Writing in Staël's *Corinne*." In Szmurlo, 139–153.
- Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law School. www.law.cornell.edu/wex/accessory_after_the_fact
- Leighton, Angela. *On Form: Poetry, Aestheticism, and the Legacy of a Word*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Leprêtre, Élisabeth, ed. *Paul et Virginie, un exotisme enchanteur*. Paris: Nicolas Chaudun, 2014.
- "Préambule." In *Paul et Virginie, un exotisme enchanteur*, 6–11.
- "Regarder l'esclavage." In *Paul et Virginie: un exotisme enchanteur*, 84–87.
- Levinson, Alfred A. "Diamond Sources and Their Discovery." *The Nature of Diamonds*, ed. George E. Harlow, 72–104. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Levinson, Marjorie. "A Motion and a Spirit: Romancing Spinoza." *Studies in Romanticism* 46.4 (2007): 367–408.
- The Romantic Fragment Poem: A Critique of a Form*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986.
- Thinking through Poetry: Field Reports on Romantic Lyric*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Levy, Gayle A. "A Genius for the Modern Era: Madame de Staël's *Corinne*." *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 30.3–4 (2002): 243–254.
- Lightfoot, Marjorie. "'Morals for Those That Like Them': The Satire of Edgeworth's *Belinda*, 1801." *Eire* 29.4 (1994): 117–131.
- Lilley, James D. *Common Things: Romance and the Aesthetics of Belonging in Atlantic Modernity*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2014.
- Lilti, Antoine. *The Invention of Celebrity: 1750–1850*, trans. Lynn Jeffress. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2017. First published as *Figures publiques. L'invention de la célébrité. 1750–1850*. Librairie Arthème Fayard, 2015.
- Lippert, Sarah J. *The Paragone in Nineteenth-Century Art*. New York and London: Routledge, 2019.
- Liu, Alan. *Wordsworth: The Sense of History*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989.
- Lokke, Kari. "Staël's Enthusiasm, Eternity, and 'les armes du temps'." *Essays in Romanticism* 15 (2007): 33–49.
- Tracing Women's Romanticism: Gender, History, and Transcendence*. New York and London: Routledge, 2004.
- Looser, Devoney. *Women Writers and Old Age in Great Britain, 1750–1850*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008.

- Luppé, Robert, de, ed. *Madame de Staël et J.-B.-A. Suard: Correspondance Inédite (1786–1817)*. Geneva: Droz, 1970.
- Lussier, Mark. “Self-Annihilation/Inner Revolution: Blake’s *Milton*, Buddhism, and Ecocriticism.” *Religion & Literature* 40.1 (2008): 39–57.
- Luzzi, Joseph. *Romantic Europe and the Ghost of Italy*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008.
- Lynch, Deidre Shauna. *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture, and the Business of Inner Meaning*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.
- Lyttelton, George. “Advice to a Lady.” In *The Poetical Works of George Lord Lyttelton: With Additions to which Prefixed an Account of His Life*. London: Cadell and Davies, 1801.
- Macedo, Ana Gabriela and Margarida Esteves Pereira. *Identity and Cultural Translation: Writing across the Borders of Englishness: Women’s Writing in English in a European Context*. New York: Peter Lang, 2006.
- Maddow, Paula. *Women of Grub Street: Press, Politics, and Gender in the London Literary Marketplace 1678–1730*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1998.
- MacFadyen, Heather. “Lady Delacour’s Library: Maria Edgeworth’s *Belinda* and Fashionable Reading.” *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 48.4 (1994): 423–439.
- Mackenzie, Althea. *Hats and Bonnets*. London: The National Trust, 2004.
- Mackie, Erin. *Market à la Mode: Fashion, Commodity, and Gender in The Tatler and The Spectator*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997.
- Mainz, Valerie. “The Chevalier d’Eon and His Several Identities: Representations of d’Eon in English Caricatures of the 1770s and 1780s.” In Burrows, Conlin, Goulbourne, and Mainz, 113–132.
- Mallipeddi, Ramesh. *Spectacular Suffering: Witnessing Slavery in the Eighteenth-Century British Atlantic*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2016.
- Malthus, Daniel, trans. of *Paul et Virginie*. Text renamed *Paul and Mary: An Indian Story*. London: J. Dodsley, 1789.
- Mansuelli, Guido. *Galleria degli Uffizi: Le Sculture*. 2 vols. Rome: Istituto poligrafico dello Stato, Libreria dello Stato, 1958–1961.
- Marinetti, F. T. “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism.” *Let’s Murder the Moonshine: Selected Writings*, ed. R. W. Flint and trans. R. W. Flint and Arthur A. Coppotelli, 47–52. Los Angeles: Sun & Moon Classics, 1972, 1991.
- Marion, Jean-Luc. *In Excess: Studies of Saturated Phenomena*, trans. Robyn Horner and Vincent Berraud. New York: Fordham University Press, 2002.
- Markovits, Stefanie. “Form Things: Looking at Genre through Victorian Diamonds.” *Victorian Studies* 52.4 (2010): 591–619.
- Marso, Lori. “The Loving Citizen: Germaine de Staël’s *Delphine*.” *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 5 (1997): 109–131.
- Mason, Nicholas. “Class, Gender, and Domesticity in Maria Edgeworth’s *Belinda*.” In *The Eighteenth-Century Novel*, ed. Susan Spencer, 271–283. Vol. 1. New York: AMS Press, 2001.
- Matlock, Jann. “Reading Invisibility.” In Garber, Franklin, and Walkowitz, 183–195.

- Maunu, Leanne. "Quelling the French Threat in Frances Burney's *Evelina*." *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 31 (2002): 99–125.
- Mawe, John. *Travels in the Interior of Brazil: Particularly in the Gold and Diamond Districts of that Country*. . . London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1812.
- A Treatise on Diamonds and Precious Stones*. 1st ed. London, 1813. 2nd ed. London, 1823.
- McAllister, Marie. "Ungovernable Propensities: *Belinda* and the Idea of Addiction." *The Age of Johnson* 23 (2015): 301–331.
- McCann, Andrew. "Conjugal Love and the Enlightenment Subject: The Colonial Context of Non-identity in Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda*." *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction* 30.1 (1996): 65–77.
- McCue, Maureen. *British Romanticism and the Reception of Italian Old Master Art, 1793–1840*. Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2014.
- McGann, Jerome. *The Romantic Ideology: A Critical Investigation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.
- McMurrin, Mary Helen. "Introduction." In *Mind, Body, Motion, Matter: Eighteenth-Century British and French Literary Perspectives*, ed. Mary Helen McMurrin and Alison Conway, 3–18. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011.
- Melzer, Sara E. and Kathryn Norberg, eds. *From the Royal to the Republican Body: Incorporating the Political in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century France*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.
- Melzer, Sara E. and Leslie W. Rabine, eds. *Rebel Daughters: Women and the French Revolution*. University of California Humanities Research Center. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Mercier, Roger. *L'Afrique noire dans la littérature française: Les Premières images (XVIIIe–XVIIIe siècles)*. Dakar: Publications de la section de langues et littératures, 1962.
- Merry, Robert. *The Laurel of Liberty: A Poem*. London: John Bell, 1790.
- Métra, François et al. *Correspondance secrète, politique & littéraire, ou mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des cours, des sociétés & de la littérature*. Vol. 1. London: John Adamson, 1787.
- Michaelis, Adolf Theodor. *Ancient Marbles in Great Britain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1882.
- Michaëlsson, Karl. "Ambiance." *Studia neophilologica* XII (1939–1940): 91–119.
- Michals, Teresa. "Commerce and Character in Maria Edgeworth." *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 49.1 (1994): 1–20.
- Millar, Oliver. *Zoffany and His Tribuna*. The Paul Mellon Foundation for British Art. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967.
- Miller, Anna Riggs. *Letters from Italy*. Vol. 1. London: Edward and Charles Dilly, 1777.
- Miller, Christopher L. *The French Atlantic Triangle: Literature and Culture of the Slave Trade*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008.
- Miller, Daniel. "Introduction." In *Materiality*, ed. Daniel Miller, 1–50. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005.

- Millikin, Sandra. "The Tribune in English Architecture." *The Burlington Magazine* 112.808 (1970): 442–446.
- Minor, Vernon. *Art History's History*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1994.
- Misson, Maximilien. *Nouveau Voyage d'Italie*. 3rd ed. 2 vols. Holland: Henry van Bulderen, Marchand Libraire, 1702.
- Mitchell, W. J. T. *What Do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.
- Mittelman, James H. *Hyper-conflict: Globalization and Insecurity*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010.
- Moi, Toril. "A Woman's Desire to Be Known: Expressivity and Silence in *Corinne*." *Bucknell Review* 45.2 (2002): 143–175.
- More, Hannah. *The Letters of Hannah More*, ed. R. Brimley Johnson. London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, Ltd., 1925.
- The Morning Chronicle*, May 20, 1780.
- Morris, James M. "Transferrential Rhetoric and Beyond: The West Indian Presence in Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda* and Amelia Opie's *Adeline Mowbray*." In *Intersections of Gender, Class, and Race in the Long Nineteenth Century and Beyond*, ed. Barbara Leonardi, 165–189. New York and London: Palgrave, 2018.
- Morris, Marilyn. "The Chevalière d'Eon, Transgender Autobiography and Identity." *Gender & History* 31.1 (2019): 78–90.
- Mortensen, Peter. *British Romanticism and Continental Influences: Writing in an Age of Europhobia*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.
- Morton, Timothy. "All Objects Are Deviant: Feminism and Ecological Intimacy." In Behar, 65–81.
- Ecology without Nature*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007.
- Dark Ecology: For a Logic of Future Coexistence*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2016.
- Humankind: Solidarity with Nonhuman People*. London and Brooklyn: Verso, 2017.
- Morton, Timothy. "Queer Green Sex Toys." *Secure Sites: Empire and The Emergence of Security*, ed. Jeffrey N. Cox, Jillian Heydt-Stevenson, and Paul Youngquist. *ELN* 54.1 (2016): 15–25.
- Realist Magic: Objects, Ontology, Causality*. Open Humanities Press, 2013.
- Müller-Sievers, Helmut. *The Cylinder: Kinematics of the Nineteenth Century*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012.
- Mulrooney, Jonathan. "How Keats Falls." *Studies in Romanticism* 50.2 (2011): 251–273.
- Murray, John. *A Memoir on the Diamond; Including Its Economical and Political History*. 2nd ed. London: Relfe and Fletcher, 1839.
- Myers, Mitzi. "My Art Belongs to Daddy? Thomas Day, Maria Edgeworth and Pre-Texts of *Belinda*: Women Writers and Patriarchal Authority." In *Revising Women: Eighteenth-Century "Women's Fiction" and Social Engagement*, ed. Paula R. Backscheider, 104–146. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000.

