CAUGHT UP IN THE ARRANGEMENT:

FORMS OF LITERARY LIFE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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ABSTRACT: In the eighteenth-century, the novel grew from a new medium to a dominant form of expression. This space, where readers and authors come to grips with the nature of fictionality, serves as a theoretical proving ground for New Materialist, agency-first reading practices. *Caught Up in the Arrangement* examines eighteenth-century literary networks within New Materialist claims about the agency of matter, applying these claims to the literary "elements" of these interrelated webs.

This dissertation argues that what it terms "literary arrangements" constitute a form of life in the ways that their agency affects other arrangements of elements, how they propagate within a text and into other texts, and in their representational excessiveness—arrangements never seem to end on the page, but to extend beyond it.

There is also a metacritical bend to *Caught Up in the Arrangement*, incorporating "subjective" viewers into "objective" critique. The literary arrangement becomes observable by the "boundary-drawing practices" (Barad) critics employ, who decide how far arrangements extend and where to snip the connections of agential relation between elements (without incorporating the observer, any single literary arrangement becomes a tiny infinity of connections).

Caught Up in the Arrangement takes an unconventional approach to the literary monograph, refusing single-text or single-author chapters, instead literalizing surprising intertextual connections. Chapter 1 relies on examples in *Robinson Crusoe* and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's *Turkish Embassy Letters* to explicate the features of literary arrangements. Chapter 2 examines Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*, exploring its expansions beyond the page into surprising configurations of agency, which produce endless quantities of revisions and retellings everywhere from personal correspondence to other published texts. Chapter 3 considers how animation figures in the thinking around human bodies and, for this chapter especially, animals. Here we return to *Robinson Crusoe* to understand novel's privileging of humans over animals, and how the anonymous 1797 *Biography of a Spaniel* conversely provides the titular spaniel with agency that propagates from the late eighteenth century to the present day. In the coda, the chiasmus figures as a microcosmic representation of literary arrangements, and we track some of its appearances over the idiosyncratic course of research.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Noah Lloyd has a B.A. in English: Creative Writing, Poetry, from Colorado College, and both a M.A. and Ph.D. in English Literature from Cornell University. He has taught numerous Freshmen Writing Seminars on everything from media studies to science fiction to roleplaying games. He works as a sometime freelancer and game designer in the RPG industry, has a passion for film and screenwriting, and has been rock climbing for over 16 years. Yes, he's the one with C. P. Cavafy tattooed on his forearm.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the course of working on this dissertation, I can't tell you how many different terms I toyed with using to describe what I've ultimately named the literary arrangement. First it was the "literary construct," which I liked because it rooted agency within a constructed framework, in both a text and in the reader, and because "construct" bears the sense of multiple elements coming together into something new. And then I settled (briefly) on the "literary complex," which, honestly, I still find compelling because of the early senses of "complex" I've always been drawn to: something more akin to an arrangement of buildings, discrete chunks that come together to form something new. Also in the running were "constellation," "aggregate," "network," and "assemblage"—though assemblage was already spoken for by Actor Network Theory and far be it from me to step on anyone's toes. I still think that "constellation" has a particularly poetic connotation, especially as constellations are premised on the particular framings bestowed by a viewer, and by the proximity between elements (namely, stars). Ultimately, though, I hope that by "arrangement" I can suggest the sense that elements are arranged by *an author*, and yet can be reassembled by a reader in the act of reading, and that yet again an arrangement can seem to move and act on its own as a kind of lifelike organism.

Literary arrangements, to state my thesis bluntly, *take action*, they do things beyond the bounds of the page, and one of the primary ways they do this is through surprising acts of propagation, whereby an arrangement draws more and more elements to itself in consistently surprising and unexpected patterns.

For me, an arrangement coheres out of textual elements (which elements,

precisely, depends on the particular reader). By "elements," I further mean any individually localized, identifiable item of critical analysis. These elements could be, or could include[1], metaphors, similes, plot, character names, dialogue, diction, spelling, grammar and punctuations, allusion, and indeed any other of the most conventional terms of critical analysis we employ, all of which come together stochastically when we talk about a literary arrangement (that is, when we talk about a networked feature of a text, like a character).[2] As I will discuss in relation to Eduardo Kohn a little later, what I term "elements" are really simply smaller divisions of organization that come together into larger arrangements, and can themselves be broken down into smaller and smaller arrangements, ad nauseam.

Further, it is the critic's own boundary-drawing practices (Karen Barad's term) that make literary arrangements perceivable: the frame I place around the character of "Robinson Crusoe" separates him from other elements that make up the novel *Robinson Crusoe*, thus making him visible. Because of this metacritical component in this dissertation, I also argue that any totalizing reading of a novel is impossible. No critic can stand on such certain ground as to claim that their reading is "final" or that they have made every element of a text interpretable; the boundary I draw around the terms that form Robinson Crusoe will never be truly identical to another's reading, we will always find discrepancies. What I take from *Robinson Crusoe* is different from what others take from it is different from the novel's actuality.

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[1] (but are not limited to)

[2] "A singular character develops not only through interior life but through its connections to other characters, connections that happen in ways that might otherwise seem superficial: through the circulation of images, repeated catchphrases, and unlikely resemblances" (Ward 45). What Ward's listing here are, in my logic, the elements of a literary arrangement, which elements we can never be 100-percent how they will interact in the production of said arrangement.

I find that the eighteenth century proves a particularly ripe field[3] from which to describe the force of literary arrangements, not because they are a localized eighteenth-century occurrence, or even because they appear for the first time in this period, but because the reading public's relationship to literature changes radically from the beginning of the century to its end. Those who read *Robinson Crusoe* in the 17-teens *read differently* than those who encounter *Clarissa* in the mid-1700s, and those who read *The Biography of a Spaniel* or *Turkish Embassy Letters* in the 1790s and 18-oughts are yet again a new kind of readership, preparing for the arrival of the Romantics and Jane Austen. This change is ultimately a shift in the audience's understanding of fictionality (a shift for which I rely on Lennard Davis's work), from "real" characters who never lived (like Robinson Crusoe), to patently imaginary creations, like a parliament of dog souls on the moon.

To my eyes, the change in the ways the reading English public approached their texts ultimately stems from a new proliferation in print media heretofore barely imaginable. I often imagine that the way I feel, with two-dozen browser tabs all open to articles I'll read "eventually," must be similar to the way someone born in the mid-1600s must have felt by the 1700s, with newspapers, pamphlets, not to mention novels, suddenly crowding out one's desk. Print media itself, if through nothing else than a sudden and incomprehensible *propagation*, took on a life of its own, exerted its own pressure on the environment around it, and fiction, especially, bore with it a sense of *truth* that would be toyed with and eventually discarded by eighteenth-century

[3]And yet here I cannot help but comment on my own colonialist language: the *ripe*ness of a *field* for plucking, even *force*fulness—and drawn as I am to the phrase (the phrase draws *me*, not the other way around), I have to consider removing it, but in the act of removing it this footnote would become meaningless, and the lessons gained by the parenthetical perhaps outweigh the harm done by self-consciously replicating a colonialist phrase. And perhaps not.

authors (think about, for instance, Swift's sending up of the "factual" travelogue). As Hugh Kenner writes in *The Counterfeiters: An Historical Comedy*, "Donne in 1611 can still think of facts as random though unnerving curiosities. A century later nothing but their interlaced trajectories can be seen filling the air" (67). The eighteenth-century person, with the globalism of the period and under the rising tide of capitalism, was becoming more and more aware of the networks within which they found themselves. The empirical mind, Kenner suggests, "is installed not amidst a Creation but in a system; in many systems, simultaneous systems. Systems expect that we will comply with them" (41). The eighteenth century was primed to begin thinking about fictional characters not in *isolation* but within a set of other intra- and interacting elements.

Concomitantly came an increasing interest in character interiority and psychological "depth." It's a platitude now to say that *Robinson Crusoe* is the first "modern" novel, taking as its interest the individual protagonist, leading in a straight line to *Clarissa*'s prolonged engagement with individuals and their idiosyncrasies, but there is something in the development of the eighteenth-century "modern" novel that makes the agential literary arrangement somehow more plain, and the seed of this dissertation *was*, initially, to be an engagement specifically with literary characters who seemed to act beyond the page. It was only through the writing of the diss itself that it became clear to me that the features I was ascribing to agential literary characters applied to other kinds of literary elements as well.

While I engage with a plurality of texts in this project, including a prolonged engagement with *Clarissa* in the second chapter, *Robinson Crusoe* returns again and again as an early model of the kind of networked subjectivities and agencies I'm interested in. It proves a special case in eighteenth-century fiction in part because of its

appearance early in the century, and because it sets the type for the rise of the protagonist-driven, fictional novel. It remains a site of complex ideological intermixing, and a focal point for surprising results of intra-acting agencies.

When Daniel Defoe writes *Robinson Crusoe*, Lennard Davis claims that he presents the character of "Crusoe… at once true and false; he is a fiction with a true existence and a true story with a fictional structure" (157). That there never was a non-fictional Robinson Crusoe (though there certainly were types of castaways, and accounts written by them on which Defoe relied) matters little when Defoe maintains the claim that Crusoe's story is true, no matter its fictionality. As we see by this example, the eighteenth-century novel is attempting a unique relationship with the "real" world, often disclaiming its own fictionality in favor of a closer proximity to the "real." The term "real" deserves the scare quotes here because, in the logic of my argument, literary arrangements [including characters] are no more isolated from the "real" than I am—or maybe *just as* isolated. Rather, I prefer to designate what we commonly call the "real" simply as "non-fictional." If there are non-fictional worlds, like the one we live in, there are also fictional worlds, within which characters like Clarissa and Crusoe continue to live and act under their own special temporality (for more on the special temporality of fictional life, see chapter 2). Springing from so-called "true" castaway stories, *Robinson Crusoe*'s proximity to the nonfictional world is maybe the first indicator of its excessiveness, it seems to extend beyond itself into the nonfictional, thus applying an agential pressure on all kinds of other networks (and arrangements) seemingly separate from its purview.

Similarly, we shall see in chapter 2 that the way Samuel Richardson

approached his writing—the expansiveness of his texts, their very unwieldiness, the way he describes his characters like real people in his private correspondence—while already more fully understood as "fiction" than *Crusoe* was, further demonstrates the ways that agency coheres and abounds from the literary's proximity to the non-fictional.

*

To briefly define a few of my key terms. The *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* defines "Agency": "In very general terms, an agent is a being with the capacity to act, and 'agency' denotes the exercise or manifestation of this capacity." By "being," however, the encyclopedia elaborates, in the same paragraph, that "it seems that genuine agency can be exhibited by beings that are not capable of intentional action, and it has been argued that agency can and should be explained without reference to causally efficacious mental states and events" ("Agency"). These two aspects—the capacity to act, without the need for *intention*—are what I would like to hold onto in my thinking around literary arrangements, and their particular form of agency. In fictional entities, their agency is felt through a kind of pressure on the world, and on other literary arrangements, around them.

Literary arrangements constitute a form of life by virtue of the agential pressure they exert, and the ways we witness their propagations. For the purposes of this project, I divorce the definition of "life" away from merely organic matter, in favor of material which has 1) the capacity to act (the agential pressure I describe above) and 2) the capability of propagating into new forms. Life is thus not necessarily thinking (as plants are conventionally alive but not "thinking"), nor not necessarily

organic, except perhaps in the fact that literary life uses (predominantly but maybe not exclusively) human organisms to propagate.

The propagation of literary arrangements occurs when we see an element of an already-existing arrangement appear in a new formation. The easiest example to demonstrate this propagative function is to think of one of the innumerable films that are based off of novels. These films, because they take the original elements of literary arrangement-qua-novel and present them in a new form, naturally cohere into a new web of relations, distinct from that present in the novel (how many times have you heard someone complain that the movie "just wasn't as good" as the novel?). And yet, despite being presented in a new form and a new medium, the elements *are still recognizable* from the original. The originating text—in this hypothetical, a novel—has propagated into the new form of a film.

Crucially, neither a literary arrangement's agency nor its propagations can occur without the process of mediation. Because literary arrangements cannot but exist in a medium (the written word, defined most broadly), the act of *mediation* is what allows elements of arrangements to extend beyond themselves, reaching into new relationships and new mediated objects. McLuhan says that the medium is the message, I argue that media are the distributing centers of life itself.

Readers are likely already identifying the deeply animist nature of this dissertation. If fictional life exists with propagative aspects and with the capacity to act manifesting through an agential pressure, what's to stop the claim that stones constitute a form of life? Or a table? Or a digital webpage?

Nothing whatsoever.

*

I first began thinking about (what I would eventually come to call) literary arrangements in relation to the so-called "minor characters" described by Alex Woloch, in *The One vs. the Many: Minor Characters and the Space of the Protagonist in the Novel*. For me, the primary thrust of Woloch's work (at least the particular thrust to which I responded) was his claim that "In terms of their essential formal position (the subordinate beings who are delimited in themselves while performing a function for someone else), *minor characters are the proletariat of the novel*," a proletariat given over to buttressing the apparent psychological complexity of a tyrannical-seeming protagonist (27); tyrannical despite the minor characters' impulses to destabilize them. For Woloch, the "minor" characters of specifically class-oriented novels of the nineteenth century work only in support of a structurally central figure or figures. I, however, could not help but question precisely who was empowered to designate these "minor" characters as such.[4] The answer, for me, comes down to the critic's own idiosyncratic focus, and around which elements of a text they choose to draw the bounds of their examination. And, while novels may lend more time and focus to central characters, characters typically understood as the "protagonist," the "proletariat" of minor characters consistently break their bonds to suggest ongoing stories beyond the novel's moment-to-moment focal point. This revises Woloch's claim, in seeking to posit an overwhelming, not simply supporting, agency in non-protagonist characters, what we call a "character" being perhaps the prime example of

[4] My suspicion of this kind of language likely comes from a deeply personal belief in the poetic poignancy of every human's life. The fiction author looks at the windows of a skyscraper apartment building and knows that in every one of those rooms hides the material for a thousand poems, novels, plays, films.

a literary arrangement.

Megan Ward similarly takes Woloch to task in *Seeming Human: Artificial Intelligence and Victorian Realist Character*. She notes that, while Woloch's privileging of the protagonist "gives us an important way to understand the character system's function, it nonetheless still frames the character system relative to a singular individual's interiority…. By contrast, reading the character system stochastically means that we need not prioritize individual interiority because individuals do not exist outside of systems" (45). While Ward and I approach the issue of character systems from a similar perspective—privileging unpredictable networked relations over any individual character's coherent interiority—her interests ultimately lie in mimesis, a process for her that, "for fictional characters and intelligent machines means producing something that is human-like but also not-human, a new thing in and of itself. They are copies that are also new originals" (7). Where she stops, however, I would push another step forward: these strange creatures, literary arrangements (of which a variety is the literary character), may be not-human, but are also not simply *life-like*, but rather may simply be *alive*. Indeed, redefining aliveness away from the organic and (especially) away from the human gets away from representation that's focused on mimesis; representation is not just an attempted recreation of some (fictional or nonfictional) world, but is its own form of agential life.

It would take Eduardo Kohn, however, to crystallize my modulations of Woloch's work. In his controversial-but-stimulating *How Forests Think: Toward an Anthropology beyond the Human*, Kohn "encourages us to explore what signs look like beyond the human" (41). Resting his argument on a reading of C.S. Peirce, Kohn claims "that signs… exist well beyond the human" (9). For him, an anthropologist, the

way animals and plants of the non-human natural world sign to one another carries forward to a logic of communication and referentiality previously gone unregarded. And, now, the sentence whose import perhaps ultimately underlies the vast majority of this project: “Life is constitutively semiotic” (9). Sit with that for a minute.

Okay, here we go. Kohn continues by rephrasing: “That is, life is, through and through, the product of sign processes” (9). The question that has driven me here is this: if life is constitutively semiotic, is all semiosis life? And if we can make the claim that yes, life is both produced by sign processes *and* sign processes themselves constitute life, *what does this mean for something like literature*, peopled as it is by figures that “look like life,” that seem to override their very creators in the actions they take across a page? Woloch quotes Mieke Bal: “The character is not a human being, but it resembles one” (15).[5] If something *resembles* life, if something is made of signs that represent and signs are what make up life, might a character not be *alive*? Not a human being per se, but a kind of life nevertheless with its own agency (or, perhaps, “pressure,” in a New Materialist sense) and powers of propagation?

Kohn describes *form's*—organization itself's—“effortless efficacy.” He uses this lovely, consonance-laden phrase as the title of his fifth chapter, which is all about the way “overlapping” or imbricated (the term I commonly fall to) forms propagate into new relationships. One compelling example he uses is that of “The rubber boom economy,” which

> was able to exist and grow because it united a series of partially overlapping forms, such as predatory chains, plant and animal spatial configurations, and

[5] This quotation also shows up in Ward's *Seeming Human* (6), which really makes me feel like I missed something by not reading Bal.