- “Shot from Canons; or, Maria Edgeworth and the Cultural Production and Consumption of the Late Eighteenth-Century Woman Writer.” In Bermingham and Brewer, 193–214.
- Naginski, Isabelle. “Germaine de Staël among the Romantics.” In Gutwirth, Goldberger, and Szmurlo, 177–187.
- Nancy, Jean-Luc. *Being Singular Plural*, trans. Robert D. Richardson and Anne E. O’Byrne. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.
- The Inoperative Community*, ed. Peter Connor and trans. Peter Connor, Lisa Garbus, Michael Holland, and Simona Sawhney. *Theory and History of Literature*. Vol. 76. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991.
- Listening*, trans. Charlotte Mandell. New York: Fordham University Press, 2007.
- The Muses*, trans. Peggy Kamuf. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996.
- Nechtmann, Tillman W. “A Jewel in the Crown? Indian Wealth in Domestic Britain in the Late Eighteenth Century.” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 41.1 (2007): 71–86.
- Neill, Anna. “The Sentimental Novel and the Republican Imaginary: Slavery in *Paul and Virginia*.” *Diacritics* 23.3 (1993): 36–47.
- Nesselrath, Arnold. *Raphael’s School of Athens. Recent Restorations of the Vatican Museums*. Vol. 1. Rome: Vatican City, 1996.
- “The Venus Belvedere: An Episode in Restoration.” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 50 (1987): 205–214.
- Nokes, David. *John Gay: A Profession of Friendship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- O’Keeffe, John. *Recollections*. London, 1825.
- O’Quinn, Daniel. *Staging Governance: Theatrical Imperialism in London, 1770–1800*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005.
- Ogden, Jack. “England’s Largest Diamond.” Published in two separate issues: Part 1: “The Gamble,” *Gem and Jewellery History* 18.2 (2009): 10–12 and Part 2: “From Pall Mall to the Pyramids,” *Gem and Jewellery History* 18.3 (2009): 36–37.
- Oracle and Daily Advertiser*. London: Tuesday, November 18, 1800; Issue 22,398. *Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Burney Newspapers Collection*.
- Paine, Thomas. *Rights of Man, Common Sense and Other Political Writings* (1792), ed. Mark Philp, 199–331. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Park, Julie. *The Self & It: Novel Objects in Eighteenth-Century England*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010.
- Park, Suzie Asha. “‘All Agog to Find Her Out’: Compulsory Narration in *The Wanderer*.” In Heydt-Stevenson and Sussman, 126–154.
- Parliamentary Register; or, History of the proceedings and debates of the Houses of Lords and Commons*. Vol. XII. London: J. Debrett, 1800.
- Pascoe, Judith. *The Hummingbird Cabinet: A Rare and Curious History of Romantic Collectors*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006.
- Paulson, Ronald. “The Severed Head: The Impact of French Revolutionary Caricatures on England.” In Cuno, 55–65.

- Peachum, Henry. *Peachum's Compleat Gentleman* (1622). Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906.
- Peacocke, Emma. *Romanticism and the Museum*. New York: Palgrave, 2015.
- Pearce, Susan M. *On Collecting: An Investigation into Collecting in the European Tradition*. New York and London: Routledge, 1999.
- Peel, Ellen. "Corinne's Shift to Patriarchal Mediation: Rebirth or Regression?" In Gutwirth, Goldberger, and Szmurlo, 101–112.
- Peer, Larry H. "Introduction." In *Romanticism and the Object*, ed. Peer, 1–7. New York and London: Palgrave, 2009.
- Perera, Suvendrini. *Reaches of Empire: The English Novel from Edgeworth to Dickens*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991.
- Perkins, Pam. "Private Men and Public Women: Social Criticism in Fanny Burney's *The Wanderer*." *Essays in Literature* 23.1 (1996): 69–83.
- Peters, Karin. "Arcadia Goes Overseas: Pastoral and Planetary Consciousness in Bernardin de Saint Pierre's *Paul and Virginia*." In *Globalizing Literary Genres*, ed. Jernej Habjan and Fabienne Imlinger, 90–109. New York and London: Routledge, 2015.
- Pfau, Thomas. *Romantic Moods: Paranoia, Trauma, and Melancholy, 1790–1840*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005.
- Phillips, Clare. *Jewels and Jewellery*. London: Victoria & Albert Publications, 2000.
- Pigot, George. *Lord Pigot's Narrative of the Late Revolution in the Government of Madrass, Dated 11th September, 1776*. London, 1778?
- Piozzi, Hester Thrale. *Observations and Reflections Made in the Course of a Journey through France, Italy, and Germany*. Vol. 1. London: A. Strahan, 1789.
- Plantzos, Dimitris. "Free-Standing and Relief Sculpture." In *A Companion to Greek Art*. Vol. 1, ed. Tyler Jo Smith and Dimitris Plantzos, 105–131. London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.
- Plato. *The Republic*. New York: Basic Books, 1968.
- Platt, Verity and Michael Squire. "Getting to Grips with Classical Art: Rethinking the Haptics of Graeco-Roman Visual Culture." In *Touch and the Ancient Senses*, ed. Alex Purves, 75–104. London and New York: Routledge, 2018.
- Plotz, John. *Portable Property: Victorian Culture on the Move*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008.
- Pointon, Marcia. *Brilliant Effects: A Cultural History of Gem Stones and Jewellery*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009.
- "Intriguing Jewelry: Royal Bodies and Luxurious Consumption." *Textual Practice* 11.3 (1997): 493–516.
- Pollnitz, Charles-Lewis. *The Memoirs of Charles-Lewis, the Baron de Pollnitz*, 2 vols. London: Daniel Browne, 1737.
- Ponge, Francis. *Le Parti pris des choses*, ed. Ian Higgins. London: The Athlone Press, 1979.
- The Voice of Things*, trans. Beth Archer. New York: McGraw Hill, 1972.
- Poovey, Mary. "Mary Wollstonecraft: The Gender of Genres in Late Eighteenth-Century." *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* 15.2 (Winter, 1982): 111–126.

- Potkay, Adam. "Wordsworth and the Ethics of Things." *PMLA* 123.2 (2008): 390–404.
- Pouget, Jean Henri. *Traité des pierres précieuses et de la manière de les employer en parure*. Paris, 1762.
Public Advertiser. Issue 13333. London, July 3, 1777.
- Rabb, Melinda Alliker. *Miniature and the English Imagination: Literature, Cognition, and Small-Scale Culture, 1650–1765*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019.
- Racault, Jean-Michel. "De l'île réelle à l'île mythique: Bernardin de Saint-Pierre et l'Île de France." In *L'île, territoire mythique*, ed. François Moreau, 79–99. Paris: Aux Amateurs de Livres, 1989.
- "Paul et Virginie et l'utopie: De la 'petite société' au mythe collectif." *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* 242 (1986): 419–471.
- "Problématique de l'Exotisme Littéraire au XVIIIe Siècle: Pour une situation de Paul et Virginie dans les ailleurs fictionnels des Lumières." In Cheval and Tchakaloff, 199–245.
- Radović, Davorka et al. "Evidence for Neandertal Jewelry: Modified White-Tailed Eagle Claws at Krapina." *PLOS ONE* 10.3 (March 11, 2015).
- Ramsay, Andrew Michael. In Joseph Spence. *Observations, Anecdotes, and Characters of Books and Men, Collected from Conversation*, June 6–11, 1729, ed. James M. Osborn. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966. Entry # 1289, 1.473.
- Rancière, Jacques. *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, trans. Gabriel Rockhill. London: Continuum, 2009.
- "Who Is the Subject of the Rights of Man?" *South Atlantic Quarterly* 103.2/3 (2004): 297–310.
- Rashed, Zenab Esmat. *The Peace of Paris, 1763*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1951.
- Rausser, Amelia. *The Age of Undress: Art, Fashion, and the Classical Ideal in the 1790s*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020.
- Raynal, Guillaume-Thomas. *Histoire philosophique et politique de établissements [sic] et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes*, 10 vols. Geneva: Jean-Leonard Pellet, 1780.
- Regier, Alexander. *Fracture and Fragmentation in British Romanticism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Reichardt, Rolf and Hubertus Kohle. *Visualizing the Revolution: Politics and Pictorial Arts in Late Eighteenth-Century France*. London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 2007.
- Reid, Roddey. *Families in Jeopardy: Regulating the Social Body in France, 1750–1910*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993.
- Reinhard, Kenneth. "Kant with Sade, Lacan with Levinas." *MLN* 110.4 (1995): 785–808.
- Reynolds, Sir Joshua. *Sir Joshua Reynolds's Discourses*, ed. Edward Gilpin Johnson. Chicago: A. C. McClurg, 1891.
- Ribeiro, Aileen. *The Art of Dress: Fashion in England and France, 1750–1820*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995.
Fashion in the French Revolution. New York: Holmes and Meier, 1988.

- Richard, Jessica. *The Romance of Gambling in the Eighteenth-Century British Novel*. New York and London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- Richard-Pauchet, Odile. "Mangogul 'Odysséen' dans *Les Bijoux indiscrets* : le découvreur et le poète." *Recherches sur Diderot et sur l'Encyclopédie* 46 (2011): 119–126.
- Richardson, Jonathan. *An Account of Some of the Statues, Bas-Reliefs, Drawings, and Pictures in Italy*. 2nd ed. London: D. Browne, 1754.
- Roach, Joseph. *It*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007.
- Robbins, Bruce. "Comparative Cosmopolitanism." *Third World and Post-Colonial Issues*, in *Social Text* 31/32 (1992): 169–186.
- Feeling Global: Internationalism in Distress*. New York: New York University Press, 1999.
- Roberts, Andrew. *Napoleon: A Life*. New York: Viking, 2014.
- Robertson, Martin. *A History of Greek Art*. Vol. 1. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975.
- Robson, Catherine. "The Stones of Childhood: Ruskin's 'Lost Jewels.'" In *Ruskin and Gender*, ed. Dinah Birch and Francis O'Gorman, 29–46. New York: Palgrave, 2002.
- Rodríguez, Carmen Fernández. "An Analysis of Octave Ségur's Translation of Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda* (1801) into French." *Alicante Journal of English Studies* 29 (2016): 91–111.
- "From Hays to Burney: An Approach to Female Difficulties in Early Nineteenth-Century English Fiction." *Estudios Ingleses de la Universidad Complutense* 16 (2008): 51–66.
- Rogers, Nancy. "Undermining and Overloading: Presentational Style in *Corinne*." In Szmurlo, 37–54.
- Rogister, J. M. J. "D'Éon de Beaumont, Charles Geneviève Louis Auguste André Timothée Chevalier D'Éon in the French Nobility (1728–1810)." In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Vol. 15. September 23, 2004. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Rolland, Romain. *The Life of Michael Angelo*. London: Ballantyne, 1912.
- Rose, Louis. "Freud and Fetishism: Previously Unpublished Minutes of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society." *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 57.2 (1998): 147–166.
- Rossard, Janine. "La Mort mystérieuse de Virginie." *The French Review* 42.3 (1969): 409–418.
- Roulin, Jean-Marie. "*Corinne*: Roman et souci patrimonial." In *Madame de Staël, Corinne ou l'Italie: L'âme se mêle à tout*, ed. José-Luis Diaz, 171–184. Paris: SEDES, 1999.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality among Men*. Amsterdam: Marc Michel Rey, 1755.
- Rowney, Matthew. *Reframing Romantic Nature: Towards a Social Ecocriticism*. Dissertation. City University of New York, September 2016. DA3729027.
- Roy, Devjani. "Negotiating Money in *The Wanderer*: Lessons from Behavioral Economics." *Style* 47.1 (2013): 25–43.

- Rubin, James Henry. "Pierre-Auguste Cot's *The Storm*." *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 14 (1979): 191–200.
- Ruiz, Luc. "Diderot: le roman comme expérience." *Littérature* 3,171 (2013): 13–24.
- Russell, Gillian. *Women, Sociability and Theatre in Georgian London*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Rzepka, Charles J. "From Relics to Remains: Wordsworth's 'The Thorn' and the Emergence of Secular History." *Romanticism on the Net* 31 (2003): n.p.
- Saint-Beuve, Charles-Augustin. *Oeuvres*. Vol. 2. Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Librairie Gallimard, 1960.
- Salih, Sara. "Camilla and *The Wanderer*." *The Cambridge Companion to Frances Burney*, ed. Peter Sabor, 39–53. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Scarry, Elaine. *On Beauty and Being Just*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.
- Schiller, Friedrich. *On the Aesthetic Education of Man; in a Series of Letters*, ed. and trans. Elizabeth M. Wilkinson and L. A. Willoughby. Oxford: Clarendon Press, Oxford University Press, 1967.
- Schlegel, August Wilhelm. *Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Literatur*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1966.
- Scot's Magazine* 39. Edinburgh, August 1777.
- Séjour, Octave, trans. *Bélinde, conte moral de Maria Edgeworth traduit de l'anglais*. Paris: Maradan, 1802.
- Semmel, Stuart. "Reading the Tangible Past: British Tourism, Collecting, and Memory after Waterloo." *Representations* 69 (Winter 2000): 9–37.
- Serodes, Serge. "Madame de Staël entre voyage et roman: *Corinne ou l'Italie*." In *The Documentary Impulse in French Literature*, ed. Buford Norman and Marja Warehime, 39–49. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2001.
- Serres, Michel. *Statues: Le second livre des fondations*. Paris: Éditions François Bourin, 1987.
- Statues: The Second Book of Foundations*, trans. Randolph Burks. London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2015.
- Sharren, Kandice. "The Texture of Sympathy: Narrating Sympathetic Failure in Frances Burney's *Camilla* and *The Wanderer*." *European Romantic Review* 28.6 (2017): 701–727.
- Sheats, Paul D. "Cultivating Margaret's Garden: Wordsworthian 'Nature' and the Quest for Historical 'Difference.'" In *Placing and Displacing Romanticism*, ed. Peter J. Kitson, 16–32. Burlington: Ashgate, 2001.
- Sheldon, Rebekah. "Form / Matter / Chora: Object-Oriented Ontology and Feminist New Materialism." In Grusin, 193–222.
- Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein* (1818). Peterborough, Ontario, Canada: Broadview, 2012.
- History of a Six Weeks' Tour*. London: T. Hookam, 1817.
- Rambles in Germany and Italy in 1840, 1842, and 1843*. Vol. 2. London: E. Moxon, 1844.

- Shelley, Percy. *The Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, ed. Roger Ingpen. Vol. 1. London, 1909.
- Shershow, Scott Cutler. *The Work and the Gift*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.
- Siegel, Jonah. *Desire & Excess: The Nineteenth-Century Culture of Art*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.
- Silver, Sean. *The Mind Is a Collection: Case Studies in Eighteenth-Century Thought*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015.
- Simmel, Georg. *The Philosophy of Money*, trans. Tom Bottomore and David Frisby. New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Simmel on Culture*, ed. David Frisby and Mike Featherstone. London: Sage, 1997.
- “The Sociology of Secrecy and of Secret Societies.” *American Journal of Sociology* 11.4 (January 1906): 441–498.
- Simpson, David. *Wordsworth, Commodification, and Social Concern: The Poetics of Modernity*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Skinner, Gillian. “Professionalism, Performance and Private Theatricals in Frances Burney’s *The Wanderer*.” *Romanticism* 18.3 (2012): 294–305.
- Smith, Bonnie. “*Corinne* and the Hermeneutics of History.” In *Who’s Afraid of Femininity? Questions of Identity*, ed. Margret Brüggmann, Sonja Heebing, Debbi Long, and Magda Michielsens, 67–74. Amsterdam and Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1993.
- Smith, Charlotte. *Desmond*, ed. Antje Blank and Janet Todd. Ontario: Broadview, 2001.
- Smith, Chloe Wigston. “The Haberdasher’s Plot: The Romance of Small Trade in Frances Burney’s Fiction.” *Tulsa Studies in Women’s Literature* 37.2 (Fall 2018): 271–293.
- Women, Work, and Clothes in the Eighteenth-Century Novel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Smith, Sharon. “Juba’s ‘Black Face’ / Lady Delacour’s ‘Mask’: Plotting Domesticity in Maria Edgeworth’s *Belinda*.” *The Eighteenth Century* 54.1 (Spring 2013): 71–90.
- Smith, Woodruff. *Consumption and the Making of Respectability, 1600–1800*. New York and London: Routledge, 2002.
- Sobin, Gustaf. “Archaeological Rhetoric.” In *Luminous Debris: Reflecting on Vestige in Provence and Languedoc*, 38–44. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.
- Collected Poems*, ed. Esther Sobin, Andrew Joron, Andrew Zawacki, and Edward Foster. Greenfield, MA: Talisman House, 2010.
- Sodeman, Melissa. “Novel Anachronisms: Sophia Lee’s *The Life of a Lover* and Frances Burney’s *The Wanderer*.” In *The Sentimental Novel in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Albert J. Rivero, 190–207. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019.
- Sofer, Andrew. *The Stage Life of Props*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003.

- Solomon-Godeau, Abigail. "The Other Side of Venus: The Visual Economy of Feminine Display." In de Grazia and Furlough, 113–150.
- Souriau, Maurice. *Bernardin de Saint-Pierre d'après ses manuscrits*. Paris: Société Française d'imprimerie et de librairie, 1905.
- Spaas, Lieve. "Paul et Virginie: The Shipwreck of an Idyll." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 13.2–3 (2001): 315–324.
- Spacks, Patricia Meyer. *Privacy: Concealing the Eighteenth-Century Self*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
- Spence, Joseph. *Observations, Anecdotes, and Characters of Books and Men, Collected from Conversation*, ed. James M. Osborn. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966. Entry # 1289, 1.473.
- Polymetis: or, An Enquiry concerning the Agreement between the Works of the Roman Poets and the Remains of the Antient Artists, etc.* (1747). London, 1755.
- Spinoza, *Ethics*, trans. Andrew Boyle and G. H. R. Parkinson. London: Everyman, 1993.
- Ethics*, ed. and trans. Edwin Curley. London: Penguin Books, 1996.
- Spitzer, Leo. "Milieu and Ambiance: An Essay in Historical Semantics," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 3.1 (Sept. 1942): 1–42 and 3.2 (Dec. 1942): 169–218.
- Spolsky, Ellen. "Introduction." In *Iconotropism: Turning toward Pictures*, ed. Ellen Spolsky, 11–20. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2004.
- Spyer, Patricia, ed. *Border Fetishisms: Material Objects in Unstable Spaces*. New York: Routledge, 1998.
- Squire, Michael. "Greek Art through Roman Eyes." In *A Companion to Greek Art*. Vol. 2, ed. Tyler Jo Smith and Dimitris Plantzos, 599–620. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.
- Staël, Germaine de. *De l'Allemagne*. Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1968.
- Corinne, or Italy*, ed. and trans. Sylvia Raphael. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Corinne ou l'Italie*, ed. Simone Balayé. Paris: Gallimard, 1985.
- Considerations on the Principal Events of the French Revolution* (LF ed.) Liberty Fund, 2008 <https://oll.libertyfund.org/title/craiutu-considerations-on-the-principal-events-of-the-french-revolution-lf-ed>
- Delphine*, trans. Avriel H. Goldberger. Delkalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1995.
- On Germany*, ed. O. W. Wight. New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1871.
- The Influence of Literature upon Society*. New York: William Pearson, 1835.
- De la littérature*. Paris: Flammarion, 1991.
- De la littérature. Œuvres Complètes*. Vol. 4. Paris: Treuttel and Würtz, 1820.
- Stam, Robert. "Introduction: The Theory and Practice of Adaptation." In *Literature and Film: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation*, ed. Robert Stam and Alessandra Raengo, 1–52. Oxford: Blackwell, 2005.
- Starr, G. Gabrielle. "Burney, Ovid, and the Value of the Beautiful." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 24.1 (2011): 77–104.