> hydrographic networks, by linking the similarities these share. The result was that all these more basic regularities came to be part of an overarching form—an exploitative political-economic structure whose grasp was very difficult to escape.
>
> In fact, this form created the conditions of possibility for the political relations that emerged. (165)

As a literary scholar, it is easy to imagine that Kohn here is simply describing a literary arrangement, whose elements he would call the "overlapping forms." What I like about his terminology is that it becomes easy for us to imagine zoomed-in views that show these overlapping forms to themselves be constituted by *other* overlapping forms, since form itself is a principle of organization and to organize some-*thing* you must have, well, *some*-thing.

Further, note that in the block quote above the "exploitative political-economic structure" that concerns Kohn in this moment *arises from* the organization itself. The *arrangement* itself creates effects on the world around it through the fact of its organization. He continues, following this logic, a little later: "Emergent phenomena," (emergent because they arise up from an unexpected arrangement or organization of elements) "then, are nested. They enjoy a level of detachment from the lower order processes out of which they arise. And yet their existence is dependent on lower-order conditions" (167). The detachment Kohn here describes, for me, is close enough to "autonomy" to be nearly indistinguishable from it—arrangements seem to act independently of the elements that produced them, not unlike children acting independently of their parents. To gesture toward my second chapter, the character of (read: the idiosyncratic literary arrangement we have defined as) Clarissa arises out of

the stochastically networked letters of *Clarissa*, and if the epistles that compose the *novel* are the elements that form the *character*, they're also the elements (read, now, the "series of overlapping forms") that push Clarissa out of and above the page, so that she starts to seem (starts to *be*) alive. Eighteenth-century readers find that they identify with this fictional entity, and she goes on to inspire fan fiction, coffeeshop talk, fan revisions, graduate student dissertations, and, in his personal correspondence, her author starts calling her "my girl." Clarissa as a formal entity, an arrangement, exerts form's effortless efficacy to propagate through new elements that then enter discourse.

Kohn, through C. S. Pierce, articulates a vision of the "soul as a marker of communication and communion among selves." In a distinctly Kantian turn, Pierce locates the soul (what I'm reading as some kind of centralized subjectivity, an idiosyncratic sense of a particular *arrangement* of formal elements)

> not necessarily in a body, even though it is always related to a body, but as an effect of intersubjective semiotic interpretance: "When I communicate my thought and my sentiments to a friend with whom I am in full sympathy, so that my feelings pass into him and I am conscious of what he feels, do I not live in his brain as well as in my own—most literally?" (CP 7.591)[6] The soul, according to Pierce, is not a thing, with a unitary localized existence, but something more like a word, in that its multiple instantiations can exist simultaneously in different places. (Kohn 107)

Here Kohn gestures toward the distributed nature of literary arrangements that I will argue for in chapter 1. Because I am adamant that we mustn't forget the material

[6] I've preserved Kohn's citation style of Pierce here: it comes from *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Pierce*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1931 (Kohn 253).

conditions in which we encounter texts, we must be careful to acknowledge the fact that, even though literary arrangements come together within a text (though also beyond it) to influence the non-fictional world, they first emerge *across* a text's surface. This means that we must be careful when ascribing human forms of temporality to literary characters/arrangements. Clarissa is *not* human (maybe a banal thing to say, but when we start assigning human-like agency to nonhuman things it deserves saying outright), although her agency *does* extend into our human, non-fictional world. Her temporality, too, is maybe more complicated than any human's: she meets Lovelace early in the novel—over and over again, every time a reader takes it up—she faces his assault, and her own, eventual angelic death with each reading. Clarissa's life is *always happening*, always in process;[7] this quality of the literary arrangement allows the critic a view of each element that composes a character within a novel, a particularly privileged view that someone like a biographer or psychoanalyst never has total access to ("form does something to cause-and-effect temporality and the ways it comes to exhibit its own kind of 'effortless efficacy' as it propagates itself through us" [Kohn 21]).

A literary arrangement, then, becomes observable at least in part through its quality of *propagation.* Because they inhere within a medium, literary arrangements must be subject to distribution, even if only between a small group of readers, they must grow more copious, must influence the world around them; the form seeks to create more of itself through the anti-entropic field of the literary. Because of this emphasis on form, and the way one form propagates into another, I do consider this

[7] And this is the reasoning I give my students when I tell them to write about literature in the present tense: a novel alive, always *in the middle of* happening.

project, at heart, a formalist one: formalism is able to account for all these systems of literary arrangement, bearing a huge, scalar reach.

Chapter 1: Arranging a Definition

I begin chapter 1 by tracking the phenomenon of the "impression," which I use to relocate agency outside of the observer and instead within the object of observation (objects that seem, variously, to assault, or strike, the senses). Of primacy to the argument of chapter 1, as I refine my definitions of the literary arrangement, is the concept of *pressure*, which, I argue, elements of texts exert both on one another and on the reader. An object like the footprint, discovered by Robinson Crusoe, not unlike a gravitational object, accrues relevance to itself by semiotically referring outward, drawing attention to itself: intratextually (by characters' reactions, metaphorical callbacks, etc.), and extratextually through critical and readerly engagements. This pressure, crucially, *leads to the propagation of new textual elements*, including entirely new texts in and of themselves.

This pressure, and resultant propagation, is one of the key takeaways of both my chapter 1 and this dissertation, which suggests my ultimate argument that literary arrangements—which include characters, "objects" (in both the ANT and OOO senses), animals, etc.—constitute a form of life, or at the very least, display a kind of agency indistinguishable from organic life's. Much of chapter 1 constitutes introductory work around the aspects I find definitional to the literary arrangement. The pressure I ascribe to arrangements, for instance, inheres in the literary text because texts are, for me, at bottom material, and as the New Materialists I engage with (especially Karen Barad and Jane Bennett, in this first chapter) argue, material, by its very nature, exerts a kind of agency on the world around it (including,

importantly, “inanimate” matter—my arguments extended to their full breadth trouble and destabilize the concept of inanimacy itself).

Literary arrangements are special objects to observe in this regard as they constitute modular and surprising configurations of matter that don’t *seem* like they should affect the world around them. But, as any fiction author will attest to (and as trite as this may seem), fictional characters—a particular kind of literary arrangement, to be sure—take on lives of their own, act surprisingly, do the unexpected, and lead a story-in-progress in new directions. Even in the act of composition, literary arrangements, in the process of forming, demonstrate a quality of *self*-formation noticeably inflected with *agency*; perhaps, even, with intent.

I end chapter 1 by applying the literary arrangement model to a series of close readings I perform first on *Robinson Crusoe*, around Crusoe’s encounter with the footprint (a long-lasting locus of critical examination), which has plain import on the plot of the novel. I move then to a reading of a passage in Lady Mary Wortley Montagu’s *Turkish Embassy Letters*, a localized description in the text of a winter activity that at first blush seems tangential to the action of the epistolary account; closer examination, however, reveals its lasting effects on both Montagu’s book and this dissertation (the arrangement, in other words, proves agential). Finally I move to a 30,000-foot view, again of *Robinson Crusoe*, tracing the novel’s references to tobacco across the text. I hope that by joining these readings—one a major moment in the plot of a canonical novel, another a minor moment in an epistolary work of nonfiction, and the last a cross-text examination of thematically linked elements—I can demonstrate the many ways that a literary arrangement might draw together through a web of interacting agencies between elements, and to gesture toward the ways that

arrangements themselves take shape through reading practices, including critical-academic reading practices.

By ending with two examples of literary arrangements that *aren't* human characters, I argue that literary texts exert agency *beyond* the human—while it may look like Robinson Crusoe takes action, *there is no human there*, just the book itself, exerting its pressure on the world around it, and various structures within it jostling one another.

Chapter 2: Character Networks: Concerning Letters

When I turn to chapter 2, "Character Networks: Concerning Letters," I begin the longest single-text reading of this dissertation. This chapter focuses exclusively on *Clarissa*, what was likely the most popular English novel written in the eighteenth century. As such it proves a productive (if not *the* productive) example of the ways eighteenth-century texts propagated. And literary arrangements *do* propagate, across texts (surprising their authors), between texts (showing up in sequels, "fan fiction," or written critical works), and as objects of discourse (in critical analysis, and in general discussion).[8]

In this chapter I engage with both the text of *Clarissa* and with brief accounts of the composition of the novel, as well as the numerous (and continually expanding) paratexts that orbit the novel like a complex gravitational system. On the one hand we have the character Clarissa, herself a literary arrangement composed through the letters of *Clarissa*, and on the other hand we have the novel-form *Clarissa* itself, a literary arrangement composed from the same letters but understood through a

[8] What are footnotes and citations if not opportunities for a reader to track down further information—an arrangement propagating itself through a reader's ongoing interest?

different critical frame. *Clarissa*'s sheer length participated in its own propagation, first through Richardson-as-author, who found editing the tome troublesome: "As he went to cut, the novel grew under his hand. He simply saw more of the fiction locked in the text, waiting for embodiment" (Ross 24). Further, Richardson's disavowal of his own authorship (in certain formal elements, in the novel's front matter, etc.) opens the door for the reading public's own interpretations and reiterations of the novel—what we would today very likely call fan fiction, and even fans' refusal to accept certain twists of the plot.

In exploring the liveliness of his characters, I fasten upon a scene in which the villain Robert Lovelace "writes to the moment," in the present tense, as action occurs around him, rather than in the more common (or at least more expected) epistolary mode of recounting past events (even if those events are only a few minutes past). Lovelace proves a particularly troublesome character for Richardson, especially in that readers seem to *love* him—a problematic issue when Lovelace is a manipulator, abductor, and rapist. Nevertheless, readers implore Richardson to save Lovelace's soul, to give them a cathartic scene displaying his penitence before God and society. Yet Richardson refuses this—it's out of character for Lovelace. That is, as Megan Ward would say, the network out of which Lovelace arises prevents his own confession; the pressure of the literary arrangement that we designate "Lovelace" pushes away from the scene of catharsis in favor of continued life as a rogue.

If *Clarissa*'s unwieldiness as a body of collected letters points to the novel's continued propagations, its very appearance as an epistolary novel gestures toward the novel's remediations (in the sense of Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, in *Remediation: Understanding New Media*) of non-fictional epistles. Through Bolter

and Grusin, and through Christina Lupton (whose *Knowing Books: The Consciousness of Mediation in Eighteenth-Century Britain* proved key to this chapter), I argue that *Clarissa*'s taking up of the epistolary form highlights the ways in which the medium of the novel itself proves agential on the non-fictional world; literary arrangements, by their nature, must occur within a medium, and because media *distribute*, literary arrangements cannot help but propagate and influence the non-fictional world they're found in. To put this in slightly more Kohnian terms (and here I'm just shamelessly quoting myself from chapter 2), "Fictional literary arrangements have agency precisely *because* they represent, they mediate alternative worlds to the non-fictional one" (99).

Part-and-parcel with a medium's propagation is its "excessiveness," the sense that the text goes on beyond the edge of the page. This excessiveness may in fact be the mechanism whereby reiterations of a literary arrangement find their footholds, usually in readers who take up new paratextual efforts around an "original" text (although, to follow again the logic of my argument, there is no atomic unit, so to speak, of an arrangement's elements; any identifiable element of a literary arrangement is *itself* an arrangement of other elements—histories, etymologies and meanings—and so there can be no "original" text. All texts, all arrangements, go back and back, infinitely networked) but also in critics who address the arrangements they find intriguing or infuriating.

Finally, chapter 2 performs a close reading of Lovelace's excessive agency on both the text and its readers (and its author) before ultimately turning to an analysis of some of the specific reiterations that circulated around *Clarissa* in the latter half of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Chapter 3: Vitality of the Thing: Self-Actuating Matter

With chapter 3 I turn to the issues of animation and, especially, current trends in literary animal studies, as the active arrangements of eighteenth-century animals prove profound loci for thinking with the literary arrangement. If, as I propose, the literary arrangement can function as a conceptual framework that allows us to reimagine the ways that elements within texts both relate to one another, *mean* to one another, and indeed seem to *live*, then the framework should be broadly applicable across the multiplicity of theoretical discourses—it should add value to Marxist readers, reader-response theory, media theorists, formalists, etc., etc., and this chapter seeks to apply the framework to a field that (depending on the thinker) often seems predicated on the question of nonhuman agencies.

In the eighteenth century, enlightenment thinkers were already at odds over the divide between animation and mechanism, especially in relation to animals, which became the proving grounds for their arguments. There's something spooky about a reader's reaction to literary animals, animals always seem to have a more profound effect than expected; it was fictional accounts of animal cruelty in nineteenth-century novels like *Black Beauty* that paved the way for modern humane societies, and animals in eighteenth-century fiction figure as contested sites in some of the earliest forms of these debates, relatedly raising questions about pity and sympathy (real emotional reactions) in response to the unreal, the fictional. I read Tobias Menely's influential *The Animal Claim: Sensibility and the Creaturely Voice* in an effort to understand the relationship between a reader's sympathetic response and the literary animal's call (for me, it shouldn't go without saying, the "literary animal" is simply another type of literary arrangement, as human literary characters are another). If a

fictional animal *can* call, can have a representative voice that affects a reader's senses, is this not more evidence of a living arrangement's agency?

After an aside about the cruelties the mechanism of belief predisposed someone like Samuel Johnson to, I turn to Julien Offray de La Mettrie's *L'homme Machine*, which finds an intelligence not behind, but *within* organized matter. Consciousness, for La Mettrie, coheres within matter itself, distinct from the need for a soul separate from the body. Taking La Mettrie's theories as an early signal of changes in eighteenth-century thought, we can see how some corners of eighteenth-century Europe are growing more invested in *material* and less in spirit—following his logic would seem to suggest the collapsing of the division between animals and humans, both of whom find their animation *through* organization (an argument eerily prescient of Eduardo Kohn), through particular relationships of elements.

As materiality does for La Mettrie—destabilizing the soul from the center of the human—so too do animals for the human subject, decentering what might otherwise *seem* the fixed centers of literary arrangements. In exploring the decentering effect of literary animals, I return again to *Robinson Crusoe*, a text known for the centralization of its narrator, which nevertheless features a zookeeper's variety of animal subjects. I close read especially the scene, after their return from the island, in which Friday engages in bear baiting as a demonstration of the novel's incoherency around Crusoe. Despite Crusoe's manipulative presentation of the event, one in which he remains master over nature, it also figures as an important moment in the play of subjectivities between figures in the novel. (For me, a literary arrangement's "subjectivity" might simply be a precise description of the arrangement's shape, how its elements relate to one another in proximity.)

After tracing another instance of an animal's decentering of Crusoe's centrality in the novel (this time it's his talking parrot, Poll), I turn to a later novel from the eighteenth-century genre of the it-narrative, *The Biography of a Spaniel*. Whereas in *Robinson Crusoe* the animals play against the title character's sovereignty, in *Biography* the first-person narrator is himself an animal, a spaniel named Jolli. Jolli's journey, to me, reads like a logical extension from the early eighteenth-century vision of the natural world's subjugation to man, through Kant's intersubjectivity, to the willing imagining of an animal narrator, the primary literary arrangement of this novel.[9] The genre of the it-narrative itself suggests the agential literary arrangement, peripatetic objects (or in this case animals) that accrue to themselves surprising (even magical) abilities to influence the world around them, and, wittingly or not, comment on the rise of capitalist and globalizing networks in the eighteenth century. *The Biography of a Spaniel* further finds extended life in the circulatory narratives of animals that remain popular in the literature and film of our own contemporary times; I look briefly, at the end of chapter 3, at the example of *Homeward Bound*, which I see as a propagated element of Jolli-qua-arrangement.

Coda: Chiastic Logic

To conclude *Caught Up in the Arrangement*, I end with a coda that examines a specific rhetorical device that, for some reason, cropped up over and over again in my research, and which I now cannot help but read as a kind of grammatical/structural analogy for the literary arrangement: the chiasmus. Tongue set firmly in cheek, I list

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[9] Kohn, too, has something to say about this: "Here is the challenge: in order for people to communicate with dogs, dogs must be treated as conscious human subjects…; yet dogs must simultaneously be treated as objects… lest they talk back…. If dogs were to talk back, people would enter a canine subjectivity and therefore lose their privileged status as humans" (143).

only some of the chiasmi I've recorded over the long course of this project, and try to show that the strange relationship between elements in a chiastic formulation is demonstrative of literary arrangements themselves. The chiasmus, in other words, while a common element of some literary arrangements, *is itself always already* a self-contained literary arrangement.

Finally, in examining the chiasmus, I find myself drawn into the philosophy of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who, I discovered only during my work on the coda, uses the figure of the chiasmus as a way to think into networked relations. For him, much of these networks pivot on the relations between nonfictional bodies, but Merleau-Ponty also helpfully applies his own thinking to the observer/observed divide, collapsing the distinction in much the same ways that I would attempt to do through the concept of the literary arrangement.

I have sat with the chiasmus in my back pocket, as it were, through the writing of effectively the entire dissertation, knowing that when I came to it, further research would prove not only applicable but generative, and this sums up the connective reality of the literary arrangement model: literary arrangements extend across texts and time, forming an overlay, a complicated three-dimensional map of relationality. Pulling on one thread *cannot help* but refer to new territory, and the expansion only stops when we decide to. Merleau-Ponty's thinking, presaging so much of my own, shows up only at the end of this project *because the project did not tell me about him*… until it decided to.