- Statutes Passed in the Parliaments held in Ireland*. Vol. 12. Dublin: George Grierson, 1801.
- Steel, Henry Draper. *The India Officer's and Trader's Pocket-Guide, In Purchasing the Drugs and Spices of Asia and the East-Indies: With practical Directions for the Choice of Diamonds*. . . 2nd ed. London, 1789.
- Steiner, Deborah Tarn. *Images in Mind: Statues in Archaic and Classical Greek Literature and Thought*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.
- Steiner, George. *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1975.
- Steiner, Wendy. *Venus in Exile: The Rejection of Beauty in Twentieth-Century Art*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001.
- Stern, Daniel N. *Forms of Vitality: Exploring Dynamic Experience in Psychology, the Arts, Psychotherapy, and Development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Stewart, Susan. *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993.
- Storrie, Calum. *The Delirious Museum: A Journey from the Louvre to Las Vegas*. London and New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 2007.
- Strasser, Susan. *Waste and Want: A Social History of Trash*. New York: Metropolitan Books, 1999.
- Straub, Kristina. *Divided Fictions: Fanny Burney and Feminine Strategy*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1987.
- Streeter, Edwin W. *The Great Diamonds of the World: Their History and Romance*, ed. Joseph Hatton and A. H. Keane. London: George Bell & Sons, 1882.
- Stuurman, Siep. *The Invention of Humanity: Equality and Cultural Difference in World History*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017.
- Sutton, John. "Porous Memory and the Cognitive Life of Things." In *Prefiguring Cyberculture: An Intellectual History*, ed. Darren Tofts, Annemarie Jonson, and Alessio Cavallaro, 130–141. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002.
- Swainson, William. *On the Natural History and Classification of Birds*. Vol. 2. London: Longman, et al., 1837.
- Swallow, Noreen J. "Portraits: A Feminist Appraisal of Mme de Staël's *Delphine*." *Atlantis* 71 (1981): 65–76.
- "The Weapon of Personality: A Review of Sexist Criticism of Madame de Staël." *Atlantis* 8.1 (1982): 78–82.
- Sweet, Rosemary. "British Perceptions of Florence in the Long Eighteenth Century." *The Historical Journal* 50.4 (2007): 837–859.
- Szabo, Franz A. J. *The Seven Years War in Europe: 1756–1763*. Harlowe: Pearson Education Limited, 2008.
- Szmurlo, Karyna, ed. *The Novel's Seductions: Staël's Corinne in Critical Inquiry*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1999.
- Taine, Hippolyte. *Italy: Naples and Rome*, trans. J. Durand, 4th ed. New York: Henry Holt, 1874.
- Tavernier, Jean-Baptiste. *Travels in India*, trans. V. Ball. Vol. 2. London and New York: Macmillan and Co., 1889.

- Taylor, William Cooke. *A Popular History of British India*. Delhi: Mittal Publications, 1987.
- Tenenbaum, Susan. "Corinne: Political Polemics and the Theory of the Novel." In Szmurlo, 154–162.
- Thibault, Gabriel-Robert. "Si le grain ne meurt. . . ." In Leprêtre, 52–79.
- Thois-Dallem, Anne, de. "Impressions colorées de *Paul et Virginie*." In Leprêtre, 102–117.
- Thomas, Ruth. "The Death of an Ideal: Female Suicides in the Eighteenth-Century French Novel." In *French Women and the Age of Enlightenment*, ed. Samia I. Spencer, 321–331. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984.
- Thomas, Sophie. "Introduction – A Tour, a Text, a Body, a Building, a Model: Some (Fore-) words for the Nineteenth-Century Museum." In *Recollecting the Nineteenth-Century Museum*, ed. Sophie Thomas. *Romanticism on the Net* 70 (2018): 1–6.
- Thomas, Sophie. *Romanticism and Visuality: Fragments, History, Spectacle*. New York and London: Routledge, 2008.
- "Vital Matter(s): Shelley, Herder, and Sculpture." *European Romantic Review* 29.3 (2018): 377–387.
- Thompson, Helen. "How *The Wanderer* Works: Reading Burney and Bourdieu." *ELH* 68.4 (2001): 965–989.
- Thomson, James. *Liberty*. In *The Works of James Thomson*, 309–421. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1908.
- Tiffany, Daniel. *Infidel Poetics: Riddles, Nightlife, Substance*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2009.
- Toal, Catherine. "Control Experiment: Edgeworth's Critique of Rousseau's Educational Theory." In *An Uncomfortable Authority: Maria Edgeworth and Her Contexts*, ed. Heidi Kaufman and Chris Fauske, 212–231. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004.
- Toinet, Paul. *Paul et Virginie: Répertoire bibliographique et iconographique*. Paris: G.-P. Maisonneuve et Larose, 1963.
- Trentmann, Frank. "Introduction." In *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption*, ed. Trentmann, 1–19. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Tronzo, William. "Justinian's Hagia Sophia, Angels and Restlessness." In *Radical Marble: Architectural Innovation from Antiquity to the Present*, ed. J. Nicholas Napoli and William Tronzo, 23–42. New York and London: Routledge, 2018.
- Trouille, Mary Seidman. *Sexual Politics in the Enlightenment*. Buffalo: SUNY University Press, 1997.
- Trussler, John. *The Honours of the Table for the Use of Young People* (1767), 2nd ed. London: Literary-Press, 1792.
- Twining, Edward Francis. *A History of the Crown Jewels of Europe*. London: B. T. Batsford, 1960.
- Vallois, Marie-Claire. "Exotic Femininity and the Rights of Man: *Paul et Virginie* and *Atala*, or the Revolution in Stasis." In Melzer and Rabine, 178–197.

- “Old Idols, New Subject: Germaine de Staël and Romanticism.” In Gutwirth, Goldberger, and Szmurlo, 82–97.
- “Voice as Fossil; Germaine de Staël’s *Corinne, or Italy: An Archaeology of Feminine Discourse*.” In Szmurlo, 127–138.
- van Eck, Caroline. *Art, Agency and Living Presence: From the Animated Image to the Excessive Object*. Berlin: Walder de Gruyter GmbH & Co KG, 2015.
- Vareschi, Mark. “Motive, Intention, Anonymity, and *Evelina*.” *ELH* 82.4 (2015): 1135–1158.
- Vasquez, Alexandra. *Listening in Detail: Performances of Cuban Music*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013.
- Verhoeven, Wil. “The Global British Novel.” In *The Oxford History of the Novel in English: Vol. 2, English and British Fiction, 1750–1820*, ed. Peter Garside and Karen O’Brien, 566–588. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Vertovec, Steven and Robin Cohen. “Introduction: Conceiving Cosmopolitanism.” *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism: Theory, Context, and Practice*, ed. Vertovec and Cohen, 1–22. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Viallaneix, Paul. “La Fable d’Elvire.” *Romantisme* 3 (1972): 33–42.
- Vitruvius, *The Ten Books of Architecture*, trans. Morris Hicky Morgan. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: Humphrey Milford; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1914.
- Volmert, Miriam. “Introduction.” In *European Fans in the 17th and 18th Centuries: Images, Accessories, and Instruments of Gesture*, ed. Volmert and Danijela Bucher, 9–20. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020.
- Volmert, Miriam and Danijela Bucher, eds. *European Fans in the 17th and 18th Centuries: Images, Accessories, and Instruments of Gesture*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020.
- Voltaire, François-Marie-Arouet de. “Poème sur le désastre de Lisbonne.” <https://gallica.bnf.fr/essentiels/anthologie/poeme-desastre-lisbonne>
- Waldie, Jane. *Sketches Descriptive of Italy in the Years 1816 and 1817*. Vol. 4. London: John Murray, 1820.
- Wall, Anthony. “Le Bavardage du corps ou *Les Bijoux indiscrets* de Denis Diderot.” *Neophilologus* 78.3 (1994): 351–359.
- Wall, Cynthia. “The English Auction: Narratives of Dismantlings.” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 31.1 (1997): 1–25.
- Wallace, Tara Ghoshal. “Rewriting Radicalism: Wollstonecraft in Burney’s *The Wanderer*.” *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 24.3 (2012): 487–508.
- Waller, Margaret. *The Male Malady: Fictions of Impotence in the French Romantic Novel*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1993.
- Walpole, Horace. “H. Walpole to Lady Mary Coke, Paris, 22 August 1771.” *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole’s Correspondence*, 48 vols., ed. W. S. Lewis. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937–1980.
- Warwick, Alexandra and Dani Cavallaro. *Fashioning the Frame: Boundaries, Dress and Body*. Oxford: Berg, 1998.
- Watkins, Thomas. *Travels through Switzerland, Italy, Sicily*. 2nd ed. Vol. 1. London: J. Owen, 1794.

- Webb, Samantha. "Feeding on Disquiet: *The Ruined Cottage* and the Unmediated Event." *Essays in Romanticism* 18 (2011): 29–43.
- Webb, Timothy. *English Romantic Hellenism: 1700–1824*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1982.
- Weber, Caroline. *Queen of Fashion: What Marie Antoinette Wore to the Revolution*. New York: Picador, 2006.
- Webster, John. *The Duchess of Malfi*, ed. John Russell Brown. London: Methuen, 1964.
- Wehle, Winfried. "Trauma et eruption : La littérature comme mise en scène de l'inconscient. Réflexions sur *Corinne ou l'Italie* de Madame de Staël." *Revue d'Histoire littéraire de la France* 110.1 (2010): 35–64.
- Weiss, Deborah. "Extraordinary Ordinary Belinda: Maria Edgeworth's Female Philosopher." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 19.4 (2007): 441–461.
- Wheeler, Wendy. *The Whole Creature: Complexity, Biosemiotics, and the Evolution of Culture*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 2006.
- Whitman, Vincent. "'Remember My Verse Sometimes': Corinne's Three Songs." In Szmurlo, 55–68.
- Wilcox, R. Turner. *The Mode in Hats and Headdresses: A Historical Survey with 198 Plates*. New York: Dover Publications, 2008.
- Willett, C. and Phillis Cunnington. *Handbook of English Costume in the Eighteenth Century*, 4 vols., vol. 3. London: Faber & Faber, 1957.
- Williams, Helen Maria, trans. *Paul and Virginia*, by Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. London: G. G. & J. Robinson, 1795.
- Williams, Raymond. *Culture and Society: 1780–1950*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1983.
Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983. 1st pub. 1976.
- Wilson, James. *A Journal of Two Successive Tours upon the Continent in the Years 1816, 1817, and 1818*. Vol. 1. London: W. Blackwood, 1820.
- Winckelmann, Johann. *The History of Ancient Art among the Greeks*, trans. G. Henry Lodge. London: John Chapman, 1850.
- Wohlgemut, Esther. *Romantic Cosmopolitanism*. New York and London: Palgrave, 2009.
- Wollstonecraft, Mary. *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman and The Wrongs of Woman, or Maria*, ed. Anne K. Mellor and Noelle Chao. New York: Longman, 2007.
- Wordsworth, William. "Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey, On Revisiting the Banks of the Wye during a Tour. July 13, 1798." In *Lyrical Ballads and Other Poems, 1797–1800*, ed. James Butler and Karen Green. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992.
The Prelude 1799, 1805, 1850, ed. Jonathan Wordsworth, M. H. Abrams, and Stephen Gill. New York and London: Norton Critical Edition, 1979.
The Ruined Cottage. 1799. The Poems of William Wordsworth: Collected Reading Texts from the Cornell Wordsworth. A Complimentary Addendum. Jared