CHAPTER 1: ARRANGING A DEFINITION

In this chapter, I begin by tracking an eighteenth-century logic of the impression, which informs my understanding of a particular (and vital) component of the literary arrangement—what I term "agential pressure," an arrangement's felt influence within a text and upon a reader. In literary texts, this pressure arises through what I conceive of as a metonymic lack (to put it a different way, literary arrangements always seem to gesture outside of themselves, to bigger and bigger pictures, in a kind of *representational excessiveness*). Excessiveness itself creates the agential pressure that concerns me, as literary arrangements push against the boundary-drawing practices required by critical theorists.

To arrive at the process of agential pressure, I rely on Karen Barad's definition of "phenomena," which I explore in the "Constitution of an Arrangement" subsection. Then I turn to my first reading, of the footprint in *Robinson Crusoe*, to consider the process through which this representational excessiveness draws to itself a host of new meanings. After reading a moment in Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's *Turkish Embassy Letters*, wherein a *traineau* (or sled) serves as an example of the literary arrangement, I turn again to *Robinson Crusoe* for a brief examination of how literary arrangements interact and ultimately form new, more encompassing arrangements.

This chapter only gestures toward my arguments about how literary arrangements can constitute a form of life, instead attempting to provide further theoretical grounding. I conclude chapter 1 through an extended visual metaphor of how I imagine literary arrangements in operation. While this chapter, as a whole, is most interested providing a theoretical framework, the close readings will hopefully

show the applicability of this materialist thinking. In the next section, "Following Footprints," I try to show how the elements caught up in a literary arrangement prove capable of influencing both readers and one another.

Following Footprints

Across eighteenth-century texts "impressions" strike characters' senses. These impressions seem to come out of nowhere, and anything seems capable of creating one. The eighteenth-century impression creates effects in those who experience them: "I own these terrors have made a very deep impression on my mind," writes Lady Mary Wortley Montague (85), and Tristram Shandy argues that one "cause of obscurity and confusion" are the sometimes "slight and transient impressions made by the objects" that act on the senses (Sterne 62). My goal here isn't to chronicle the "impression" in eighteenth-century English literature, but to highlight that the language of sensory impressions demonstrates a specific mode of encountering the world, a mode that translates into the literature of the period. Following the impression metaphor produces two corollaries: one, that the mind is *impressionable*—the mental faculties and sensorium receive input and respond to that input in differing ways. The second, conversely, is that objects encountered by the senses *contain the ability* (the agency or power) to cause impressions.

This argument in part derives from John Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. In the chapter "Of Power," Locke describes how changes in ideas come "sometimes by the impression of outward objects on the senses, and sometimes by the determination of [the mind's] own choice" (155). Even in 1689, Locke presents an argument for how material sources can exert agency on human subjects—can stop us in our tracks. The *Oxford English Dictionary* shows us how many definitions of

“impression” proliferated by the eighteenth century, with meanings imbricated across printing, sensory effects, “atmospheric influence,” or simply “the effective action of one thing on another.” The second definition, “A mark produced upon any surface *by pressure*” (“Impression,” my emphasis), is particularly apt to my argument, as I argue that literary arrangements—like the sensory impressions that accost eighteenth-century writers—exert a form of pressure on those who encounter them corollary to that produced upon a concrete surface. Literary arrangments, which I spend much of this chapter attempting to define, exert pressure on (impress upon) our attention, and indeed on one another.

About halfway through his time on the island, Robinson Crusoe stumbles across an impression in sand—impermanent, representational, and agential. The impression is a footprint, and it drives Crusoe to distraction: “I stood like one Thunderstruck, or as if I had seen an apparition” (112). Crusoe is right to call this object an apparition. For one, it is metonymic, defined by absence, by the foot that is no longer present, and by temporal delay. The footprint is markedly transient, will eventually be washed away by sand. But the limits of the footprint are so vague: where does it begin and end? Within the hollows of the impression itself? Or the edges of the sand that surround it? Or is the footprint inimitably linked, representationally, with the owner of the foot who cast the print? If we were to cast the print, we would allow some room for overflow to ensure we captured everything; but have we really entered a space where the limits of the footprint need definition by a plaster-of-Paris user’s manual? Or is the footprint more expansive than all these, exceeding the sands of the beach where we find it?

The New Materialists have shown how material processes have agencies beyond or beside the human. In a particularly apt example, Jane Bennett shows how refuse on the street can accost the unsuspecting passerby, that is, form upon them an impression:

> Glove, pollen, rat, cap, stick. As I encountered these items, they shimmied back and forth between debris and thing—between, on the one hand, stuff to ignore, except insofar as it betokened human activity (the workman's efforts, the litterer's toss, the rat-poisoner's success), and, on the other hand, stuff that commanded attention in its own right, as existents in excess of their association with human meanings, habits, or projects. In the second moment, stuff exhibited its thing-power: it issued a call, even if I did not quite understand what it was saying. (4)

To phrase this another way, these items that "commanded attention" exert their own kind of agential pressure (a phrase derived from Bennett's work that informs much of my own) on the world around them. They "issued a call" on the viewer simply by being. Like the material that engages Bennett here, literary arrangements call on readers to engage with them; they exert pressure on both the text surrounding them (as Crusoe's footprint radically changes Crusoe's lifeways on the island) and on any critical discourse that attempts to describe them.

Crusoe's footprint (an ambiguous possessive, but the footprint is as much Crusoe's as it is the person's who made it, perhaps more so) commands attention like the refuse Bennett passes by. In the moment that Crusoe encounters it (alternatively, in the moment that it accosts Crusoe), he dives into a rambling, clause-ridden sentence

that mirrors the perturbation of his mind:

> It happen'd one Day, about Noon going towards my Boat, I was exceedingly surpriz'd with the Print of a Man's naked Foot on the Shore, which was very plain to be seen in the Sand: I stood like one Thunderstruck, or as if I had seen an apparition; I listen'd, I look'd round me, I could hear nothing, nor see any Thing; I went up to a rising Ground to look farther; I went up the Shore and down the Shore, but it was all one, I could see no other Impression but that one, I went to it again to see if there were any more, and to observe if it might not be my Fancy; but there was no Room for that, for there was exactly the very Print of a Foot, Toes, Heel, and every Part of a Foot; how it came thither, I knew not, nor could in the least imagine. (112)

Sentences like this one are not necessarily unique in Crusoe's writing style,[10] but the form nevertheless points to the rapid-fire series of thoughts it describes. The encounter causes him to question his own observation ("I went to it again… to observe if it might not be my Fancy"). The sight triggers Crusoe's senses ("I listen'd, I look'd round") as well as his imagination ("how it came thither, I knew not, nor could in the least imagine"). The footprint's agential pressure—the force it exerts on the world around it simply by existing—arrests Crusoe in his tracks, and marks an important inflection point in the novel, marking the effective end of Crusoe's solitary existence, or at least his belief that he is solitary, and introduces new kinds of conflicts and fears that plague Crusoe until he encounters the indigenous islanders sometime later.

[10] Yes, I'm continuing to make the mistake of ascribing the text to Crusoe instead of Defoe, for now at least.

Bennett calls this arrestive power “thing-power,” which she says “has the rhetorical advantage of calling to mind a childhood sense of the world as filled with all sorts of animate beings, some human, some not, some organic, some not” (20). “The term’s disadvantage, however,” Bennett continues, “is that it also tends to overstate the thinginess or fixed stability of materiality, whereas my goal is to theorize a materiality that is as much force as entity” (20). This force, or pressure, as it appears in literary arrangements, be they protagonists, minor characters, assemblages of objects, or agential things, is the subject of this dissertation. If “literary arrangements" are the subject of the sentence, and their effects on the world around them the direct object, then my primary concern is the active, transitive verb that connects the two, which for now I call “pressure.” Literary arrangements pressure the worlds (both the texts’ and the readers’) around them, creating all kinds of surprising and diverse reactions.

The Constitution of an Arrangement

I define the “literary arrangement” in terms similar to (and inspired by) Karen Barad’s definition of “phenomena.” To arrive at the arrangement, we will first have to pass through her conceptual framework, as well as a segue into similar formations of concepts preceding the Barad phenomenon, especially the Latourian “assemblage” and thing theorist’s “thing” and “object.” Tied into her notion of objective knowledge, Barad posits a philosophical framework she calls “agential realism,” wherein phenomena become the necessary objects of study, and where “*phenomena are the ontological inseparability of intra-acting agencies.*”[11] The apparatuses used to observe these phenomena (though I think we could expand her definition of apparatus to

[11] Throughout this study, all emphases in quotations are also in the original, unless otherwise noted.

include, for example, the human sensorium) "*are not mere observing instruments but boundary-drawing practices.*"[12] In other words, Barad makes an argument about objective knowledge's (and reality's) constructed nature: "Reality is therefore not a fixed essence. *Reality is an ongoing dynamic of intra-activity*…. On the contrary, phenomena are specific material configurations of the world" (206). In doing this, in identifying the complex, discursive, and plural nature of agency behind any object of study, Barad argues that

> Agency is a matter of intra-acting; it is an enactment, not something that someone or something has. Agency cannot be designated as an attribute of subjects or objects (as they do not preexist as such). Agency is a matter of making iterative changes to particular practices through the dynamics of intra-activity (including enfoldings and other topological reconfigurings). (214)

By refusing the possessive, Barad instead enforces a matter of motion. Material phenomena that move through the world produce changes upon that world, an agency defined by interaction. She goes on: "it seems not only appropriate but important to consider agency as distributed over nonhuman as well as human forms" (214).

The intra-acting nature of phenomena—an acting from *within*—highlights the looping nature of agency as it develops across assemblages, forming feedback loops between one element[13] (one node within a larger *arrangement*) and the next. Thomas

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[12] Boundary-drawing practices fill for Barad the space that mediation fills for most Marxist critics. Every medium draws its own boundaries, as it were, around the particular subjects that that medium is capable of presenting. Television will never reproduce the olfactory sense in any sufficient way—when it does, that medium will no longer be what we understand as "television" (rather, Smell-o-vision).

[13] I often use the word "element" to denote a literary arrangement as one among a collective of other arrangements, or, as an isolated arrangement that forms a larger one in assemblage. As I'll argue later, literary arrangements are only ever isolated by the observational practices that study (or simply read) them; that said, "element" is sometimes a shorthand I use to indicate this.

Nail helpfully defines the assemblage—a term coined by Gilles Deleuze but largely popularized by Bruno Latour (in *Reassembling the Social*)—in the aptly titled article "What is an Assemblage?"

> In contrast to organic unities, for Deleuze and Guattari, assemblages are more like machines, defined solely by their external relations of composition, mixture, and aggregation. In other words, an assemblage is a multiplicity, neither a part nor a whole. If the elements of an assemblage are defined only by their external relations, then it is possible that they can be added, subtracted, and recombined with one another ad infinitum without ever creating or destroying an organic unity…. Each new mixture produces a new kind of assemblage, always free to recombine again and change its nature. (23)[14]

The assemblage remains an important conceptual tool for New Materialists, who emphasize interactions between elements in rhizomatic, rather than hierarchical, relations. What Barad adds to the assemblage is a cognizing, choice-making viewer, a "measuring/measurer unit" (Hayles, *Unthought* 68). The phenomenon, in Barad's reckoning, is composed both of a boundary-drawing observational practice, an object of observational interest (whose limits are drawn by the observational praxis at play), and a hermeneutic interpreter.[15]

Crusoe's footprint emerges as a surprisingly apt example of all this, for the footprint's boundaries are, eventually, measured by Crusoe himself: "When I came to measure the Mark with my own Foot, I found my foot not so large by a great deal"

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[14] The point here about "Each *new mixture*" is especially important for us to hold onto. As I'll discuss later, I consider each reader's conception of a literary arrangement to be peculiarly idiosyncratic, defined by the extremely specific arrangement of elements that *that reader* considers part of said arrangement.

[15] The inclusion of this interpreter, the observer, is one crucial reason why I refuse to abandon hermeneutics entirely, as Kittler, Latour, and Deleuze and Guattari all suggest.

(115).[16] The footprint that Crusoe discovers on the island represents an assemblage comprising an absent foot, the sand around it, Crusoe's own affective responses, Crusoe's more measured observational responses, and indeed the whole of the novel after it, which hinges on the discovery of indigenous inhabitants, Friday, and, later, other castaways.

Rather than relying solely on Barad's phenomena-framework, I use the term "literary arrangement" to designate the loci of critique that I (and other critics) prejudicially select from a (genuine) infinity of textual options. I also preference "literary arrangement" instead of something like "textual object" or "thing" (or even "character," though I look at the special case of character in chapter 2) precisely because these other terms have been re-defined and differently applied over the past three decades. Further, while terms like "assemblage" and "phenomena" hold to the material in productive ways, "assemblage" crucially lacks the sense of a hermeneutic observer (that is, someone/something that is *impressed upon*), and "phenomena" loses some sense of authorial intentionality, which, while I devalue it in chapter 2, cannot be completely overwritten.

Jonathan Lamb (in *The Things Things Say*) defines "object" and "thing" by their relation to the marketplace, inside and outside of capitalism's use-value system, respectively (xi). Even "assemblage," which I have used somewhat loosely up to now, carries its own definitionally trying complexities. Nail notes how "assemblage" is the common translation for the French *agencement*, "from the verb *agencer*, 'to arrange,

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[16] This occurs quite a bit after Crusoe's initial encounter with the footprint, at least "three Days and Nights" later, and several pages, despite Crusoe's own meditations on its impermanence: "the first Surge of the Sea upon a high Wind would have defac'd [it] entirely" (113). How the print survives remains a mystery, but its permanence *in spite* earmarks its centrality to the novel's turn.

to lay out, to piece together." Unfortunately, this is not quite the definition of assemblage as we use it in English, as "'the joining or union of two things' or 'a bringing or coming together.'" Nail points out the obvious problem with this translation:

> A layout or arrangement is not the same thing as a unity or a simple coming together. Thus the second problem of this translation: the French word *assemblage* already exists and means the same thing as the English word "assemblage." According to *Le Robert Collins* dictionary, the French word *assemblage* [distinct from *agencement*] means, "to join, to gather, to assemble." Again, an arrangement or layout is not the same as a joined or unified gathering. (22)

The English "assemblage," then, comes to mean *both* something laid out or pieced together, *and* elements that have been joined together, depending on the context of the translation (and when so many theorists of the assemblage have written in their Native French, e.g. Deleuze and Guattari, or Latour, this can cause real linguistic confusion).

When I invoke the phrase "literary arrangement," I am attempting to make several maneuvers. First, while acknowledging "assemblage" within its definition, I am attempting to deny neither of the two definitions that vie for attention within "assemblage," but instead to accrete them. The literary arrangement is absolutely a joining together of elements, as we see with the example of Crusoe's footprint (elements like its physical manifestation, Crusoe's temporal doubling, religiosity, existential terror, etc.), but is also physically laid out *because it is a confluence of literary, narrative, and printed material*, and so must be distributed serially across a

text.[17] This seriality, enforced by reading's movement through time, sometimes applies within the narrative of a text (Crusoe returns to the footprint—once physically to measure its dimensions, and then repeatedly afterward in his mind) but always applies across the physical text itself, be it paper-based, digital, or some other formation.[18]

I nest "assemblage" within Barad's definition of phenomena, with her emphasis on observational practices that define the assemblage's limits—like cutting a fly out of a spider's web, we lose part of the whole picture.[19] Further, the literary arrangement is always a point of agential pressure within and on a text, pressures that denote the arrangement's representationally excessive condition (the footprint arrests Crusoe, it issues a call, impresses, is metonymic, exceeds itself).

To consider the arrangement in terms of its discursiveness and criticality—what I've found is often the most confusing aspect to describe—I turn to Michel Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge*. For Foucault, the aim of *Archaeology* is to reconceptualize a study of the referent, to relate objects back to their governing discourse.

> What, in short, we wish to do is to dispense with 'things'. To 'depresentify' them. To conjure up their rich, heavy, immediate plenitude…. To substitute for

[17] Further, the sense of something having "a layout" suggests that one element might have multiple relations with other elements, rather than appearing, say, along a number line.

[18] Books are also good metaphors for the literary arrangement: they are literally constructed out of diverse elements (like wood pulp, ink) and are inscribed within discursive systems of economic, philosophical, literary, and other praxes. They are literally "laid out" by book designers, typographers, editors, etc., with analyzable relationships between each element in coordination.

[19] This analogy can be drawn ad nauseam, ad infinitum. If we cut the web from the tree in which it hangs, we lose a vital part of the spider's environment. Taking the tree into our lab, we lose a picture of the soil nutrients the tree relies on, the weather patterns that sustain it, and the numerous animals that cohabit the tree alongside the spider.

> the enigmatic treasure of 'things' anterior to discourse, the regular formation of objects that emerge only in discourse. To define these *objects* without reference to the *ground*, the *foundation of things*, but by relating them to the body of rules that enable them to form as objects of a discourse… (47-48)

Foucault, then, is interested in migrating away from things in favor of objects that arise as results of discourse and historical determinism—in a literary context, the "body of rules" these objects adhere to would be grammar, punctuation, and the ideological modes of writing the text adheres to. Material finds its way into discursive networks. It is important that we hold onto the discursive framework of literary arrangements, but without releasing their ontological status, as Foucault does here. In other words, my aim is not to forget or deny the discursively produced nature of arrangements, but to acknowledge the multiplicitous (infinite) series and compositions of agencies behind them, and thus behind discourses, going back and back.

To summarize my criteria for them, literary arrangements are defined by six interlocking commonalities: they have seriality and a phenomenal nature, they are points of pressure and potential objects of discourse, and they are representationally "excessive," the sum total of which leads to their self-propagation.

1) **Seriality.** Literary arrangements have a serial nature. They occur over a series of encounters with the reader, and, as such, their ontological engagement with temporality is profoundly different from the reader's own. Arrangements are serial, and we encounter them serially, but they exist in a printed stasis. (This seems, to me, like one of the facts of a literary arrangement's existence, and I largely leave over examining this feature in subsequent chapters as a necessary assumption.)

2) **Phenomenal Nature.** Literary arrangements take shape through a variety of intra-acting elements, each of which has agency on the system of the arrangement itself. They are specifically "phenomenal" because the bounds of the construction are drawn by specific observational practices (reading, close reading).

3) **Potential Object of Critical Discourse.** They are potentially objects of critical discourse, which point 2, a "phenomenal nature," is predicated upon, as a critical practice (or, at the very least, a reading practice) defines the boundaries of the literary arrangement in question. (This is Barad's insistence on the inclusion of the observer in her definition of phenomena.)

4) **Representationally Excessive.** Due to their phenomenal nature, literary arrangements call into question the referential nature of signs, especially if, as I argue, they exert influence both across and beyond a text. In our first example, Crusoe's footprint has a metonymic relationship to both its creator and to the rest of the novel, drawing far more to itself than the description of a simple footprint would seem at first to imply. In the case of the footprint, the fact of its metonymy, that it represents something unknown, creates new relationships and unforeseen circumstances, and *implies* subsequent and/or alternative scenarios. (See also Lennard Davis on the "reality" of fiction in chapter 2 and the ways in which *Clarissa* seemed to escape Richardson, and especially Eduardo Kohn, cropping up throughout this project, whose argument about life and cognition rests wholly on the representational.)[20] The

[20] Grammar and punctuation, it is important to point out, do not fit the definition of literary arrangement as I've currently laid out. While grammar has profound organizational agency over a text, and is indeed excessive, in that it refers to broader trends in social communication, grammar is not a representation; it is rather the *rules* that formalize certain kinds of representation.

excessiveness of literary arrangements is the cornerstone of my later arguments; it is through their excessiveness that we observe their inherent:

5) **Agential Pressure.** Literary arrangements are sites of agential pressure, whether that's internal to a text (they cause plot to continue, characters to react to stimuli, etc.) or external (they become a site of readers' affective reactions, or are a subject of critical discourse), but usually (maybe always) both. This pressure occurs largely due to their excessiveness, as arrangements always push beyond the boundary-drawing practices that attempt to observe them. I would struggle to find examples of one or the other (internal or external) or neither, for simply by entering the possibility space of becoming an example, they enter external discourse as a viable object of study (see point 3).

6) **Self-propagative.** Through their agential pressure, literary arrangements produce new versions of themselves—sometimes in microcosm, and sometimes a new arrangement becomes much more ubiquitous than its "parent" arrangement. It is through observations of their self-propagation that I argue that literary arrangements constitute a form of *life*. Even in that they exist as objects of critical discourse, literary arrangements propagate through the minds of readers. I take up these arguments especially in chapters 2 and 3.

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In turning toward a study of the agential webs of relation demonstrated by literary arrangements, we should first acknowledge that, in *Reassembling the Social*, Bruno Latour argues for rethinking the ways in which sociology examines physical and social relationships; specifically, that everything forms societies, and that "*critical sociology*" can examine the relations behind these social objects. Latour continues that

this “sociology of associations” “doesn’t only *limit* itself to the social but *replaces* the object to be studied by another matter made *of* social relations” (9)—a similar move made by both Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*, and Friedrich Kittler in *Discourse Networks, 1800/1900*, attempting to overturn hermeneutic modes of analysis. While the framework I propose in this chapter doesn’t aim to fully replace objects of study in favor of their relationships (I am in fact quite against this) it does emphasize the agential relationships between elements of texts. Whether those elements are characters, things, or animals, I argue that they all fit the criteria of the literary arrangement, and that discrete arrangements (as far as they can be discrete) exert pressure on one another, which the reader or literary critic observes or understands as agency.

To begin an examination of a specific literary arrangement, I look at four moments taken from two early eighteenth-century texts: the footprint and Crusoe’s use of tobacco in Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*, and the description of a *traineau* alongside a description of the ladies of Hanover in Lady Mary Wortley Montagu’s *Turkish Embassy Letters*. In each example I hope to show how the literary arrangement in question interrelates (or “intra-acts,” in Karen Barad’s terminology) with other elements of the text to produce surprising, agential relations.

Arranging a Footprint

The footprint, as a material phenomenon, exerts agency on Crusoe in a number of recognizable ways, and we get a glimpse into its nature as an assemblage over the course of Crusoe’s next several days after the encounter, as he undergoes a series of internal conflicts. His first thoughts imagine that the “Devil” himself has come to the island, simply to torment Crusoe with apprehensions, and at first Crusoe’s rationality

conspires to this imagination: “Reason joyn’d in with me upon this Supposition: For how should any other Thing in human Shape come into the Place?” (112). His rationality does eventually win out, as he figures that the Devil would have more surefire means of tormenting his quarry than by leaving a footprint “where ‘twas Ten Thousand to one whether I should ever see it or not” (113). Soon, however, Crusoe develops something of a Job complex, believing that his entrapment on the island, and the distress caused by the footprint, are all of divine intervention:

> I consider’d that this was the Station of Life the infinitely wise and good Providence of God had determin’d for me, that as I could not foresee what the Ends of Divine Wisdom might be in all this, so I was not to dispute his Sovereignty, who, as I was his Creature, had an undoubted Right by Creation to govern and dispose of me absolutely as he thought fit; and who, as I was a Creature who had offended him, had likewise a judicial Right to condemn me to what Punishment he thought fit: and that it was my Part to submit to bear his Indignation, because I had sinn’d against him. (114)

This fairly obvious allegory to the tale of Job, alongside direct quotations of Psalms 50 and 27 in the following paragraphs, ties the footprint’s power into one of divine providence, even complicit in the war of souls. It makes little difference that these concerns are Crusoe’s own internal monologue; as Tony Brown argues in *The Primitive, the Aesthetic, and the Savage: An Enlightenment Problematic*, “Sundering reason, the footprint works up Crusoe’s imagination, a faculty that, for Defoe more widely, one cannot control” (163). Brown’s argument insists that “Crusoe’s encounter with the footprint and his subsequent response to the arrival of savages—dramatize the

advent of what we might call an aesthetic self" (148). While Brown's argument focuses on the aesthetic self (specifically through an encounter with the sublime in a Longinus-like mode), the engagement with modality that the passages around the footprint indicate importantly signify the ways in which footprint-qua-literary arrangement infects the novel. Crusoe's experience of modality is another way that the footprint enacts its representationally excessive nature, entering a space of could-haves and might-have-beens.

> But after innumerable fluttering Thoughts, like a Man perfectly confus'd and out of my self, I came Home to my Fortification, not feeling, as we say, the Ground I went on, but terrify'd to the last Degree, looking behind me at every two or three Steps, mistaking every Bush and Tree, and fancying every Stump at a Distance to be a Man; nor is it possible to describe how many various Shapes affrighted Imagination represented Things to me in, how many wild Ideas were found every Moment in my Fancy, and what strange unaccountable Whimsies came into my Thoughts by the Way. (112)

Brown shows how this passage's use of modality ("mistaking," "fancying," "wild Ideas," "unaccountable Whimsies") signals a lapse into an experience of the sublime. "In this way, the narrator dramatizes the turn from literal to figural as a corollary of the footprint's force" (156). This corollary, the turn to the figurative, is part and parcel with the footprint's excessiveness.

Indeed, "the footprint's force" divides the two Crusoes (one the narrating autobiographer, the other the character within the narrative) into distinguishable entities: "Though we are not told when and how Crusoe realizes his misattribution" of bushes, trees, and stumps for men, "his mistaking local flora for other men suggests

that a model of uncontrolled, deceptive figuration (symptomatic of irrationality here as elsewhere in Defoe) cuts through the historical Crusoe…. By producing the historical Crusoe as a mere empirical being stumbling upon this singular thing, the narrating Crusoe allows himself to fully register the footprint's transforming effect" (Brown 156). Brown, as I've mentioned, is most interested in accounting for and discovering the aesthetic, which he does here by identifying a sublime experience. However, by registering that sublimity, the footprint comes more and more to figure like a hole in parchment that obscures an important verb. The footprint, Brown notes, is "Untimely," (150):

> Especially troubling for Crusoe is the footprint's obscure origin. A sign in the sand waiting to be deciphered…. Yet Crusoe finds himself unable to form a determinate judgment on the print's origins. He cannot read from the mark to an individual body, or from the effect to the cause…. It withdraws to present an almost inaccessible margin to that temporal condition—a presentation that in turn distorts the world as Crusoe knows it. (151).[21]

The footprint causes a general confusion that exceeds its simple representation: "Defoe's novel articulates an especially complex logic of the sublime that hinges on the footprint's insistent singularity, that is, its apparent lack of derivation, it [*sic*] nonrepresentational force" (149).[22] While Brown argues that the footprint's nonrepresentational force is part and parcel with its presentation in a matrix of

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[21] Hayles, in *Unthought*, notes a similar event that occurs to a traumatized character in the novel *Blindsight*, by Peter Watts: "She literally becomes 'no one,' reduced to nonconscious cognitive and material processes that precede the self's construction by consciousness" (102). I think that she would find this a fitting description for the loss of rationality that Crusoe undergoes here.

[22] The "footprint's insistent singularity" is important, as it highlights the, to wit, impressiveness of the footprint on Crusoe's psyche, but it *is yet* a signifier. Despite being singular, it still refers, it is simply that the possibilities of its reference begin to seem boundless, as Crusoe's disturbed mental state elucidates.

sublimity, for me this excessiveness produces the selfsame agential pressure I began this chapter discussing—excessiveness itself, in a kind of material insistence on one's attention (think of refuse's impression on Jane Bennett's attention at the start of this chapter), is a component in agential pressure. Simply by materially existing, the footprint affects the historical Crusoe directly encountering it, the narrativizing Crusoe in the future, who recalls it, and of course the reader who is left to parse the encounter's ramifications across time and space. [23]

The footprint is a literary arrangement, but it is also a metonym for native inhabitants of the island and nearby mainland, as well as for Crusoe's fear, both of the inhabitants but also of his own inadequacies as a Christian. He notes, "what a Surprise should I have been in, if when I discover'd the Print of a Man's Foot, I had instead of that, seen fifteen or twenty Savages, and found them pursuing me, and by the swiftness of their Running, no Possibility of my escaping them" (126). (Brown makes the attractive observation that "surprise," as in "I was exceedingly surpriz'd," [Defoe 112] enters English through French, where "*surprise* (literally 'over-taken,' *sur-prise*) connotes capture and domination" as opposed to the more sterile English perception of surprise as a sudden shock, which is "a late nineteenth-century development" [155].) The "surprise" that overtakes Crusoe upon encountering the footprint notably

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[23] Alex Mackintosh notes that part of the trouble for Crusoe is a material danger, that the food chain on his island has been upset. "'Thunder-struck' by this discovery, [Crusoe] is instantly cast back into the status of an edible animal, 'for never frighted Hare fled to Cover, or Fox to Earth, with more Terror of Mind'" (29). One reason I have for raising such disparate-seeming readings of the passage is to reiterate a belief I have in close reading, and which aligns with Karen Barad's understanding of the phenomenon: this is that, despite drawing such markedly different conclusions, both Tony Brown and Alex Mackintosh seem *correct* about the footprint. On the one hand this is a testament to the agential pressure of the footprint, but it also highlights something about our own critical reading practices: different critics, with the same or similar training, will often draw wildly dissimilar conclusions about a work of art, passage in a text, etc. See chapter 3 for more on how critical reading, as a boundary-drawing practice, both limits and makes possible our examinations of literary arrangements.

overwhelms him, producing long moments of self-reflection that trouble the novel's temporal coherence. Crusoe acknowledges that the footprint marks his dependence on fate and subsumes his agency: "that Providence, which had deliver'd me from so many unseen Dangers, and had kept me from those Mischiefs which I could no way have been the Agent in delivering my self from" (127). Crusoe makes explicit that he "could no way have been the Agent" of his own self-protection, and so the sign of an existential threat earmarks his reliance on that which surveys the world and (in Crusoe's worldview) manipulates it to protect the faithful ("nothing can happen in the great Circuit of his Works, either without his Knowledge or Appointment" [68]). The footprint is merely one element in the wider "great Circuit."

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In his encounter with the footprint—and especially after he discovers a "Shore spread with Skulls, Hands, Feet, and other Bones of humane Bodies" (119-20)—Crusoe is haunted, and the feeling of a haunting is an illuminating metaphor for the excessiveness of the arrangement. What are ghosts if not excessiveness of the soul refusing to exit the state of representation? Crusoe describes how "with my three Pistols, and my Sword, I made no doubt, but that if there was twenty I should kill them all" (122). These plans, explicitly linked to Crusoe's interior workings ("After I had thus laid the Scheme of my Design, and in my Imagination put it in practice…" [123]), continue "for two or three Months" in which Crusoe keeps up a regular vigil from the island's hilltop. But soon, the narrativizing Crusoe returns to comment on the historical Crusoe's apparently malodorous outlook:

> As long as I kept up my daily Tour to the hill, to look out; so long also I kept up the Vigour of my design, and my Spirits seem'd to be all the while in a

> suitable Form, for so outragious an Execution as the killing twenty or thirty naked Savages, for an Offence which I had not at all entred into a Discussion of in my Thoughts, any farther than my Passions were at first fir'd by the Horror I conceiv'd at the unnatural Custom of that People of the Country, who it seems had been suffer'd by Providence in his wise Disposition of the World, to have no other Guide than that of their own abominable and vitiated Passions; (123-24)

The mention of these "abominable and vitiated Passions" leads then into a short excursus on the tragedy that native peoples survive by "Customs, as nothing but Nature entirely abandon'd of Heaven" (124). But, as Crusoe "began to be weary of the Excursion, which I had made so long, and far, every Morning in vain" to the hilltop, "so my Opinion of the Action it self began to alter, and I began with cooler and calmer thoughts to consider what it was I was going to engage in. What Authority, or Call I had, to pretend to be Judge and Executioner upon these Men as Criminals, whom Heaven had thought fit for so many Ages to suffer unpunish'd" (124). As an arrangement, Crusoe's reception and reaction to these elements constitutes an actively enlarging association.

Crusoe follows a Lockean path, further expanding his reach as a character-arrangement, receiving simple ideas (the footprint, the skulls and bones on the shore) and turning them into complex ones through reflection. In this mode of pseudo-cultural relativism,[24] in which Crusoe considers the cultural environment of the

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[24] Bob Chase describes Locke's framework for cultural relativism:

If the store of simple ideas in the human mind is subject to the particular "exigencies of this life" generated by particular environments and social and economic arrangements, and if structures of thought are to any

indigenous people, Crusoe determines that "neither in Principle or in Policy, I ought one way or other to concern my Self in this Affair." And here again, theology appears as a structuring force in Crusoe's apperceptions of his responsibilities. "Religion joyn'd in with this Prudential, and I was convinc'd now many Ways, that I was perfectly out of my Duty, when I was laying all my bloody Schemes" (125). Crusoe goes on, "In this Disposition I continu'd, for near a Year after this; and so far was I from desiring an Occasion for falling upon these Wretches, that in all that Time, I never once went up the Hill to see whether there were any of them in Sight…. Besides this, I kept my self, as I said, more retir'd than ever, and seldom went from my Cell, other than upon my constant Employment, *viz*. To milk my She-goats, and manage my little Flock" (126).

Crusoe comes more and more to appear like a monk, reclusive in his "Cell" and even managing a "Flock." The metaphor is plain, but in the middle of all these reflections the signifier of Crusoe's precarity returns: "if when I discover'd the Print of a Man's foot, I had instead of that, seen fifteen or twenty Savages, and found them pursuing me, and by the Swiftness of their running, no possibility of my escaping them," (126), and earlier he writes that "All this Labour I was at the Expence of, purely from my Apprehensions on the Account of the Print of a Man's Foot which I had seen" (118).[25] Imbricated into systems of religiosity, cultural difference, and

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extent dependent on the "acquired habits" ingrained within humans as the result of social relations…then our "more abstruse significations," being metaphors making use of ideas thus subject to cultural availability, are going to be shaped by our particular cultural conditions (78)

Chase quotes here, respectively, from Book II, Chapter xxiii, Paragraph 12, from II.xxi.45, and from III.i.5 (Locke 184; [not present in my edition]; 256).