- Curtis, ed. Humanities-Ebooks, *LLP*, Tirril Hall, Tirril, Penrith CA102JE, 2012.
- Yeats, William Butler. "Leda and the Swan." In *The Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats*, 211–212. London: Macmillan, 1933. Reprint, 1973.
- Yogev, Gedalia. *Diamonds and Coral: Anglo-Dutch Jews and Eighteenth-Century Trade*. London: Leicester University Press, 1978.
- Young, Arthur. *Travels during the Years 1787, 1788, and 1789*. 2nd ed. Vol. 1. London: W. Richardson, 1794.
- Youngquist, Paul. *Monstrosities: Bodies and British Romanticism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003.
- Zonitch, Barbara. *Familiar Violence: Gender and Social Upheaval in the Novels of Frances Burney*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1997.

Index

- abstraction
 alternate definitions for, 107
 classical statues and, 106–107
 in *Desmond*, 242
 embodiment vs., 30, 87, 96
 French Revolution and, 26, 28
 melancholy and, 113
 in *Paul et Virginie*, 175, 209
 as separation from the material, 3, 9, 13, 18–19, 165
 thing theory practice and, 87–88, 97, 103, 111, 185
- Act for the Union of Great Britain and Ireland (1800), 148
- Addison, Joseph, 48, 52, 53, 73
- Adkins, Nelson, 181
- after-art objects, 195–209
- agency
 embodied cosmopolitanism and, 95
 female virtue disassociated from, 147
 hats and, 219
 human–nonhuman connection and, 14, 41, 193, 228
 movement and, 16, 28
 political disenfranchisement and, 85
 statues and, 47–49, 57
- Alaimo, Stacy, 5, 21, 171
- Alessandri, Giovanni degli, 69
- Alliston, April, 88, 152, 180
- American Revolution, 221
- Amoia, Alba, 114
- anagnôrisis*, 213
- Anderson, Emily Hodgson, 231
- Anstey, Christopher, 239
- Aravamudan, Srinivas, 128
- archaeological approaches, 30, 181, 198, 251–252
- Arendt, Hannah, 120
- Aristotle, 29, 58, 80, 213–214
- Asendorf, Christoph, 11
- Atkinson, Colin, 188
- Atkinson, Jo, 188
- Audran, Gérard: *The Venus de' Medici* (engraving), 53–54
- Bachelard, Gaston, 243, 246
- Baker, Malcolm, 107, 110
- Bal, Mieke, 69, 180, 189–191
- Balayé, Simone, 102, 114, 118–119
- Barad, Karen, 8, 14, 55
- Barber, Benjamin, 96
- Barbier, Jean, 207
- Barchas, Janine, 197
- Barrell, John, 53, 58–61
- Batchelor, Jennie, 191
- Bateson, Gregory, 179, 236
- Baudrillard, Jean, 66
- Beattie, James, 57
- beauty
 in *Belinda*, 72–73
 classical sculpture and, 72–74, 106–107
 as interaction, 42
 measurement and, 73–74
 Romantic pressures on, 81
 Venus de' Medici as touchstone for, 39, 53, 57
- Beckford, William, 197
- Beenstock, Zoe, 183
- Belinda* (Edgeworth), 6, 12, 30
 Bélinde compared to, 144–146, 194–195
 belonging with in, 39
 colonialism and, 138, 146, 148–149
 conflict diamonds and colonial domesticity in, 138–149
 diamond-bride markets in, 130–138
 ecology of diamonds in, 149–157
 female gender ideals in, 77–79, 135, 189
 French language and allusions in, 31–32
 marriage plot of, 33, 80
 Paul et Virginie recycled by, 180, 188–194, 198, 209
 recognition in, 213–214

- restoration in, 19, 75–79, 155
Venus de' Medici and, 19, 33, 71–81
- Bélinde, conte moral de Maria Edgeworth* (Ségur), 31, 144–146, 180, 194–195, 209
- belonging with*, 1–3, 9, 11–13, 254
- in *Belinda*, 141–144, 155–158, 189
- comparatism and, 22
- in *Corinne ou l'Italie*, 84–85, 87–97, 111, 120
- environmentalism and, 22
- food and, 161–162
- hats and, 220, 228
- healing through, 87
- human rights and, 7–14
- imprinting and, 89–90
- liberating community through, 159
- listening and, 91–92
- in *Paul et Virginie*, 160–165, 173, 179–180
- possession vs., 12–13, 92–93, 120, 241, 252
- radiance and, 18
- restoration and, 20
- resuscitation and, 19
- in *The Ruined Cottage*, 183–188
- Spinoza and, 24
- transnationalism and, 31–34
- Uffizi's Tribuna Gallery and, 43, 47–49
- Venus de' Medici* and, 39, 53, 56, 61–62, 69, 80
- in *The Wanderer*, 246–249
- women's rights and, 27
- Belvedere Venus (Venus Victrix)*, 20, 39, 48, 58, 66, 69, 84
- Benedict, Barbara M., 6
- Benjamin, Walter, 157
- Bennett, Jane, 10, 14
- Bennett, John, 74
- Bergeret de Grancourt, 43, 47
- Berman, Carolyn Vellenga, 168
- Berman, Douglas, 183
- Bermingham, Ann, 44, 136
- Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, Henri, *see also Paul et Virginie* (Bernardin)
Études de la Nature, 159–161, 163, 165, 175
- Rousseau and, 164
- slavery and, 164, 167–168
- Voyage à l'Île-de-France*, 203
- Berry, Wendell, 158, 171, 198, 252, 253
- Bertin, Rose, 221
- Betz, Dorothy, 178
- Biger, Pierre-Henri, 206
- Binhammer, Katherine, 86
- Bishop, Elizabeth: "Exchanging Hats," 34, 210–212, 217–218, 221, 223, 226
- bodies, *see also* sexuality
 as archetype for sculpture, 109
belonging with, 87, 249
- disrespect for materiality of, 165, 167–168
- imprinting on, 108, 170
- as jewels, 125, 135
- measurement and proportions of, 57, 74
- nondualism of, 24–25, 83, 127
- as property, 169
- restoration and resuscitation of, 19, 76, 78, 102
- truthfulness through, 126
- women's severing from, 114, 170–171, 174–180, 210
- Bolla, Peter de, 27
- Bongie, Chris, 159, 164, 168
- Bonifacio, Mariella, 98
- Bour, Isabelle, 189
- Brazil, diamonds in, 150–151
- breath
 resuscitation and, 19, 83, 90, 98, 100, 106
 women's freedom and, 83, 114, 118, 120, 122
- Britton, Jeanne M., 79, 192, 213
- Brogan, Stephen, 36
- Broglio, Ron, 187
- Brown, Bill, 1, 2, 40, 89, 125
- Brown, Catherine, 22, 40
- Bruschini, Enrico, 114
- Bryant, Levi, 253
- Buontalenti, Bernardo, 40
- Burke, Edmund, 57, 139, 228
- Burney, Frances, 12, 92, *see also Evelina* (Burney); *The Wanderer* (Burney)
 on hats, 219
 women's relationship to property in works of, 210
- Byron, Lord, 50–51, 252
- Camper, Petras, 71
- Canova, Antonio
Cenotaph of Archduchess Maria Christina of Austria, 114–115, 119
Perseus Triumphant, 232
Venere Italica, 70
- Canuel, Mark, 73
- Capra, Fritjof, 18, 165
- Cave, Terence, 213–214, 247
- Charlotte (queen), 44
- Châtel, Laurent, 197
- Cherpack, Clifton, 178
- Cheval, François, 196
- Chrisman–Campbell, Kimberly, 221, 223, 234
- circuit structure, 179
- classicism, 105, *see also* monuments and statues
- femininity and, 136
- modern art compared to, 112–121
- resuscitation and, 104–110

- clothing
 cotton trade and, 173
 in *Paul et Virginie*, 173–177
 in *The Wanderer*, 215
 performance of, 211
- Coat, Nanette Le, 97
- Cobb, James, 180
- Cohen, Joshua, 96
- Cohen, Margaret, 105
- Cohen, Robin, 96
- Cohen, William, 154
- collections and museums, 64–65, *see also* Uffizi's Tribuna Gallery
- collections and museums GB, 68
- Colley, Linda, 241
- Colman, George, 226
- colonialism
 Act for the Union of Great Britain and Ireland, 147–149
Belinda's critique of, 138, 146, 148–149
 diamonds and, 128, 143
 dualism of, 165
 Pigot diamond lottery and, 146–147
- Colwill, Elizabeth, 168
- comparatism, 3, 22–23, 43–44, 250
- conatus, 14, 62, 187, 214, 230, 241, 246
- Condillac, Étienne Bonnot de, 109
- connection, 7–14, *see also* belonging with consumption, 5
- Cook, Elizabeth Heckendorn, 248
- Cook, Malcolm, 160, 178, 191
- Coole, Diana, 14, 44, 165
- Cooper, James Fenimore, 44
- Coquery, Natacha, 152
- Corinne ou l'Italie* (Staël), 6, 13, 33
 ancient Greek sculpture in, 103–110
 diamonds in, 157
 listening in, 17
 melancholy in, 113–120
 nationalism in, 85–87, 93, 98, 113, 119
 Oswald's antimaterialism in, 85–86
 Pantheon and, 98–102, 186
Paul et Virginie compared to, 163, 171, 176
 restoration in, 19
The Ruined Cottage compared to, 188
 sculpture in, 47, 112–121
 severing from materiality in, 110–112
 St. Peter's and, 102–103
 thing theory of, 13, 82, 84–85, 87–97, 112–121
 transnationalism in, 32
Venus de' Medici and, 33, 55
- cosmopolitanism, 94
 in *Belinda*, 93–97
 from *belonging with*, 124
 in *Corinne ou l'Italie*, 103, 108, 120
- defined, 96
 embodied, 93–97
 Pantheon and, 100
- Cot, Pierre-Auguste, 199
- Courtais, Georgine de, 223
- Courtenay, Florence, 53
- creativity and originality
 classical vs. modern art and, 112
 in *Corinne ou l'Italie*, 93, 104, 118, 121
 hats and, 228
 trauma and, 108
- Creil et Montereau (manufacturer), 207
- Croker, John Wilson, 225
- cross-channel connections, *see* transnationalism
- Cumberland, Richard, 226
- Czechowski, Tara, 217, 218
- Damrosch, David, 22
- Darwin, Erasmus, 52
- Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme* (1789), 220
- defamiliarization, 13, 90–92, 109
- Delacroix, Eugène, 67
- Deleuze, Gilles, 62, 119, 214
- dematerialization, 18, 30, 33, 116, 194, 209
- Deney-Tunney, Anne, 127
- Derrida, Jacques, 112
- Desmond* (Smith), 13, 25, 32–33, 212
- diamonds, 2, 15, 131
 characteristics of, 130–131
 colonialism and, 128, 143
 in *Corinne ou l'Italie*, 33
 ecology of, 149–157
 listening to, 17
 marriage markets and, 129–138, 143
 radiance and, 18, 143
 recycling of, 20
 trade and economy of, 5, 131, 134–135, 148, 151–154
 women's rights and, 31
- Diderot, Denis, 26, 110, *see also* *Les Bijoux indiscrets* (Diderot)
- Didier, Béatrice, 94
- Dirks, Nicholas, 140, 141
- The Discovery of the Vital Principle, Or Physiology of Man*, 132–133
- divinity and the divine
 classical sculpture and, 108
 Pantheon and, 100
Venus de' Medici and, 56
- Donovan, John, 169, 174, 192
- dualism, 8, 14, 26, 88
 after-art objects and, 209
 classical sculpture and, 109
 as cultural memory, 180
 debasing women and matter, 250
 imprinting of human and nonhuman vs., 89, 108

- marketing of women and, 6
 in *Paul et Virginie*, 166–167, 176, 180, 198
- Duncan, Carol, 68
- Durkheim, Emile, 157
- earthquakes and natural disasters, 25
- East India Company (EIC), 138–142, 156–157
- ecology, 7
belonging with vs. possession in, 93, 149
 in *Desmond*, 241
 diamonds and, 149–157
 movement and, 16
 in *Paul et Virginie*, 161–165, 185
 in *The Ruined Cottage*, 185–186
 of Uffizi's Tribuna Gallery, 21, 39
see also recycling
- Edgeworth, Charlotte, 194
- Edgeworth, Maria, *see also* *Belinda* (Edgeworth)
Belinda revisions and, 72
belonging with and, 92
 radicalism of, 194
 transnational influences on, 31
 on *Venus de' Medici*, 32
- Edgeworth, Richard Lovell, 149, 240
- Elgin Marbles, 69, 107
- Emanuel, Harry, 129, 150, 152
- embodiment, 23, 25, *see also* *belonging with*,
see also bodies
Belinda's Lady Delacour and, 79–80
 human rights and, 29–30
 marriage plots and, 33
Venus de' Medici and, 59, 66–67, 69
- Enlightenment, 13, 25, 27–29, 94
- enslavement, *see* slavery and enslavement
- environmentalism, 21–22, 150, *see also* ecology
- Éon, Chevalier d', 35–39
- Ernst, Wolfgang, 45
- Esterhammer, Angela, 92, 107, 211
- ethical practice, 2, 4, 8–9
Belinda and, 157
belonging with as, 237
 in Bernardin's *Études*, 160–161
 imprinting of human and nonhuman and, 90
 listening as, 253
 Spinoza and, 24
- Eustace, John Chetwode, 66, 68
- Evelina* (Burney), 32, 210
 alienation from nonhuman in, 15, 235–237
 hats providing protection in, 212, 219,
 221–225, 233
- Éventail* (decorated fan), 204
- Falconet, Étienne-Maurice: *Pygmalion aux pieds
 de sa statue*
Pygmalion aux pieds de sa statue, 110
 fans as after-art objects, 204–206
- Faraday, Michael, 179
- fashion, 211, 239, *see also* hats, *see also* clothing
- female gender ideals
 in *Belinda*, 77–79, 135, 189
 diamond-bride markets and, 133, 136
 Pigot diamond lottery and, 147
Venus de' Medici and, 37, 52–53, 71, 73, 77
 virtue and, 5
- feminism, 3–4
 classicism and, 105
 comparatism and, 23
 human–nonhuman relations and, 6–7
 nature and, 149
 thing theory and, 4, 252
Venus de' Medici and, 74
The Wanderer and, 216
- Fennetaux, Ariane, 20, 152, 153, 254
- Fenwick, Eliza, 150–151
- Ferrata, Ercole, 70, 76
- Festa, Lynn, 13, 27, 124, 197, 237
- food, 161–165, 172, 177, 208
- Forsyth, Joseph, 44, 46, 67, 68
- fragments and fragmented objects
 classical statues and ruins, 107–108, 116
 Elgin Marbles, 107
 restoration and, 19
 Romanticism and, 113
Venus de' Medici, 19, 73, 77–81
Venus Victrix/Belvedere, 69
 vitality in, 187
- Frank, Marcie, 226
- Frankenstein* (Shelley), 21, 74
- Franklin, Benjamin, 7
- Freedgood, Elaine, 2
- French Revolution, 23, 26, 30, 86
 liberty caps and, 218
 women's rights and, 33
- Frost, Samantha, 14, 165
- Fulford, Tim, 137
- gambling, 139, 146–147, 151, 155
- Gamer, Michael, 80
- Gell, Alfred, 49
- gender, *see also* women's rights, *see also* women,
see also female gender ideals, *see also* men
 and male gaze
 classical statues and, 108–109
 d'Éon and, 37
 diamonds and, 132–133
 hats and, 226–227
 measurement and, 73
 nonhuman connections to, 3–7
 Pigot diamond lottery and, 146–147
Venus de' Medici and, 56–64, 71
- Gibbon, Edward, 41, 46, 48, 52
- Gidal, Eric, 104

- Giedion, Siegfried, 15
 Gigante, Denise, 161, 208
 Gilpin, William, 62–63, 75, 80
 Goldberger, Avriel H., 86
 Gray-Rosendale, Laura, 4
 Greenfield, Susan C., 80, 137
 Greenhalgh, Michael, 51
 grief, 106, 108, 252
 modern art and, 114–116
 Niobe statue and, 118
 resuscitation from, 123
 Grieg, Hannah, 5, 128, 151
 Gross, Kenneth, 108, 120, 251
 Grosz, Elizabeth, 11, 24, 149, 176
 guillotines, 230–233
 Gustafson, Susan E., 77
 Gutwirth, Madelyn, 87, 95, 103, 174, 179
- hair and wigs, 15, 221, 223, 234–237, 239
 Hale, J. R., 67
 Haley, Bruce, 64
 haptic viewing, 53, 59
 Harootunian, Gil, 4
 Harriman-Smith, James, 96
 Hartley, David, 179
 Hastings, Warren, 139
 hats, 2, 33
 see also hair and wigs
 belonging with, 12, 251
 in Bishop's "Exchanging Hats," 210–212
 body armored by, 62
 in *Corinne ou l'Italie*, 82–83
 in *Desmond*, 237–243
 functions and characteristics of, 215–217, 223
 losing one's head and, 232–233
 performing human–nonhuman relations, 211–212
 radiance and, 18
 veils vs., 215
 in *The Wanderer* (Burney), 212, 215–220, 224, 232–233, 243–249
 women's transformational talents and, 227–228, 233
 Hawthorne, Nathaniel, 77
 healing
 ancient Greek sculpture and, 104–110, 113
 Pantheon and, 100
 Paul et Virginie's after-literature and, 180, 186
 through art, 93
 through human–nonhuman relations, 12, 87, 159–161, 193, 195
 Hekman, Susan, 4, 150
 Henderson, Ian, 167
- Herder, Johann Gottfried, 106
 heroism and classical statues, 106
 Hershinow, Stephanie Insley, 192
 Hertz, Neil, 232
 Heyl, Christoph, 220
 Higonnet, Margaret, 22–23
 Hillard, George Stillman, 64
 Hobson, Marian, 55, 72, 109
 Hogsett, Charlotte, 100
 Holcomb, Melanie, 128
 Holcroft, Thomas, 139
 Horrocks, Ingrid, 220, 244
 Hughes, Claire, 244
 human rights, 8, 25–31, 230–231,
 see also women's rights
 human–nonhuman relations, 23
 absence and, 65–66
 beauty and, 42
 classical sculpture and, 109–110
 diamond markets and, 134–135, 137
 gender and, 3–7
 healing through, 12, 87, 159–161, 193, 195
 humans' desire for, 49, 55, 57, 180
 imprinting in, 88–90
 interdependence in, 9–10
 justice and, 1, 13, 243
 love and alliance-building in, 90–92, 192–194
 recognition of, 233–234
 spaces of excess in, 11–12, 53
 terminology, 1
 Hunt, Lynn, 28, 30, 67, 170, 176, 197
- Ianetta, Melissa, 92, 109
 imprinting
 in *Corinne ou l'Italie*, 88–90, 102, 108, 112
 grief and, 185
 in *Paul et Virginie*, 167, 187
 of worn things, 215
 individualism, 9
 interdependence, 9, 18, 85,
 see also *belonging with*
 Introna, Lucas D., 175
 Ireland, 139, 147–149, 157
 Isbell, John, 86, 122
 Israel, Jonathan, 25–26, 29, 31
- Jacobus, Mary, 17, 97, 193
 Jeffries, David, 131–137, 152
 jewels and jewelry, *see also* diamonds
 as mouths, 17, 127, 128, 138
 recycling of, 151–154
 women and, 128–129
 Johnson, Claudia L., 248
 Jones-Rogers, Stephanie E., 172