[25] I could easily imagine another version of my chapter that takes up seriously Crusoe's use of economic language here, "Labour," "at the Expense of," and "Account." These suggest the ways that even here, in isolation, king of his little island, Crusoe's labor is being commodified toward some purpose (and indeed it is—the book sells quite well).

Lockean self-reflection, Crusoe is haunted, by the footprint and by what the footprint represents, "for certain it is, that these Savage People who sometimes *haunted* this Island, never came with any Thoughts of finding any Thing here" (126, my emphasis). This haunted feeling—a feeling that representation seems to be overflowing its dam—is a defining quality of metonyms, which stand in for a lack, something related but not present. Literary arrangements share this quality, always referring, always reaching out to something not present within the bounds of the arrangement itself. The elements that compose literary arrangements are always already arrangements in themselves, and literary arrangements are always already the elements of larger arrangements that exceed and absorb.

Friedrich Kittler has argued that changes in eighteenth-century reading practices are symbolic of a metonymic lack, or (interpretive rather than representational, for Kittler) excessiveness, at the heart of literature in 1800. In a paragraph about what few kinds of home entertainment there were in eighteenth-century Europe, Kittler writes that

> Aside from mechanical automatons and toys, there was nothing. The discourse network of 1800 functioned without phonographs, gramophones, or cinematographs. *Only books could provide serial storage of serial data*. They had been reproducible since Gutenberg, but they became material for *understanding and fantasy* only when alphabetization had become ingrained. Books had previously been reproducible masses of letters; now they reproduced themselves. The scholarly republican heap of books in Faust's study became a psychedelic drug for everyone. (116, my emphasis)

While seriality is one of the defining terms for literary arrangements, Kittler is here

making an argument about how alphabetization reorganized the way readers read, a structural change that formed one of the bases of hermeneutic reading, a style of reading that, for Kittler, links the operation of "understanding" with "fantasy." In his section on the discourse network of 1900, Kittler will argue that modernist media shift away from hermeneutic reading the same way that the network of 1800 shifted toward it. "A notation system," e.g., alphabetization, "has the exterior character, the outsideness, of a technology. …[it] set the framework within which something like 'meaning'… [became] possible at all" (x). This new kind of reading, predicated on mass reproduction (itself necessitating systems of organization, like alphabetization) relies on readers to do their own work of comprehending, to step outside of rote memorization, and thus opens up spaces for readerly fantasy.[26] There is thus a lack that literature—meant to be "interpreted"—embodies, a metonymic relationship wherein the reader of a text is always already haunted by the "meaning" interpretation reaches toward.

The footprint too is haunted by a relationship to print media, by its relationship to what it metonymically refers. Of course, there is the word "print" in the object's name itself, but Crusoe distances the two ("foot" and "print") into a longer phrase, "the Print of a Man's naked Foot," and later, "the very Print of a Foot," emphasizing

[26] Writing of Wagenseil's 1697 *Nuremberg Chronicles*, taken up again by the Serapion Brethren, Kittler notes that "A book that had been a classic among Gutenberg texts, that had reproduced pre-Gutenberg, that is, handwritten sagas of the Wartburg singers' contest, is hermeneutically reworked until it can reproduce its own sensuousness." Set in a new era of mass reproduction, the Serapion Brethren rework the *Nuremberg Chronicles* into a new framing device: "Alphabetization could hardly accomplish a more elegant translation of Gutenbergiana into phantasmagoria. The writer of an old book becomes an inner voice; the frontispiece becomes an inner image; the list of characters becomes a scene; and the chronicle's cold medium becomes a time-series of sounds and sights—it is sound film avant la lettre" (117).

the printed (by which I mean impressed) nature of the missing appendage.[27] Crusoe's encounter with the footprint, especially taken alongside the print's linguistic proximity to print media, invokes again Locke's *Essay*, in which external sensory objects impact the senses to "impress" us with their effects. "Let us then suppose the mind to be, as we say, white paper, void of all characters, without any ideas; how comes it to be furnished?… Whence has it all the materials of reason and knowledge? To this I answer, in one word, from EXPERIENCE; in that all our knowledge is founded, and from that it ultimately derives itself" (49).[28] The tabula rasa of the mind, as Locke argues, is subject to all kinds of forces, both interior and exterior, that affect it.

> The mind being every day informed, by the senses, of the alteration of those simple ideas it observes in things without; and taking notice how one comes to an end and ceases to be, and another begins to exist which was not before…. and concluding from what it has so constantly observed to have been, that the like changes will for the future be made in the same things by like agents, and by the like ways… so comes by that idea which we call *power*. (155)

Locke's explanation of the mind's conception of power is telling, in that it relies on external sensory inputs to reify the mind's ideas. In this way, externalities can cause major, unsuspecting and surprising upsets that the mind was previously unprepared for. The sudden shocks that accost Crusoe underline the portrayal of the mind as a

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[27] Variants of "footprint" appear in the English language as early as the sixteenth century but are either hyphenated or presented as a noun phrase ("foot print") until the nineteenth century, when the term loses the division between "foot" and "print" ("Footprint").

[28] Christopher Flint, in *The Appearance of Print in Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, says that "when John Locke adapts the classical concept of the *tabula rasa* or blank slate to compare the mind in its infancy to 'white paper, void of all characters, without any ideas,' he imagines a page readied for printing, as his repeated use of the word 'imprint' attests" (80). One of the qualities of mind, in other words, is that it awaits *impression*.

responsive surface onto which material experiences are spread, changing that surface in the process. (To put all this one final way, the act of impression itself is agency enacted by whatever does the impressing. Phrases like "*something* impressed upon me" affirms the reception of external agency by the sensorium.)

As Locke notes in "Of Power," agency is mutually constitutive: "the sun has a power to blanch wax; and wax a power to be blanched by the sun." Locke locates the power for transformation *both* externally and internally in a series of chiasmi, wherein "fire has a power to melt gold… and gold has a power to be melted." Discussing this feature of the agents involved in a transformation, Locke stipulates that by "taking notice how one comes to an end and ceases to be, and another begins to exist which was not before; reflecting also, on what passes within itself, and observing a constant change of its ideas, sometimes by the impression of outward objects on the senses, and sometimes by the determination of its own choice," the observer comes to realize that the power for alteration (what I call pressure, emblematizing a particular kind of agency) comes from two sides of an equation, not one exerted on the other, but mutually constitutive (155). This aspect of Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* denies the simple subject/object divide that seems so natural within the paradigm of subject-verb-object languages.

Following Letters

Shortly after arriving in Hanover, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu describes to Lady Rich a common diversion among the German upper class:

> The snow is already very deep, and people begin to slide about in their *traineaus*. This is a favourite diversion all over Germany. They are little machines fixed upon a sledge that hold a lady and a gentleman, and are drawn

> by one horse. The gentleman has the honour of driving, and they move with a prodigious swiftness. The lady, the horse, and the traineau are all as fine as they can be made, and when there are many of them together, 'tis a very agreeable show. At Vienna, where all pieces of magnificence are carried to excess, there are sometimes traineaus that cost 5 or £6000 English. (79-80)

Is the *traineau* a literary arrangement, or is it rather a thing, object, or something else entirely? In one sense, the sled, especially in the context of Montagu's letters, is absolutely an object of discourse: it appears in the text as a curiosity—Montagu's fascination with it (and the ease with which modern eyes might gloss over it) demonstrates its historical constructedness. Further, the sled is bound up with Empire, economics, and class, costing "5 or £6000 English" in the heart of what will become the Austrian Empire not a century later. It could even be included under the marker of commodity fetish, equated as it is so immediately with wealth and leisure (who were the artisans who constructed these? Montagu does not tell us, the *traineau* subsumes that labor).

Jonathan Lamb might simply argue that the sled serves the human, and so qualifies as an "object," not a thing (or an agential phenomenon). Montagu's description of the *traineau*, however, presents a more complicated assemblage of elements. For one, the *traineau* is not simply the sled bed, but consists of "a sledge…a lady…a gentleman, and… one horse." Without any one of these elements the *traineau* breaks down: without the horse it cannot move, without the gentleman it cannot be steered, and without the sledge, well, it's just a horse. (And without Montagu, of course, the observer of the phenomenon, all we'd have would be blank pages.) But

what of the lady? Her appearance in the assemblage is less obviously functional, but no less necessary. In the sentence after the *traineau*'s breakdown, the lady receives primacy of place: "The lady, the horse, and the traineau are all as fine as they can be made." Here, the gentleman is elided, and it is almost as if one human or another is a fine stand-in, so long as the sled (or the horse) isn't self-moving.[29]As I'll show in chapter 3, eighteenth-century preoccupations with animation and, in general, human relationships with animals, mean that animals often figure as central, organizing elements within literary arrangements (but more on that later).

Agencies intra-act across the *traineau*'s elements in some surprising ways. Though the lady takes no action grammatically, her insistent presence partially defines the *traineau*'s being. Its construction, as we've seen, is composed of more than just the sled—but who makes it? In a sentence already gestured to—"The lady, the horse, and the traineau are all as fine as they can be made"—the passive voice passes over whatever agency produced the three subjects, and elides whether or not that agency was singular or multiple. In Deleuzian or Latourian terms we would be tempted to call the *traineau* an assemblage, and perhaps this isn't wrong, but what I'd like to propose here instead is Barad's "phenomenon." *Traineau*-as-phenomenon recognizes the complex of agencies that comprise it, and also recognizes its function as *another* agency within *yet another* admixture: a large group of the sleds together make something entirely new, "a very agreeable show." (And, similarly, serves as a model

[29] Fears (and interest) about self-moving machines abound in the literature of the period, signaling another focal point for interest in vitality and agency. While I don't make much of it here, there could be something said about Montagu's apparent need to maintain the horse's pairing with a human, and isn't represented under its own power. Heather Keenleyside's concern with self-animation, for instance, could prove a fruitful avenue, and gestures toward La Mettrie's *Man a Machine*, which I discuss in chapter 3.

for how one arrangement is always already an element of a yet-larger arrangement.)

The *traineau* is an intra-acting literary arrangement, hewn together by diverse elements (lady, horse, sled, Montagu). Yet each of these could be further contextualized by literary-historical studies, and their interactions examined both with one another and the text at large. Raymond Williams, in *Marxism and Literature*, describes "structures of feeling," which he describes as "meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt" in certain periods, which exert "palpable pressures and set effective limits on experience and on action" anterior to their enunciation in discourse or critical practice (132). It is important, for Williams, "to acknowledge (and welcome) the specificity of these elements—specific feelings, specific rhythms—and yet to find ways of recognizing their specific kinds of sociality, thus preventing that extraction from social experience which is conceivable only when social experience itself has been categorically (and at root historically) reduced" (133). I raise Williams here, even though he is more concerned with how periodizing forces develop across texts, because the sociality he addresses is at heart the sociality of the assemblage and the literary arrangement. (Structures of feeling, I should caveat, are lived experiences reflected through art ["meanings and values…actively lived and felt"], whereas literary arrangements are specifically textual by nature, though they certainly refer to and are imbricated within structures of feeling.) Both arrangements and structures of feeling go beyond themselves, rhizomatically referring to and extending toward new, "emergent or pre-emergent" elements; "true social content… cannot *without loss* be reduced to belief-systems, institutions, or explicit general relationships"[30] (132; 133,

[30] This sentence is worth quoting in full: "The hypothesis [of structures of feeling] has a special relevance to art and literature, where the true social content is in a significant number of cases of this present and

my emphasis). The “social content” of structures of feeling is always reduced by the critical practice that both recognizes them and inscribes them into a critical frame, just as “the very agreeable show” of the *traineau* suffers from limitations even as I seek to enunciate its excessiveness. (The two-sidedness of relational critique shows up in an appropriate chiasmus, “We are talking about characteristic elements… specifically affective elements of consciousness and relationships: not feeling against thought, but thought as felt and feeling as thought” [Williams 132].)

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Jane Bennett importantly posits that where subjects (just like literary arrangements or assemblages or structures of feeling) begin and end is not isolable—that subjects are comprised of infinite *other* subjects (what Latour calls assemblages). If we step to the side about questions of *subjectivity* we can instead focus on the agential pressure that nonhuman actants exert.[31] In other words, there are phenomena within texts (and thus within the world) that have agency without necessarily having subjectivity, or at least without our being able to prove that they have subjectivity. (Katherine Hayles makes a similar move, leaving aside subjectivity to argue that cognitive systems are not necessarily conscious.)

The *traineau* works in the same way—its boundaries are not isolable, it exceeds its representation, though it is obviously not the refuse Bennet gestured to earlier in this chapter (although, presumably, many if not all the *traineaus* witnessed

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affective kind, which cannot without loss be reduced to belief-systems, institutions, or explicit general relationships, though it may include all these as lived and experienced, with or without tension, as it also evidently includes elements of social and material (physical or natural) experience which may lie beyond, or be uncovered or imperfectly covered by, the elsewhere recognizable systematic elements.” (133)

[31] This sidestepping of subjectivity is a move Bennett herself makes in *Vibrant Matter*. Foregrounding subjectivity tends to foreground those whom we *know* have it—other humans. By leaving it to the side, we can instead focus on other factors (like agency) that instead show relations between beings rather than privileging any particular subset.

by Montagu herself have by now made the shift to refuse). Simultaneously, the representation of the *traineau*—the description in Montagu's text—exerts its own pressure on me. I have now googled the definition of the word, image-searched the term to view period-appropriate sleds, and written several hundred words breaking the literary phenomenon down into discrete analyzable chunks. The *traineau* existed "in excess" for Montagu as a unique experience she felt worthy of representing to a friend, and the *traineau* continues existing, for us, mediated by *The Turkish Embassy Letters* and by Montagu's own, personal experience of it (Bennett 4).

Bennett's meditation on refuse, which I cited earlier, continues, "I also felt something else: a nameless awareness of the impossible singularity of that rat, that configuration of pollen, that otherwise utterly banal, mass-produced plastic water-bottle cap" (4). Unlike her refuse, we don't have a sense of the singularity of Montagu's *traineau*; and yet *the description itself* is something singular (though, paradoxically perhaps, highly reproducible). Montagu's description has prompted me to write these words, and my brain to expend calories. (I mean this latter statement only half-jokingly—while the number of calories burned by thinking is comparatively small, *I have burned calories* in thinking about Montagu's sleds; thus, in a very real sense, they continue to have real effects on the world, within my body. They continue to exert "palpable pressures" [Williams] that, if not quite agency, is practically indistinguishable from it.)

Does the *traineau* fit the categories I have proposed that define the literary arrangement? Its seriality exists by its nature as an extended description. After an acknowledgment of the current weather ("The snow is already very deep"), a fact which is itself temporally rooted, Montagu enters an ongoing description that fills

most of a paragraph. The *traineau* is phenomenal both because it exists as an assemblage and because it is observed through a descriptive practice of recollection employed by Montagu (and observed second-hand by us, thus also proving an object of discourse). And finally, as a literary arrangements the *traineau* exceeds its referentiality through its alignment with other social spheres (economic, class-based, etc.) and through its pressures on the text.

The *traineau* is hardly the only excessive literary arrangement in *Turkish Embassy Letters*. Shortly before the passage describing the *traineau*, Montagu enters into a metonymic series describing the ladies of Hanover:

> I will make haste to change the disagreeable subject [of a false report that Montagu had returned to England], by telling you that I am now got into the region of beauty. All the women have literally, rosy cheeks, snowy foreheads and bosoms, jet eyebrows, and scarlet lips, to which they generally add coal black hair. These perfections never leave them, till the hour of their death, and have a very fine effect by candlelight, but I could wish they were handsome with a little more variety. (79)

Once again, metonymy has come to figure as a way that literary arrangements manifest within texts ("rosy cheeks, snowy foreheads and bosoms, jet eyebrows, and scarlet lips"). Like the footprint, Anne Pankhurst argues that metonymy in fiction is necessarily linked to temporality (not far removed from seriality). She writes that "Metonymic referentiality in narrative fiction is associated with a number of powerful effects, achieved by recurring references to a concept, experience or object. The scope of a referent is extended from a single episode to the entire text." This *extension* earmarks agential pressure's excessiveness: the arrangement presses out on (extends

toward) the text and the reader. Pankhurst continues to say that metonymy "assist[s] in the development of a communicative linguistic interface between writer and reader" (385). The outward pressure of the metonym, stretching from "a single episode" to the whole work, is one primary way in which literary arrangements exceed their referentiality.[32]

While not confined to description, description *does* make more plain the boundaries of literary arrangements. In describing the women of Hanover, Montagu hopes to approach the coherent image of a real woman that the reader can latch onto; this aim is undercut, however, by two facts. One is that, as Montagu herself notes, she is busy describing a category ("all the women") and not the particularities of an individual.[33] Further, we know that description will always fall short of perfectly replicating its subject. (This is not to say that I think that description "falls short" in general, it is simply something *different* than the referent, not more or less.) As Walter Benjamin would say, "In even the most perfect reproduction, *one* thing is lacking: the here and now of the work of art—its unique existence in a *particular* place" (21, my emphasis). Literary works of art encounter reproduction in a doubly ambiguous manner. They face the lacuna of the particular (identified by Benjamin, in his omnipresent "The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility," as an artwork's "aura" [23]) on the one hand as a symptom of the limits of description and representations more generally, and on the other as objects precisely predicated on their *own* reproduction and dissemination. Texts are self-conscious of this aspect of

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[32] The excessiveness of an arrangement's referentiality gestures toward Eduardo Kohn's arguments regarding representational life, arguments I take to heart throughout this project: "life-forms represent the world in some way or another, and these representations are intrinsic to their being" (9).
[33] On particularity's relation to individuals and characters, see my reading of *Clarissa* in chapter 2.

their existence, but what of literary arrangements? Metonymy highlights the representational excessiveness that inhere in literary arrangements. A literary arrangement is at once externally referential *and* internally coherent even without the aid of referent. The women Montagu writes of were a cultural phenomenon of Hanoverian high society, and Montagu's description is, of course, a representation of that phenomenon. However, *at the same time*, the description is structurally *itself*, an isolable, analyzable element[34] of the larger text. (E.g., structural critics would have little difficulty in analyzing Montagu's use of metonymy, grammar, or other structures in their analysis without falling back on the historical exempla in Hanover.)

How do we inspect the literary arrangements of *Turkish Embassy Letters*? Is a single letter an arrangement, or all the letters addressed to a single person? Or do the contents of the letters contain their own isolable literary arrangements? As you might expect by this point in the chapter, I argue that the answer to these last two is "yes," though which arrangements we perceive at any particular moment is crucially dependent on the boundary-drawing practice we employ, and which subject we draw the boundaries around.

Tobacco's Distemper

Robinson Crusoe's footprint is a (relatively) localized example of a nevertheless compelling and critically ubiquitous literary arrangement, as was Montagu's *traineau*. Literary arrangements can just as equally occur, however, across a text, localizable by critical reading practices. In this section I look at the figure of tobacco as it appears in Defoe's novel, and the ways in which it ties Crusoe up with theology, economics,

[34] That is, analyzable only by the same observational practices that isolate it to make observation possible in the first place.

health, and even Crusoe's personal history.

In the moments before Crusoe describes a violent illness he contracts, we see him everywhere struck by his apperception of objects, animals, plants, and eventually people. These are often accompanied, either after (in the case of the footprint) or before (in the following case), with Crusoe's religious "Reflections" on his state (68). Shortly after his shipwreck on the island, Crusoe falls into a self-reflective discourse on the theological repercussions of his entrapment.

> It is true, when I got on Shore first here, and found all my Ship's Crew drown'd, and my self spar'd, I was surpriz'd with a Kind of Extasie, and some Transports of Soul, which, had the Grace of God assisted, might have come up to true Thankfulness; but it ended where it begun, in a meer common Flight of Joy, or, as I may say, *being glad I was alive*, without the least reflection upon the distinguishing Goodness of the Hand which had preserv'd me, and had singled me out to be preserv'd, when all the rest were destroy'd (66)

Here Crusoe is once again overtaken—"surpriz'd"—but this time by Extasie and Transports, which overwhelm in a manner different from the footprint. The historical Crusoe misses, at first, what the narrativizing Crusoe believes he can more readily see: divine intervention on the part of Crusoe's survival. Crusoe diagrams how the wonders of nature, "The growing up of the Corn" (a plant that grows in tall stalks, perhaps foreshadowing the coming importance of tobacco) and "Even the Earthquake," would at first have "something of the miraculous… but as soon as ever that Part of the Thought was remov'd, all the Impression which was rais'd from it, wore off also." In other words, the miraculous power of plants to grow and the Earth to shake find their

compass in Crusoe's perception of them: "no sooner was the first Fright [of being stranded] over, but the Impression it had made went off also" (66). In both counts, Crusoe's perception is subject to the "Impression" of events around him, which leave their mark behind like a piece of lead type impressed on paper.

Soon, however, despite his subsistence on the land, Crusoe contracts "a strong Distemper… with the Violence of the Fever" (66), which will, of course, only be cured by association with another flora. The medicine that he devises is a curious mixture of physical and spiritual aids.

> I went, directed by Heaven no doubt, for in this Chest I found a Cure, both for Soul and Body, I open'd the Chest, and found what I look'd for, *viz*. the Tobacco, and as the few Books, I had sav'd, lay there too, I took out one of the Bibles which I mention'd before, and which to this Time I had not found Leisure, or so much as Inclination to look into; I say, I took it out, and brought both that and the Tobacco with me to the Table.
>
> What Use to make of the Tobacco, I knew not, as to my Distemper, or whether it was good for it or no; but I try'd several Experiments with it, as if I was resolv'd it should hit one Way or other (69)

In this passage, Crusoe levels his experimental gaze toward tobacco that he has rescued from the shipwreck. His experiments, however, only wind up defining the tobacco further within a matrix of his own use-values.

But before arriving at the tobacco, Crusoe locates the origin of his "Distemper" within "the Justice of God" (66) for his previously unthankful existence on the island, and the selfish acts of his life before the shipwreck. This illness, which lays him up for several days, highlights for Crusoe the precarity of his situation. As we've seen

elsewhere, Crusoe's "Reflections" on his mortality produce a loss of both bodily and mental control: bodily in the sense that illness and fever signal the body's malfunction, and mental as reflections, impressions, and "Apprehensions" overcome him. "[I]n these Hurries of my Soul, I know not what my Tongue might express: but it was rather Exclamation, such as Lord! what a miserable Creature am I? If I should be sick, I shall certainly die for Want of Help, and what will become of me" (67). Even "Hurries" demarks a mix up of bodily and mental affects, thrown into a "Commotion or agitation." The *Oxford English Dictionary* notes that the noun "hurry" includes both "Mental agitation" and "Senses related to haste or rapid motion" ("Hurry"). In addition to the jumble signaled by "Hurries," Crusoe effects a strange turn to the present tense, "I *know* not what" rather than "*knew*."[35]

This odd precarity of the present tense, which immediately shifts back to the past tense ("but it *was* rather…"), signals another of these excessive moments in *Robinson Crusoe* where the two Crusoes (the Crusoe on the island and one narrativizing, remembering his stay) compete for relevance.

What is it about these moments that keep causing the seemingly singular Crusoe to shear so obviously into two? I began this digression into Crusoe's distemper by way of tobacco, and the two literary arrangements (one illness, one agricultural product) interpenetrate. Crusoe's distemper is one literary arrangement—it acts like an assemblage, extending across the novel's themes of religiosity and survival, and forces

[35] I will admit that this present-tense verb could conceivably be an error, or a turn of phrase relating to ongoing "Hurries of the Soul" that Crusoe still experiences from his autobiographical standpoint. In the latter case, the shift from "know" to "was" in the next clause ("it was rather Exclamation") still earmarks the division between the two Crusoes, even while highlighting a commonality (they both experience "Hurries"). In the case of an error, however, it's worth noting that this verb shift occurs through at least the first four editions of the novel (all four editions 1719, accessed through *ECCO*).

Crusoe into acts of self-reflection—which interlaces with the tobacco Crusoe recovers. Tobacco and illness are related grammatically, appearing together several times in the same sentences ("in this chest I found a Cure… *viz*. the Tobacco," and "What Use to make of the Tobacco, I knew not, as to my Distemper," and even "the *Brasilians* take no Physick but their Tobacco" [69]), and tobacco is usually presented as the cure for illness (even though it does at this point seem that Crusoe is past the worst of it). Tobacco is a curative and a preventative, which enables Crusoe's continuation: immediately after the wreck, and after finding water, "having drank and put a little Tobacco in my Mouth to prevent Hunger, I went to the Tree…" (36).

Crusoe's illness and his tobacco develop into interpenetrating elements of the same literary arrangement: examined on their own, of course, they are arrangements in themselves, but placing them side by side develops a kind of tobacco/distemper matrix. The elements of this matrix both act outwardly (the illness gives Crusoe a fever, the "Hurries," and mortal dread, while the tobacco provides a potential cure, and "doz'd my Head so much, that I inclin'd to sleep" [69]) and internally (the illness and the tobacco are at loggerheads for the kind of reverie Crusoe might fall under, and whether he succumbs to illness or not). The elements of the distemper/tobacco matrix are mutually constitutive, but to leave behind the meaning of these references in favor of their relationality *only* is to abandon vital components of the literary arrangements themselves.

And these elements continue to reach beyond themselves. We should not forget the ways that tobacco appears in this novel as a signal of Crusoe's never-ending individualistic alacrity for both business and survival. During his days in Brazil,

tobacco is one of the crops Crusoe grows alongside his neighbor, Wells. Tobacco marks their first productive season: “we began to increase, and our Land began to come into Order; so that the third Year we planted some Tobacco” (27). Tobacco is a serial, recurring element in *Robinson Crusoe* and comes to be imbued with many connotations and meanings. When it suddenly appears on Crusoe’s island, the religious overtones get tied up with Crusoe’s history of managing plantations. Taking up a “more particular Survey of the Island,” Crusoe follows a brook upstream to the island’s interior, “about two Miles.” There, “On the Bank of the Brook I found many pleasant *Savana’s*, or Meadows; plain, smooth, and cover’d with Grass; and on the rising Parts of them next to the higher Grounds, where the Water, as it might be supposed, never overflow’d, I found a great deal of Tobacco, green, and growing to a great and very strong Stalk” (72). This luxury good, which Crusoe has had so much economic experience with, now appears readily at his hand. All he lacks is a “Tobacco-pipe; but it was impossible to me to make one, however, I found a Contrivance for that too at last” (79).

The Tobacco does perhaps serve as one-third of a cure against his distemper. The other two thirds are rum, which he steeps the tobacco in, and, unsurprisingly at this point, the word of God, which he locates in a Bible stored in the same chest as the tobacco. Running through the tobacco/distemper literary arrangement, Crusoe’s reflections on faith (not faith in isolation, but modulated through Crusoe) provide a curving, substantive thread. As Crusoe says, “nothing can happen in the great Circuit of his Works, either without his Knowledge or Appointment” (68). This “great Circuit” is a fine model for the literary arrangement’s character: an assemblage of

often diverse elements that cohere to exert pressure on other elements surrounding them.

After describing how he employs the tobacco as a curative ("I first took a Piece of a Leaf, and chew'd it in my Mouth, which indeed at first almost stupify'd my Brain," and later, "I took some [tobacco] and steeped it an Hour or two in some Rum… I burnt some upon a Pan of Coals, and held my Nose close over the Smoke of it" [69]), Crusoe falls into another reflection on the religious precarity of his situation, but the reflection is routed through an object, the Bible: "In the Interval of this Operation, I took up the Bible and began to read, but my Head was too much disturb'd with the Tobacco to bear reading, and least that Time; only having opened the Book casually, the first Words that occurr'd to me were these, *Call on me in the Day of Trouble, and I will deliver, and thou shalt glorify me*" (69). The network of elements imbricated within the tobacco/distemper matrix exceed their signifiers to include the novel's interest in religion—where we draw the boundaries of the matrix, of this particular arrangement, depends on the boundary-drawing practice we apply.

To pivot slightly to tobacco per se, Crusoe's Tobacco raises one of the many questions historically situated literary arrangements produce: can (or should) we read this noun with all the force it has on the present day—does it extend to our present circumstances? To put this another way, does the appearance of "Tobacco" in Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* invoke the same economic, health, and racial issues that the word invokes today? In recognizing the literary arrangement's plenitude, the short answer is yes. In another, more ethical configuration, we can tie the tobacco back into the rum Crusoe steeps it in for his curative; by aligning South American tobacco with

Caribbean rum, with the fact that Crusoe is both a former (and future) slave holder, we see how the tobacco/distemper arrangement reaches out to the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the effects of which, of course, reverberate through today. Even Crusoe's individualistic labor alongside the plantation-like tobacco growing wild on the center of the island suggests the elided labor of slaves, an element that complicates Crusoe's already problematic relationship with Friday.

Cognizing the Arrangement

As this largely introductory chapter draws to a close, I'd like to return, briefly, to my more theoretical engagement with literary arrangements. While, on the one hand, I primarily focus on agency to leave behind the question of volition or intentionality (at least in literary arrangements' case) the question of arrangements' cognition deserves at least some consideration. Can an arrangement make a "choice"?

Katherine Hayles passes over tracking "agency" in favor of delineating choice-making. Hayles's argument can be broken up into three broad terms, two of which also receive their negative: "cognitive" (and "noncognitive"), "conscious" (and "nonconscious") and "material processes." In defining the first two, Hayles writes that "Consciousness… creates the (sometimes fictitious) narratives that make sense of our lives and support basic assumptions about worldly coherence.[36] Cognition, by contrast, is a much broader capacity that extends far beyond consciousness… it is also pervasive in other life forms and complex technical systems" (9). To gloss Hayles a little later, she goes on to describe cognition as effectively synonymous with choice-making. Any thing that can be presented with a situation, which can then *choose*

[36] Later she boils consciousness down to "an awareness of self and others shared by humans, many mammals, and some aquatic species such as octopi" (9).

between at least two options, is considered a cognizer. And this is the thrust of *Unthought: The Power of the Cognitive Nonconscious*, that nonconscious agents like computers, bodily processes that function without our intervening, plants responding to light, et al., can also cognize. (Something which is both "noncognitive" and "nonconscious" is effectively a material process, which may yet "have awe-inspiring agency." She uses the example of the tsunami [3].) These distinctions, Hayles argues, build toward "understanding the specificities of human-technical assemblages and their power to transform life on the planet" (3).

The account Hayles provides adds much to a reading that's attempting to apply the arguments of the New Materialists to literary texts. Primarily, it gives us another conceptual apparatus with which to think the ontology of literary beings. Texts, and the literary arrangements that form them, are certainly nonconscious—they have no self-awareness. But are they cognitive? When we trace a literary arrangement, be it a footprint or a character reacting to that impression, can we trace a cognitive, choice-making component?

Under Hayles's framework for cognition (nonconscious and otherwise), we might say that literary arrangements are noncognizers and wholly material processes. However, they nevertheless seem to react to their environments, even if that environment might be some combination of fictional or textual. The more I've worked on this project, the less sure I have become that literary arrangements are noncognizers, incapable of choice-making. Literary arrangements are certainly nonconscious (like other material processes, examples of which include inanimate matter, weather patterns, etc.), but do they cognize? In other words, like people or technical systems, do literary arrangements respond to stimuli by choosing from a

range of options?[37] One problem with answering this question, and with conceptualizing literary arrangements as cognizers, is that of temporality. The *kind* of time that we as readers experience is remarkably different from the kinds of temporality that a literary arrangement is subject to. For one: how an arrangement appears on page 52 will always be the same; it will always appear the same when I return to page 52. By the time I reach 400, however, the literary arrangement may have changed radically—I'm thinking here of character growth (characters being one category of the literary arrangement), when over the course of a plot the same[38] literary arrangement (made the same by the observational practice of reading, which coheres separate elements across time into the same character) changes, apparently by environmental and social circumstances, never mind that these circumstances are, themselves, textual and representational.

Cognition, for Hayles, remains an internal process, even if distributed (linearly or rhizomatically) across internal elements. The forces that concern me are those that seem to *exceed* the literary arrangement, processes that sometimes seem to look like (or perhaps approach asymptotically) cognition, concomitantly drawing more and more elements together into an assemblage that we would still recognize as a specifically literary arrangement (or at least recognize a previous arrangement within this new amalgamation). When Crusoe's "Imagination" responds to the footprint by

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[37] It is important to note here, with the same distinction that Hayles makes in *Unthought*, that when we talk about choice-making we are not talking about free will. Rather, given a range of options and data points, does the system in question (whether technical, biological, or some other) have the capability *to select* from the available options.

[38] What I mean by "the same," precisely, depends entirely upon the reader and their critical practices. The character of Robinson Crusoe, for as much change as he might undergo while on his island, is as much an arrangement of elements as is the footprint of the native islander. Were a reader to engage in a four-sentence close reading about Crusoe, however, they would be dealing with a *different arrangement* than someone interested in a cross-novel investigation.

representing "Things… and what strange unaccountable Whimsies," (112) and as he returns to it in his thoughts for much of the novel, turning the encounter over in his mind, weighing its theological and practical possibilities, the footprint effectively exceeds itself, becoming more than its representation.

The literary arrangement forms from a plethora of analyzable elements, signs and referents, representations and intentions, material texts, reader responses, and our own critical analyses. The arrangement is an assemblage, made phenomenal by the incorporation of the observer and specific observational practices, and made literary by context. Invoking the literary arrangement of a footprint seems innocuous at first, but, like a complex allusion in a work of poetry, it ripples through both the text and into critical discourse like a rapidly expanding wave. The arrangement is phenomenal, in Karen Barad's terminology, but at the same time it is something more than that; literary arrangements are representationally excessive, causing metonymic-like lacunae in texts and in discourse that press against the frames drawn by readers.