- Juengel, Scott, 220, 232
 Junqua, Amélie, 20
 justice, 1
 as abstraction, 28
 embodiment and, 29–30
 in human–nonhuman relations, 13, 27
 nonhuman things embodying, 30
 Venus de' Medici and, 69
 women's rights and, 28
- Kates, Gary, 35, 36, 37
 Kavanagh, Thomas, 126
 Keats, John, 62
 Kelly, Gary, 178
 Kenney, James, 217
 Khalip, Jacques, 187
 Khan, Muhammad Ali, 140–141
 King, Charles William, 130, 157
 Kirby, Vicki, 127
 Kirkley, Laura, 189
 Kohl, Hubertus, 218
 Kotzebue, Augustus von, 66, 69
- Labio, Catherine, 165
 labor and labor conditions, 4, *see also* slavery and enslavement
 after-art objects and, 205–206
 in *Belinda*, 154–155
 companionship with physical objects as, 158
 diamonds and, 7, 134, 150–151
 in *Paul et Virginie*, 163, 173
- Lafrance, Geneviève, 111
 Lake, Crystal, 2, 19–20, 23, 58, 212
 Lamb, Jonathan, 10, 12–13, 126
 Lancelle, Danièle, 199, 201
 Leighton, Angela, 145
 Leopold (Grand Duke of Tuscany), 68
Les Bijoux indiscrets (Diderot), 125–126
 Belinda compared to, 136
 belonging with in, 12
 jewels as mouths in, 124, 133–134
- Levinson, Marjorie, 6–7, 24
 liberty and emancipation
 from *belonging with*, 159
 classicism and, 105
 diamonds and, 151, 153–154
 embodied cosmopolitanism and, 95, 111–112
 hats and, 211, 218–219, 223, 228
 human–nonhuman cooperation and, 161
 Venus de' Medici as embodiment of, 84
 women as representation of, 67
- liberty caps, 218–219
 Liebart, Philippe, 148
 Lilley, James, 8
- Lilty, Antoine, 196
 Lippert, Sarah J., 110
 listening, 2, 34
 belonging through, 158
 in *Les Bijoux indiscrets*, 125
 diamonds and, 132–133
 as ethical practice, 253
 keyword description, 16–18
 love for the nonhuman and, 91–92
 in *Paul et Virginie*, 164
 Pigot diamond and, 141, 146, 149
- Lokke, Kari, 121
 Looser, Devoney, 225
 Louis XVI (king), 222
 love
 classical sculpture and, 107
 nonhuman dynamism and, 84
 thing theory practice and, 98, 101
- Lussier, Mark, 179
 Luzzi, Joseph, 52, 113, 122
 Lynch, Deidre, 212, 219
- Mahmoud II (sultan), 149
 Malthus, Daniel, 191
 Mansfield, William Murray, Lord Chief Justice, 35–37
 marbelization/petrification of flesh, 33, 93, 116, 119–121
 Marinetti, F. T., 47
 Markovits, Stefanie, 131
 Marks, Herbert, 251
 marriage, 33
 diamond markets and, 139, 143
 guillotine as metonym for, 232
- Marso, Lori, 85
 Martinet, Aaron, 229
 Marx, Karl, 11
 materialist ethics, *see* ethical practice, *see* thing theory
- Mawe, John, 135, 152
 McAllister, Marie, 79
 McCann, Andrew, 189, 191
 McCue, Maureen, 64, 117
 McMurren, Mary Helen, 34
 measurement and measuring, 54–57, 70–76, 80, 109
- Medici, Francesco de', 42
 Medusa, 121, 232
 melancholy, 98, 104, 106–107, 121, 188
 memorabilia, *see* after-art objects
 men and male gaze
 hats and, 223–227, 229–230
 Venus de' Medici and, 58, 60–63
- Mercier, Roger, 168
 Merry, Robert, 67

- Michelangelo
Tomb of Giuliano, Duke of Nemours, 116, 118
Tomb of Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino, 116, 118
- Millar, Oliver, 40, 43, 45, 46
- Miller, Anna Riggs, 48, 51, 55
- Miller, Christopher L., 168
- miniatures, 33, 80, 161, 176, 189–194, 206, 213
- Misson, Maximilien: *Nouveau Voyage*, 62–63
- Mitchell, W. J. T., 11, 49, 50, 79, 112
- Mitys' statue, 69, 79, 214, 226, 236, 243
- modernity and modern art
 in *Corinne ou l'Italie*, 93, 104, 108, 112–121, 123
 melancholy and, 104, 112–123
 museum collections from perspective of, 64
 Pantheon and, 101
Venus de' Medici and, 56
- modesty, 56, 58, 64, 71–72, 75
- Mohammed Ali (Pasha of Egypt), 149
- Moi, Toril, 87
- monuments and statues, 30
 companionship with, 91–93, 109–110
 as double for the dead, 197
 embodied cosmopolitanism and, 94
 healing and generative power of, 93, 101–102
 literary role of, 71
 measurement and, 57, 72
 modernism and, 115–116
 movement and, 108, 129
 resuscitation and, 104–110
 as touchstone for beauty, 30, 72–74
see also specific monuments and statues
- More, Hannah, 151
- Mortensen, Peter, 162
- Morton, Timothy, 10, 35, 111, 162, 185, 253
- movement, 2
 classical sculpture and, 108
Corinne ou l'Italie and, 97–98
 joy from, 252
 keyword description, 15–16
 Pantheon and, 100
 in *The Ruined Cottage*, 183, 185–186
 Stern's theory of vitality and, 49
 technology and, 15
 thing theory practice and, 97
 trade of diamonds and, 156
Venus de' Medici and, 49–52, 56–64, 69, 97, 129
Venus Victrix/Belvedere and, 69
- Müller-Sievers, Helmut, 15
- Mulrooney, Jonathan, 108
- museums and collections, 64–65, 68,
see also Uffizi's Tribuna Gallery
- Nancy, Jean-Luc, 9–10, 17, 93, 163
- Napoleon and Napoleonic rule, 23
 Niobe statues and, 68
- Pigot diamond and, 148
 Staël on alienation of, 120
 tourism and, 70
 trauma and grief of, 119–120
Venus de' Medici and, 65, 68, 80, 119
- Napoleonic Code (1805), 85
- nationalism
 comparatism and, 22–23
 concepts transcending, 30
 in *Corinne ou l'Italie*, 85–87, 93, 98, 113,
 119
 embodied cosmopolitanism vs., 94–96
Venus de' Medici and, 52
- neighborhoods and comparatism, 34, 43–44,
 46
- Neill, Anna, 164, 168
- neoclassicism, 105, 199
- New Historicism, 184
- New Materialism, 34, 89
- Niobe* statues, 68, 118–119
- Nivernais, Louis-Jules Barbon Mancini-
 Mazarini, duc, 239
- Nivernois hats, 225, 237–243
- Nokes, David, 206
- nondualism, *see belonging with, see dualism*
- nonhuman, *see agency, see thing theory, see human–nonhuman relations*
- O'Keeffe, John, 239
- painting, 105–106
- Palmerston, Henry Temple, 43
- Panini, Giovanni Paolo, 98–102
- Pantheon (Rome), 98–102, 118, 186, 225, 251
- Park, Julie, 5, 181, 211
- Park, Suzie Asha, 248
- Pascoe, Judith, 24, 44, 198
- patriarchy, 85
Corinne ou l'Italie and, 86, 122
Paul et Virginie and, 178
 resistance to women's partnership with things,
 212
The Wanderer and, 248
 women as possessions under, 232
- Paul et Virginie* (Bernardin), 2, 12–13, 16
 after-art objects recycling, 195–209
Belinda's recycling of, 180, 188–194, 198,
 209
Bélinde and, 144, 180
Corinne ou l'Italie compared to, 163, 171, 176
Etudes de la Nature published with, 159
 human–nonhuman cooperation in, 161–165
 listening in, 17
 recycling in, 20–21, 33
 restoration in, 19

- The Ruined Cottage's* recycling of, 180–188, 198, 209
 untwining/severing from materiality in, 165–180, 188
- Peacham, Henry, 121
- Peacocke, Emma, 65
- Pearce, Susan, 65
- Peer, Larry, 2
- Peters, Karin, 178
- petrification/marbelization of flesh, 33, 93, 116, 119–121
- Pfau, Thomas, 113
- Phrygian caps, 218, 232
- Pigot diamond, 138–149, 155, 157–158
- Pigot, George, 138, 140–144, 155
- Piozzi, Hester Thrale, 46–47
- Pitt, William, 240
- plates as after-art objects, 206–209, 214, 218
- Pointon, Marcia, 128
- Poke (shielding bonnet), 229–230
- Polykleitos, 57
- Ponge, Francis, 17
- possession and property, 11, 25, 80, 84, 87, 89, 92
belonging with vs., 12–13, 92–93, 120, 240, 252
 classical sculpture and, 110
 in *Desmond*, 241
 diamonds and, 150
 enslavement and, 172
 hats as protection from, 218–220, 222, 225
 nationalism and, 103, 111
 untwining in *Paul et Virginie* and, 161, 174
Venus de' Medici and, 68
 women's relationship to, 210, 228–230, 232, 245–246
- Potkay, Adam, 11, 160, 183
- privacy, *see also* recognition and nonrecognition
 Civil and Napoleonic Code and, 85
 medical practice and, 75
 nonhuman rights to, 62
The Wanderer and, 248
- Puccini, Tommaso, 64–65
- Pygmalion, 121
- Rabb, Melinda, 23, 190, 192, 206
- radiance, 2, 12
 of after-art objects, 198
Corinne ou l'Italie and, 84
 diamonds and, 124, 153, 157
 keyword description, 18
 Pantheon and, 100
 prismatic refraction of, 254
Venus de' Medici and, 40, 51, 59, 83
- Rancière, Jacques, 27–28, 155
- Rashed, Esmat Zenab, 240
- Rausser, Amelia, 105, 173–174
- recognition and nonrecognition
 in *Desmond*, 242
 in *Evelina*, 222
 justice through, 234
 listening and, 17
 Nivernais hat and, 239
 Poke shielding bonnet and, 229–230
The Ruined Cottage and, 187
 in *The Wanderer*, 220–222, 243–247
 women's right to, 212–214
- recycling, 2, 197
 of *Belinda*, 144
 female ownership of diamonds and, 151–156
 food and, 161
 keyword description, 20–22
 liberty caps and, 219
Paul et Virginie and, 162–163, 180
Paul et Virginie's after-art objects and, 195–209
Venus de' Medici and, 70
 in *The Wanderer*, 245
- Regier, Alexander, 107
- Reichardt, Rolf, 218, 219
- Reid, Roddey, 164
- Reinhard, Kenneth, 34, 43
- restoration, 2, *see also* healing
 keyword description, 18–20
 of *Belinda's* Lady Delacour, 75–79, 155
 in *The Ruined Cottage*, 186
 Uffizi's Tribuna Gallery and, 46
Venus de' Medici and, 69–71, 75–78
- resuscitation, 2, *see also* healing
Corinne ou l'Italie and, 82–83, 90, 102–103, 118, 120–123
 hats and, 219
 keyword description, 18–20
The Ruined Cottage and, 183
- revolutionary movements, 25–26, 31
- Ribeiro, Aileen, 215, 226, 239
- Richard-Pauchet, Odile, 125
- Richardson, Jonathan, 76
- rights of man, *see* women's rights, *see* human rights
- Roach, Joseph, 157, 205, 211, 225–228, 236
- Robbins, Bruce, 94, 96
- Robertson, Martin, 64
- Rogers, Nancy, 98, 105
- Romantic era and Romanticism
Corinne ou l'Italie and, 122
 ecological orientation of, 162
 fragmentation and, 113
 melancholy fascination of, 104
 New Historicist perspectives on, 185