Visualizing Arrangements: The Manifold

It may help as I conclude the chapter to present my own way of visualizing literary arrangements, which I conceive of as a manifold. This term has, well, manifold meanings in both publishing and mathematical history, which makes it all the more appropriate for the uses I employ it for. In manuscript history, manifold *paper* was "carbonized paper used in making several copies of a handwritten document at one time," popular in the mid-nineteenth century, but two of its more current senses interest me more. The first is "Varied or diverse in appearance, form, or character; having various forms, features, component parts, relations, applications, etc.;

performing several functions at once,"[39] but the mathematical definition is even more applicable to visualizing literary arrangements: "A topological space each point of which has a neighbourhood homeomorphic to the interior of a sphere in a Euclidean space of given dimension. Originally called *manifoldness*." ("Manifold"). To put this in laypeople's terms:

> To illustrate this idea, consider the ancient belief that the Earth was flat as contrasted with the modern evidence that it is round. The discrepancy arises essentially from the fact that on the small scales that we see, the Earth does indeed look flat. In general, any object that is nearly "flat" on small scales is a manifold, and so manifolds constitute a generalization of objects we could live on in which we would encounter the round/flat Earth problem, as first codified by Poincaré.
>
> More concisely, any object that can be "charted" is a manifold. (Rowland)

Why such a complex term? The "charted" feature is vital, as it suggests the measurability of the elements of literary arrangements. Imagine, first, a two-dimensional plane crisscrossed by lines that intersect at random intervals. The points of intersection are our literary arrangements, and the web of relation formed between them (the crisscrossing lines) are their agential effects on one another. As a particular arrangement gains more emphasis within a text, whether that's measured by volume of critical discourse around it, word count devoted to it, or some other quantifier, that

[39] This goes along with the very similar definition, "Multiplicity, abundance, or variety (originally *of* material objects, now chiefly *of* abstract phenomena)" ("Manifold"). The appearance of "phenomena" in this definition is a lovely little synchronicity.

particular intersection begins to stretch into three-dimensional space as a signifier of its impact on the text. Were we to chart out all the elements of a particular text (a feat I doubt is truly possible) our chart would look like a mountain range of peaks and valleys. In *Robinson Crusoe*, the footprint becomes a towering peak, since its influence on the novel reaches out across so much of Crusoe's experience, while the tobacco is a long (because it occurs in multiple places) low hill (for its relative obscurity). For *Turkish Embassy Letters*, the *traineau* would be something of a foothill: a single paragraph in a much longer text, which Montagu never returns to, yet one that nevertheless shows us something of her relation to power, class, gender, animalia, and artifice.

As we examine literary arrangements more, the tools of literary analysis remain appropriate and applicable to the challenge. In my reading of Crusoe's footprint and the distemper/tobacco alignment, I found myself relying on grammatical close reading and basic historicizing efforts not dissimilar from other studies I've written. What the literary arrangement begs, however, is a change in mindset toward the objects examined. Friedrich Kittler argues that "Hermeneutic reading makes [the] displacement of media possible" (95). (As an example of what Kittler means by "hermeneutic": "The discourse network of 1800 revokes Luther's commandment to 'recount from word to word.' This is replaced by the new commandment to have only that read which students and teachers 'understand'" [20].) The kind of reading and analysis that I think the work of the New Materialists builds toward is precisely a network or relational style of analysis that refuses to give up on hermeneutic reading—as Kittler does here, or Deleuze and Guattari do in *A Thousand Plateaus*. Hermeneutics, digging meanings out of texts, is the foundation of modern literary

praxis, and without it the content and apparent intent of so much literary work is lost.[40]

In a real sense, literary arrangements are Kittlerian discourse networks writ small. Kittler's interest is precisely in the relational effects that media produce; we might even go so far as to say that media *are composed by* their relational effects. When we study a medium, we examine the web that links elements into a coherent representational surface. David E. Wellbery, in his foreword to Kittler's *Discourse Networks, 1800/1900*, has this to say about Kittler's theory: "Everything lies on the surface, precisely because this surface materiality of the texts themselves—their inscription within a discourse network—is the site of their historical efficacy" (Kittler xvii).[41] While Kittler examines surfaces, by alloying media theory with work on agency and agents, we start to see how a surface (our manifold) takes on a third dimension as action pulls and stretches a text's inter-relational fabric. Wellbery continues, "As in the sociological theory of Niklas Luhmann, the notion of society itself *is abandoned* in favor of an investigation of interacting subsystems endowed with their particular technologies and protocols" (xvii, my emphasis). Everywhere an unnecessary abandonment of the referent—sociological or otherwise. What I would like to keep is the "tremendous gain in analytical precision and concreteness" that Wellbery identifies in Kittler's work (xvii), while refusing to forgo the interpretive

[40] The last time I considered teaching a group of students the intentional fallacy, I thought about the speeches of Donald Trump. It is true that his speeches have had a harmful impact on large groups of people, but it is *also* true, from ethical, moral, legal, and political standpoints, that his intentions *do* matter. I do not pretend that the intentions of an author or orator are ever perfectly represented by the work they inhabit, but to pretend that *nothing* of a creator's intentions are preserved is itself a fallacy, as I think work on the transference of agency bears out.

[41] Kittler even describes impressions, or what Wellbery calls "'shocks,' of unforeseeable and instantaneous perturbations… a key component of experience in modernism" (xxxi). While the unforeseen shock is for Kittler a modernist phenomenon (as it is for Benjamin) of technological change, the language of impression in the eighteenth century, especially alongside Crusoe's overtaken-ness, bespeaks an earlier corollary than the solely modernist one reasoned by Kittler.

capabilities of close reading.

There is a tendency when making an argument for rhizomatic or horizontal relationships to forget all quanta of the vertical. This becomes especially problematic (and dangerous) when the examined relationships are imbricated within human power structures. Is Actor-Network-Theory (ANT), asks Latour,

> not one of the symptoms of this market spirit that claims, against all evidence, that everyone has the same choice—and too bad for the losers? "What have you done", people could ask in exasperation,[42] "with power and domination?" But it is just because we wish to *explain* those asymmetries that we don't want to simply *repeat* them—and even less to *transport* them further unmodified…. This is why it's so important to maintain that power, like society, is the final result of a process and not a reservoir, a stock, or a capital that will automatically provide an explanation. Power and domination have to be produced, made up, composed. Asymmetries exist, yes, but where do they come from and what are they made out of? (*Reassembling* 63-64)

Latour's argument that explanation is enough of a political goal for a philosophical (or sociological) theorem leaves something to be desired, but it at least gestures toward an acknowledgment of differential (vertical) power hierarchies, *which exist* even while we examine, and begin to privilege, rhizomatic (horizontal) relationships. Just because something is rhizomatic, it's worth being said again, does not necessarily mean it isn't *also* hierarchical. As Deleuze and Guattari argue, "machinic assemblage[s]" constitute both "lines of articulation or segmentarity, strata and territories; but also lines of flight,

[42] In copying out this quotation I originally misquoted "exasperation" as "desperation," a parapraxis that evidences capitalism's own agency on my unconscious.

movements of deterritorialization and destratification" (3). "A book," argue Deleuze and Guattari, "is unattributable. It is a multiplicity" (4). This move, however, obscures the multiple itself, precisely because it is no longer attributable. They continue, via a somewhat confusing analogy,

> One side of a machinic assemblage faces the strata, which doubtless make it a kind of organism, or signifying totality, or determination attributable to a subject; it also has a side facing a *body without organs*, which is continually dismantling the organism, causing asignifying particles or pure intensities to circulate, and attributing to itself subjects that it leaves with nothing more than a name as the trace of an intensity. (4)

To gloss this dense passage, Hayles says that "[Deleuze] and Guattari acknowledge, of course, that subjects exist, but they highlight the forces that cut transversally across levels" (*Unthought* 70). For Hayles, "some new materialists focus almost entirely on the 'side facing *a body without organs*,' eradicating… the forces of cohesion, encapsulation, and level-specific dynamics characteristic of living beings" (71).

In the example they use here, describing the very book Deleuze and Guattari are in the process of writing, the concept "book" stands in for assemblages in general, and the interrelations among its elements form the strata or "plane of consistency." It is useful here to return to the visualization of the manifold, especially as we try to understand the "*body without organs*" and "forces that cut transversally across levels." (A quick reminder that what I keep referring to as a text's "manifold" is simply a visualization and pedagogical tool for portraying the relationships we examine within a text.) From a flat, two-dimensional field, the subjects we choose to examine within a text form the peaks and valleys, whether we quantify these by number of occurrences,

amount of previous critical interest, or even affect (a kind of measurement that Ted Underwood has advocated for with topic modeling). I do not propose a literal graph, but to take seriously the idea that *every element* within a text is related to every other element, sometimes by immediate proximity and sometimes by degrees of separation. Analyses that search for the "meaning" behind literary arrangements restrict themselves to a single element and its proximal neighbors, but by conceiving of arrangements as inextricably tied into a network of relations[43] we can diversify our thinking about the ways in which agency is enacted across texts, how one, seemingly minor event on page three can have profound effects on a major turning point three-hundred pages later. This take sounds rather formalist, and that apparent formalism is bolstered by Deleuze and Guattari, who state that

> A book itself is a little machine; what is the relation (also measurable) of this literary machine to a war machine, love machine, revolutionary machine, etc.—and an abstract machine that sweeps them along? We have been criticized for overquoting literary authors. But when one writes, the only question is which other machine the literary machine can be plugged into, must be plugged into in order to work. (4)

The formalism I argue for, however, is less a structural critique (though it does not deny structural arguments) than it is a desire to examine the relational forms that literary arrangements create through proximity to one another. If we visualize one element of a literary arrangement as a node within a web (or as a peak rising from a

[43] One of the most obvious forms that this network of relations might take is grammar: nouns, verbs, subjects, objects, all related and acting on one another via punctuation and societal rules for structuring communication.

field) the next most proximal nodes within the web constitute the form of the web itself. The question now becomes, which nodes and which lines of connection are we interested in studying? What I hope to have shown in the examples from *Turkish Embassy Letters* and *Robinson Crusoe* is that another mode of interpretation (still one predicated on close reading, though with an awareness of how close reading draws the necessary boundaries for observation) can trace the agential links between arrangements, and the internal elements of those arrangements, illuminating the ways that noncognitive literary arrangements nevertheless impact the textual environment around them in analyzable ways.

"Here, as elsewhere, the units of measure are what is essential: *quantify writing*" (Deleuze 4). This imperative to quantify writing is one I would avoid, if only because I still privilege the hermeneutic responsibilities of literary critics and readers. Literary texts, though agential, are not agential in isolation (except as material objects) and require interaction in order to fully realize the potential of the representations they store. For this reason I divert from Deleuze and Guattari, who argue that "Literature is an assemblage. It has nothing to do with ideology. There is no ideology and never has been" (4). As an anti-capitalist, I cannot agree with a statement that so blatantly ignores the status quo of differential power relations. Of course there is ideology in texts; literary arrangements build toward or dismantle ideologies (as chapter 3 explores more explicitly), and we can trace the threads of power that ideology enacts through the assemblage-network of a text (the way we traced the path of Crusoe's religiosity in connection with tobacco and illness). Shortly after their claim about ideology, Deleuze and Guattari continue to say that "writing [is] always the measure

of something else. Writing has nothing to do with signifying. It has to do with surveying, mapping, even realms that are yet to come" (4-5). In "mapping" literary arrangements, I hope that we can come to perceive their networked, relational states, connected by lines of agency that influence and impact one another, as well as the reading audience. This dissertation purports that literary arrangements come to resemble a form of life, through their representational status, abilities to propagate through readers and other texts, and through, simply, their agential pressures.

In the next chapter, I look at how literary arrangements appear in relation to fictionality, and how they work in the figure of one of the most popular characters of the eighteenth century: Clarissa Harlowe.

CHAPTER 2: CHARACTER NETWORKS: CONCERNING LETTERS

> "If Richardson's texts are not 'novels' in his own dismissive use of the term, neither are they novels in our own sense. A novel today is usually a finished, seamless product; Richardson's works, by contrast, are more usefully thought of as *kits,* great unwieldly containers crammed with spare parts and agreeable extras, for which the manufacturer never ceases to churn out new streamlined improvements, ingenious additions and revised instruction sheets…. One text ceaselessly spawns another…"
>
> Terry Eagleton, *The Rape of Clarissa* (20-21)

What Terry Eagleton's introduction to his important work *The Rape of Clarissa* makes clear is that Samuel Richardson found himself battling his own creations in a fight to control his readers' interpretations. With the appearance of *Clarissa*, Richardson was at the helm of the longest English-language novel then written. But positioning Richardson as a captain with a clear course in mind is deceptive; the ship was far too big for him to ever steer. "Around the fictions [that Richardson's characters] inhabit," Eagleton writes, "an enormous body of writing begins to proliferate: letters to and from the author, savage spoofs and denunciatory pamphlets, bawdy rhymes and poetic encomiums, imitations and translations. *Pamela* is pirated, put into heroic couplets, adapted for the stage by Voltaire and Goldoni, inscribed in its French edition on the Roman Catholic Index," (5-6) and this proliferation is just as true with *Clarissa*. We could say that as a literary arrangement, Clarissa—and by extension *Clarissa*—has as a defining feature an ongoing accretion of material, an excessiveness that results in a form of self-propagation; *Clarissa* exceeds its bounds as a novel to create new literary life in the world.

In the epigraph to this chapter, Eagleton calls Richardson's novels "*kits*, great unwieldy containers." The assemblage of the novel contains "spare parts and agreeable extras," (20) a concern with day-to-day life that seems to have no immediate

bearing on the "plot" that surrounds the character of Clarissa, or Pamela, or Grandison.[44] And yet many of these spare parts seem fully fleshed out. As Margaret Doody notes in an introduction to the Penguin Classics edition of *Pamela*, "Even when personages were originally conceived merely to serve the narrative, Richardson was not satisfied with leaving them as blank counters, but went back and worked them up into full-blooded characters" (11). Part of my literary arrangement postulate is that no "personage" in a literary text is a "blank counter"—texts are too highly interwoven, too discursive, for this ever to be the case. Similarly Angus Ross, who, in his introduction to *Clarissa*, notes that Richardson had difficulty cutting sections from his novel, and subsequent editions from the first simply grew in length.

> As he went to cut, the novel grew under his hand. He simply saw more of the fiction locked in the text, waiting for embodiment. There are further exchanges of letters frozen in passages of indirect reporting (e.g. L157.1, L158.1), and there are whole novels implied in episodes like the involvement of James Harlowe, Junior, with a lawless shipmaster, or Anna Howe's plan to rescue Clarissa by means of the higgler, Mrs. Townsend, and *her* free traders. (24)

Despite the reverential tone of Ross's prose here, the perspective he applies to Richardson's text makes a claim about Clarissa's fictional world that sounds remarkably like Michelangelo's (perhaps apocryphal) epigram, "Every block of stone has a statue inside it, and it is the task of the sculptor to discover it." This point of

[44] It is no coincidence that all three of Richardson's novels revolve around titular characters. Only one, *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*, could be said to have a protagonist different from that of the title. In *Grandison*, Harriet Byron figures, initially, as one protagonist. After her abduction and subsequent rescue by Grandison, the novel turns to his history. Refracting the gentleman's story through Byron's, an orphaned heiress, makes assigning a single protagonist difficult.

view radically removes the agency for composition from the hands of the author and places it in the hands of the text—perhaps Richardson *was* more an editor than an author of his novels.[45] Ross in effect claims that the fictional world Richardson described in *Clarissa*'s first edition *demanded* from its author further elaboration, and its elaboration ultimately results in a material phenomenon.

Whereas Richardson's "novels arise out of and remain integrated within dense, multi-genre networks of composition and correspondence" (Curran, "Mediation" 123-24), the character of Clarissa, as a literary arrangement, is constituted by the letters collected in *Clarissa*. Speaking from a material perspective, Clarissa begins as nothing more than these letters; and yet she so obviously exceeds these confines, evidenced (by way of one example) through Richardson's correspondence. In his letters, Richardson repeatedly calls Clarissa "my girl,"[46] a turn of phrase that suggests Clarissa's refusal to remain fixed on the page. In his personal letters regarding *Clarissa*, Richardson's authorship is self-evident, as he repeatedly describes his motivations for characters' affectations and plot changes (despite the claim that he makes in the text to only being an editor), as well as disputing with his readers who find Lovelace too attractive or Clarissa too unwilling.[47] The novel's natural excessiveness produces the agential pressure that prevents the author's easy control of the subject. The letters Richardson purports to have collected in *Clarissa*, however, are fictional, and they constitute a remediation of the letter-writing medium into the mass-

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[45] Terry Castle also marvels at the interpretive and, critically, potential *density* of *Clarissa*: "One might imagine the present book [Castle's *Clarissa's Ciphers*] as gloss for a single line of *Clarissa*" (15).

[46] See Richardson's *Selected Letters*, pages 90 or 92, for examples.

[47] As Christina Lupton notes, in writing fiction "a slippage of will at the point of inscription is inevitable" (8, glossing Derrida in *Writing and Difference*). What gets written is rarely what one expected to write.

produced novel.