- Romantic era and Romanticism (cont.)
 public-private dialectic in, 247
 Rancière on materiality in, 155
 women—diamond connections in, 130, 156
- Rome, 84–85, 97
see also specific landmarks,
- Romney, George, 223–224
- Rossard, Janine, 178
- Roulin, Jean-Marie, 98
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 164, 188
- Rubin, James Henry, 199
The Ruined Cottage (Wordsworth), 33
 grief in, 106, 183, 185
Paul et Virginie recycled by, 180–188, 198, 209
- ruins, 107, 184
- Ruskin, John, 130
- Russell, Gillian, 225
- Rzepka, Charles, 181, 251
- Salih, Sarah, 226
- Schall, Jean-Frédéric, 199
- Schlegel, Karl Wilhelm Friedrich, 88
- Séгур, Octave: *Bélinde, conte moral de Maria Edgeworth*, 31, 144–146, 180, 194–195, 209
- Semmel, Stuart, 70
- Serres, Michel, 101–102
- Seven Years' War (1756–1763), 239, 240–241
- sexuality, *see also virtues and morality*
 in *Belinda*, 189–193
 in *Bélinde*, 194–195
 jewels and, 125–127
 nationalism and, 86
Paul et Virginie and desecration of, 169–171, 173–177, 179, 190, 199
Paul et Virginie's after-art objects and, 198–201, 205–206
Venus de' Medici and, 41, 52, 55–56, 61
 in *The Wanderer*, 245
- Sharren, Kandice, 248
- Sheats, Paul D., 186
- Shelley, Mary, 48–49
- Shelley, Percy, 132
- Shershow, Scott, 154
- Siegel, Jonah, 143
- Silver, Sean, 6, 23, 59, 65, 66, 100, 138
- Simmel, Georg, 174, 214, 232, 242
- singular plural, 9
- slavery and enslavement
 in *Belinda*, 134, 143–144
 Bernardin and, 164, 167–168
 cotton trade and, 173
 Edgeworth on, 146
 human materiality and, 165
 in *Paul et Virginie*, 166–173, 201–204
Paul et Virginie's after-art objects and, 203–204, 206, 208–209
- slouched hats, 226
- Smith, Bonnie, 115
- Smith, Chloe Wigston, 215–216
- Sobin, Gustave, 1, 5, 19, 34, 251
- social contracts, 159, 164, 170
- Sodeman, Melissa, 210
- Solomon-Godeau, Abigail, 52, 245
- sound, *see listening*
- Spaas, Lieve, 196
- Spacks, Patricia Meyer, 248
- Spence, Joseph: *Polymetis*, 37, 58–60
- Spinoza, Baruch, 242
 on conatus, 214
Ethics, 252
 on mind–body unity, 23–26
 on virtue, 84, 87, 179, 184
- Spitzer, Leo, 43
- Spolsky, Ellen, 171
- Squire, Michael, 104
- St. Peter's Basilica, 102–103, 251
- Staël, Germaine de, 32–33, 85,
see also Corinne ou l'Italie (Staël)
 classicism and, 112
Considerations on the Principal Events of the French Revolution, 120
De l'Allemagne, 89, 104
Delphine, 95
 on French and German culture, 32, 95
 on love, 91
 opposition to slavery, 114
 travel notebooks of, 97
- Stam, Robert, 198
- Starr, G. Gabriella, 228
- statues, *see monuments and statues, see Venus de' Medici*
- Steiner, Deborah Tarn, 71, 115, 197
- Steiner, Wendy, 42
- Stern, Daniel N., 49, 59
- Stewart, Susan, 64–65, 206
- Straub, Kristina, 197, 222, 235
- Strozzi, Giovanni, 116
- Stuurman, Siep, 27, 28
- Swallow, Noreen J., 103
- Sweet, Rosemary, 67
- symmetry, 73, 79, 81
- Szabo, Franz A. J., 240
- Taine, Hippolyte, 115
- Tavernier, Jean Baptiste, 150
- Tchakaloff, Thierry-Nicolas C., 196
- Tenenbaum, Susan, 105
- textile of scenes from *Paul et Virginie*, 201–204

- thing theory, 3, 5, 22, 25, 196
belonging with vs. possessing in, 92–93
 in *Les Bijoux indiscrets*, 127
 comparatism and, 22–23
Corinne ou l'Italie and, 13, 82, 84–97,
 112–121
 defamiliarizing and loving the nonhuman,
 90–92
 embodied cosmopolitanism in, 93–96
 feminism and, 4, 252
 healing through art in, 93
 imprinting of human and nonhuman in,
 88–90
 literary works' creation of, 34
 nondualism in, 165
 in *Paul et Virginie*, 16
 in *The Ruined Cottage*, 183, 185, 188
 teleology and, 214
Venus de' Medici and, 55–56, 61
- Thomas, Ruth, 177–178
 Thomas, Sophie, 65, 107
 Thomson, James: *Liberty*, 59–61
 Tiffany, Daniel, 251
 Titian: *Venus of Urbino*, 46–47
 Toal, Catherine, 189
 Toinet, Paul, 196
 transcendence, 5, 6, 8, 15, 26, 91, 123, 253
 transcorporeality, 21
 transnationalism, 3, 31–34
Corinne ou l'Italie and, 96
 embodied cosmopolitanism and, 94–96
 recycling of *Paul et Virginie* and, 177–178,
 181, 195
 women's rights and, 231–232
- trauma
 Napoleonic rule and, 113, 119
 severing from materiality, 110
- Treaty of Paris, 23, 25
 Trentmann, Frank, 5
 Tribuna, *see* Uffizi's Tribuna Gallery
 Tronzo, William, 101
- Uffizi's Tribuna Gallery, 2, 15, 33, 38–39, 55, 84
 appearance and layout, 42–43, 65
 contemporary access to, 251
 in *Corinne ou l'Italie*, 118
 material historical awareness and, 65
Venus de' Medici's absence from, 65–71, 119
- Vallois, Marie-Claire, 85, 179
 van Eck, Caroline, 41, 49, 112
 Vareschi, Mark, 219
 Vasset, Sophie, 20
 Vatican museums, 104, 118
 Vazquez, Alexandra, 17
- veils, 215, *see also* hats
Venere Italica, 70
Venus de' Medici, 2, 7, 19, 30
Belinda and, 33, 71–81
belonging with, 39, 53, 56, 61–62, 69, 80
 d'Éon and, 36–39
 gendered history of, 56–64
 as heroic icon, 64–71, 80
 images of, 38
 listening to, 17
 measuring humanness of, 49–56, 70–75
 pronoun assignments, 35
 recycling of, 20
 restoration of, 20
 transnationalism of, 32
 Uffizi's Tribuna Gallery and, 39–49
The Wanderer's Juliet compared to, 244
Venus Victrix (Belvedere Venus), 20, 39, 48, 58,
 66, 69, 84
- Vesuvius, 90–91
 virtues and morality, 84,
see also female gender ideals
 in *Belinda*, 72, 75–76
 in *Bélinde*, 194–195
belonging with and, 253
 in *Les bijoux indiscrets*, 126
 in *Corinne ou l'Italie*, 83
 diamonds and, 131, 147
 female agency disassociated from, 147
 female virtues vs., 5
 materiality *belonging with*, 84
 measurement and, 80
 in *Paul et Virginie*, 175–179, 195
Venus de' Medici and, 56–64
- Vitruvius, 57
- Waldie, Jane, 62
 Wall, Anthony, 126
 Wall, Cynthia, 238
 Wallace, Tara Ghoshal, 216, 232
The Wanderer (Burney), 6, 210
 hats providing protection in, 212, 215–220,
 224, 232–233, 243–249
 transnationalism in, 32
- Watkins, Thomas, 53
 Webb, Timothy, 105
 Wehle, Winifried, 91
 Weiss, Deborah, 194
 Westbrook, Harriet, 132
 Wheeler, Wendy, 8, 241
 Williams, Helen Maria, 177
 Williams, Raymond, 29, 145
 Wilson, James, 42, 66
 Winckelmann, Johann Joachim, 51, 76, 91
 Wollstonecraft, Mary, 19, 30, 84, 195

- women
- classical statues and, 108
 - diamond ownership and exchange by, 151–154
 - diamonds commensurate with, 130, 133, 137, 146–147, 154
 - nationalism and, 104
 - property and, 210, 228–230, 232, 245–246
 - separation from body and, 114, 170–171, 174–180, 210
- women's rights, 2, 13
- British patriarchy and, 85–86
 - comparatism and, 22–23
 - diamonds and, 31, 134–137
 - embodied in things, 84
 - ethical practice and, 24
- French Revolution and, 33
- human–nonhuman belonging and, 88, 250–254
- to nonrecognition, 212, 220–222, 226, 232–233, 248–249
- recycling and, 21
- Wood, Gillen D'Arcy, 64, 69
- Wordsworth, William, 29, 33, 92, 214, *see also* *The Ruined Cottage* (Wordsworth) “The Thorn,” 181
- Yogev, Gedalia, 131
- Young, Arthur, 48, 52
- Zoffany, Johann: *The Tribuna of the Uffizi*, 44–46