"Trewer than truth": Epistolarity and Authorial Disavowal

In a very real way, novels take on lives of their own because of the excessive, agential pressure they exert on their authors "at the point of inscription" (Lupton 8). *Clarissa* proves a prime example of this in Richardson's own grapples with the novel.

Clarissa Harlowe takes on a life of her own in Richardson's letters: this occurs as a response, in some part, to the varied interpretations of Richardson's readers: which themselves partly arise from Richardson's disavowal of *Clarissa*'s fictionality. *Clarissa*'s frame narrative—that the letters were eventually collected by Belford and "Published by the *Editor* of *Pamela*" (Richardson 33, my emphasis), rather than "the author"—suggests an air of truth about Clarissa's story. Lennard Davis, in *Factual Fictions: The Origins of the English Novel*, argues that Richardson uses this denial of authorship because "he wanted the novel to be seen as partially or provisionally true only to the extent that it could not be charged with being outrightly false," and that "Richardson wanted the novel to be *thought* genuine but really not to be considered genuine" (175).[48] (As I'll argue, moreover, Richardson's denial of authorship also results in an accidental denial of his own author*ity*). The ambidextrousness with which Richardson approaches truth and untruth (or what we should properly call fiction and nonfiction) speaks to his hope that readers would find "true" morals relevant to their

[48] In this chapter I have relied on Davis's work, finding that it harmonizes with my own in some very significant ways. For one, *Factual Fictions* is largely concerned with tracing the "news/novel discourse" of the eighteenth century, which Davis draws out largely through readings of works characterized by "authorial disavowal." This news/novel discourse, which he sometimes refers to as a "matrix" (e.g., Davis's third chapter, "News/Novels: The Undifferentiated Matrix," pages 42-70), I read essentially as a large-format literary arrangement, one that spans multiple novel-sized elements and is a defining feature of eighteenth-century literature. Knowingly or not, Davis repeatedly falls to the language of networked elements, and his chapter "Samuel Richardson: Disavowal and Spontaneity" I found especially helpful.

lives within the framework of a fictional text. (Indeed, Samuel Johnson notes that one does not read Richardson for the plot: "Why, Sir, if you were to read Richardson for the story, your impatience would be so much fretted that you would hang yourself" [Boswell 480]. This despite Johnson's frequent praising of Richardson over other contemporary novelists, especially Fielding, whom Johnson despised.)

Richardson's use of the epistolary form was the mode in which he sought to create a "new species of writing," especially one that "might tend to promote the cause of religion and virtue" (Richardson, *Selected Letters* 41). This he called spontaneous writing, or writing to the moment, which sought to create a sense of immediacy for the reader—the letters Richardson's narrators produce are *being* produced during and amid the events they describe. Margaret Doody notes of *Pamela* that "Pamela as she tells her story is always in the middle of her own experience. Her narration is fresh, even to herself…. There is only one point at which Richardson lets go of this method of narration, the linking passage explaining the abduction; in *Clarissa* he was to achieve complete disappearance" (9).

The result of this spontaneous writing is that readers feel closer to the moment of action. In the gaps of the telling—read: excessiveness, the letters refer to "real" occurrences happening beyond the letter—the reader feels invited to *insert themselves*. In letter 224, Lovelace believes himself close to the conclusion of his plot. He has abducted Clarissa and keeps her trapped in a room on an upper floor of his lodgings. Writing to Belford, he asks—of himself—questions that suggest he has lost control over his own body (coming near the moment when he would seek to steal Clarissa's control from her): "Limbs, why thus convulsed!—Knees, till now so firmly knit, why

thus relaxed? Why beat ye thus together? Will not these trembling fingers, which twice have refused to direct the pen, and thus curvedly deform the paper, fail me in the arduous moment?" (722). This series of questions replicate the dissociative state that Lovelace is supposedly going through, *in the moment* of their writing. These are enunciative, almost magical questions in their effect; written in the present tense, there is something that foreshadows film's capacity for seeming to happen *now*. We can imagine how, in the common eighteenth-century practice of reading aloud to others, this first-person text takes on an element of the dramatic soliloquy, so that the reader seems to embody and perform Lovelace's own affect in this moment (and which leads up to his frustration at failing, at least for now, in his endeavor a few pages later).

Davis argues that "What was significant and unique in this new method of spontaneous writing was the ability to recapture recent time past and to forcibly decrease the interval between event and transcription. Lovelace calls this technique (in his own, self-congratulatory way) a 'lively present tense manner'" (183). The epistolary form that Richardson uses to achieve this effect is part-and-parcel with his program of denying *Clarissa*'s (and *Pamela*'s) fictionality. (If *Clarissa* is somehow above the level of fictionality, it seems to exceed itself.) By "writing to the moment," Richardson felt that he was performing an altogether new kind of writing. We get insight into this framework in moments when Richardson finds himself struggling to realign readers' (what he considers) misinterpretations. In a letter to Lady Echlin, he rhetorically asks,

> can it require any great Degree of Patience, to hear Characters blamed that were not intended to be perfect…. But it is impossible that Readers the most

> attentive, can always enter into the Views of the Writer of a Piece written, as hoped, to Nature and the Moment. A Species of Writing too, that may be called New; and everyone putting him and herself into the Character they read, and judging of it by their own Sensations (316)

Richardson's letter speaks to a desire both for a writing that invokes immediacy (writing to the moment) and one that controls reader reactions in a specified direction. As we will see in Lovelace, this habit where "everyone put[s] himself and herself into the Character they read" causes a multitude of problems, as Lovelace takes on a life of his own beyond Richardson's intentions, both in readers and in retellings of *Clarissa*.

In attempting to exceed the boundary-drawing practice of a medium, new media (as we must remember the novel was in the eighteenth century) invoke the trappings of older media. A medium, in other words, cannot help but be excessive in the very moment it presents its information—and this process is nowhere more obvious than in the moments when new media remediate their predecessors. J. David Bolter and Richard Grusin, in *Remediation: Understanding New Media*, note that immediacy is an attempt to "involv[e] the viewer more intimately in the image" (28) e.g., sympathy, empathy, and pathos in the realist novel, or genre forms like epistles and "autobiographical" accounts (*Robinson Crusoe*, for instance) that claim a possibility space in the non-fictional world. They continue, "the logic of transparent immediacy does not necessarily commit the viewer to an utterly naive or magical conviction that the representation is the same thing as what it represents" (30). However, "The common feature of all these forms [of art] is the belief in some necessary contact point between the medium and what it represents" (30). For

photography, this “contact point is the light that is reflected from the objects on to the film. For theorists of linear-perspective painting and perhaps for some painters, the contact point is the mathematical relationship established between the supposed objects and their projection on the canvas” (30). The question then, in Richardson’s quest for immediacy (writing to the moment), is, what is the contact point between the textual medium and the *fictional world* it represents?

Remediation is the process by which one medium seeks to replicate the content of another medium: for example, the epistolary novel, which remediates the medium of letter-writing in mass-produced print form. “Talbot, one of the pioneers [of photography], justified his invention because of his dissatisfaction with a contemporary device for making accurate perspective drawings by hand, and the name ‘camera’ was his remediation of the *camera lucida*” (Bolter 69). Similarly, Richardson’s taking up of the epistolary subject in *Pamela* (and later *Clarissa*) is a remediation of his assignment to write *Familiar Letters on Important Occasions* (the full title of which is *Familiar Letters On the most Important Occasions in Common Life*), and was directly inspired by the real tale from “a small sequence of letters from a daughter in service, asking her father’s advice when she is threatened by her master’s advances” (Doody 7).

According to Bolter and Grusin, remediation has two sides: immediacy and hypermediacy. The former produces the experience of transparency, as though the user of a medium can truly experience the delivered message without the medium’s interference (*im*-mediacy, the medium falls away); the latter, hypermediacy, is precisely the reverse, wherein the user’s attention is called directly to the medium

itself. (Christina Lupton's self-aware it-narratives model one example of the hypermediate mode.) For Bolter and Grusin, *all* mediation can be classified along a spectrum of immediacy on the one hand, and hypermediacy on the other.

In the ways that Samuel Richardson was concerned with immediacy, he resembles the computer programmers described by Grusin and Bolter (or programmers resemble him): "Programmers seek to *remove the traces of their presence* in order to give the program *the greatest possible autonomy*" (27, my emphasis). This sentence is remarkable: Grusin and Bolter are effectively arguing that the artist's self-effacement (programmers removing their own presence) is with the direct aim of providing artworks *with autonomy*, with self-agentialization in the world.[49] The repercussions of this sentence reach back to the eighteenth-century novel (already concerned with immediacy and hypermediacy), of course, but raises concerns about the status of the realist novel (and novelist). If representational forms, like the genre of the epistolary novel that can so accurately recreate the epistolary networks of humans, are especially concerned with the artifice of the absent author (exceeding the boundaries the author might otherwise wish to draw, as Richardson does when he tries to circumscribe readers' interpretations), then that absent author is precisely seeking to become absent to allow their work to stand on its own, *to live*. The realist novel, so intrigued by the author who seems to fade in and out of view, seems even more radically different from the postmodernist works to follow, which once again become

[49] It makes no difference, at least to my mind, that the creations of programmers seem to act with a life of their own—algorithms, video games, web graphics, etc. In another analogy, literary texts, by way of their arrangements, operate within the world *like programs*, enunciating effects with measurable results, sometimes falling within the purview of their creators, sometimes without.

fascinated by the noise their own media produce.[50] (This "white noise," for Kittler, is "the ineradicable background of information. For the very channels through which information must pass emit noise" [183]. Kittler's editor, David Wellbery, writes in his foreword, "post-hermeneutic criticism focuses on the difference between information and noise, sense and nonsense, that defines every medium" [xv].)

Bolter and Grusin's *Remediation* grounds its readings primarily in what it calls the "new media": technical systems like the internet, video games, and even film (in the ways that film uprooted photography in the former's early days) and photography (which uprooted painting). As each new medium appears, Bolter and Grusin present its arrival as a contest with older media that now must battle for attention. The claims that arise in historical moments like this sound familiar: "photography will make painting obsolete," "the ebook will overthrow the printed book," "digital photography makes film irrelevant," "podcasts replace radio," etc. The novel's claims to truth-value are a manifestation of this same process in the appearance of our contemporary new media: a Defoe or a Richardson felt that, in order to validate their use of representational/narrative space, there needed to be some grounding in "the real" world (hence Defoe's quip that "the 'foundation of [*Roxana*] is laid in truth of fact; and so the work is not a story, but a history'" [cited in Davis 165]). By disavowing one's own agency in the writing of the novel, the author aimed to produce a work that stood on its own as a "history." Davis claims that "Defoe does precisely mean that his

[50] "Ideally, there should be no difference between the experience of seeing a painting in person and on the computer screen, but this is never so. The computer always intervenes and makes its presence felt in some way, perhaps because the viewer must click on a button or slide a bar to view a whole picture or perhaps because the digital image appears grainy or with untrue colors. Transparency, however, remains the goal" (Bolter 46). To posit the ramifications of this claim in my own terms, media always already have their own *agency*, making their presences *felt* in the grain of the medium, refusing to vanish in service of the message.

manner of telling a lie will make it truth. That is, Defoe is keeping well within the bounds of the news/novel discourse intreating the reader to an inherent doubleness or reflexivity. Crusoe is at once true and false; he is a fiction with a true existence and a true story with a fictional structure" (157). This chiastic form of novelistic existence recurs in Richardson's novels, where characters like Clarissa are imbued with truth-value both because of their framing narrative and because of their agential effects as arrangements; Clarissa (or Lovelace, as we saw in his rhetorical questions in the example above) enacts herself through the reading of *Clarissa*, a manifestation that worms its way into the minds of its readers and reproduces, evolves—not wholly unlike biological life—into new iterations, new takes on the same story (think of a remediation of *Pamela* Terry Eagleton notes, written by Voltaire and Goldoni, and others, of *Clarissa*, which we'll touch on below). "'Clarissa'" Lois Bueler notes, "quickly became the type name for the illustrious and virtuous young woman under siege, 'Lovelace' the type name for the rakish seducer" (*Rewriting* xviii).

By the 1740s, when *Pamela* and *Clarissa* appear, there is less need on the author's part to refute their involvement in the project—and yet Richardson makes the same move that Defoe made in *Robinson Crusoe*, disavowing his authorship (in public-*ation* if not in *public*) and positioning himself instead as an editor and collator of the letters in question. Richardson's somewhat contradictory self-effacement in the text of *Clarissa* but not in his personal correspondence helps produce the agencies of the letters that proliferate across mid-eighteenth-century readership. In thinking about how media itself produces agential pressure on the nonfictional world, Bolter and Grusin point out how digital interfaces divide the user's attention: "each text window defines its own verbal, each graphic window its own visual, point of view" (Bolter

33). What they argue for here is an agency of technical interfaces, interfaces which assert proper use methods and receptions (which methods issue a call to the reader). Similarly, *Clarissa*'s letters each portray their authors' own points of view, portray an argument that just might be persuasive to any individual reader (one reason why Richardson would have found it so difficult to control those readers' interpretations, and why he would have been dismayed when so many seemed compelled by, if not attracted to, emotionally and physically, Lovelace). When we (as readers) already have access to a network of distinct and sometimes contradictory viewpoints, it is easier for us to assume that our own perspectives on the actors and the plot are equally as valid.

Yet despite the epistolary novel's surface-level claims to immediacy, the fact of the letters' mediation through the print process (and indeed the hands of their "editor") is forever apparent to the reader; it is impossible to extract the letters from their printed context. Davis argues that Richardson's mode of spontaneous writing resulted in a

> decreasing of the cognitive space between language and reality, as well as between reader and text.[51] Spontaneous writing permits Richardson to fashion language and narrative so as to cleave closer to the real in terms of both time and space—time, in the sense that when Pamela writes, she writes close to the

[51] Bolter and Grusin would use this example: describing the experience of playing a virtual flight simulator computer game, "As in a real plane, the experience of the game is that of working an interface, so that the immediacy of this experience is pure hypermediacy" (11). This is how the epistolary form works also. A reader encounters a fictional letter (interfaces with it) the way they would interface with an "actual" letter from a human friend: they read words from a piece of paper, including, often, a salutation and a closing signature, though the signature is presented as a typeface in the case of printed letters, and the reader can never forget that what they are reading is a reproduction, often bound into a volume, and not the original loose leaf.

moment of doing; and space, in the sense that the reader is presented with the letters themselves. Lovelace, perhaps more than any other character, comes closest to this ideal since he writes not only spontaneously but in shorthand as well, so that he can attempt to approach asymptotically the *immediacy* of the originating moment. Because Richardson assembles these units of immediacy into a *series* of letters rather than a retrospective narrative, he is better able to give a continuous and coterminous account of reality by virtue of the serial format letters afford.[52] (Davis 183-84, my emphasis)

I wish to call attention, however, to two aspects of the material experience of reading *Clarissa* that Davis here overlooks. For one, the reader is *not* "presented with the letters themselves," but with a printed *reproduction* of the (nonexistent) letters that are bound between covers and presented, more often than not, across multiple volumes (in some printings as many as nine!). Indeed, Lovelace may supposedly write in "shorthand," but the reader does not encounter his shorthand, rather a translation performed for the benefit of publication.[53] It's true that in the closing segments of the novel we get a sense of the magnitude of the collected letters (Clarissa's Last Will and Testament contains lengthy directions about how these documents should reach publication[54] [1418, L507]), but their mediation is never truly forgotten—if anything,

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[52] I wish to call attention only briefly to the acknowledgment of seriality that Davis provides us here. According to him, one of the ways that the epistolary novel reaches through immediacy toward the nonfictional world is one of the same processes through which we experience the literary arrangement—that is, seriality.

[53] Just imagine how confounded the reading public would have been had all of Lovelace's writing appeared in a curious shorthand, perhaps with a key used for decoding it in an appendix. Thinking about it this way, one is almost disappointed by Richardson's lack of dedication to portraying reality.

[54] "Clarissa selects Belford to be the 'protector of her memory' and asks Reverend Lewen to preserve and publish 'all letters and materials' as well as her Last Will and Testament. *It is Clarissa's written/printed story which is paramount, displacing Clarissa and her temporal existence*" (Davis 186-87, my emphasis). While Davis's argument here is that Clarissa is devoured by her textuality, which fits his argument, I prefer

Richardson's claims to truth would cause the credulous reader to want to see the real thing, the boxes and boxes of manuscript sheets and torn-open envelopes and scrawled notes. In this manner, *Clarissa* is exceedingly hypermediated *because of* its attempts to efface the medium (in Bolter and Grusin's terms, its efforts at immediacy constitute its very hypermediacy). Elsewhere Davis states that "The letter is not merely the graphical trace of the protagonist's personality; it is the only tangible and directly available information that the reader may scrutinize" (186). Unfortunately, any "graphical trace" of a character in *Clarissa* or *Pamela* is already lost to the process of print (re)production—their "aura," Benjamin might say, has been consumed by mass reproduction (although it would be the aura of a *fictional* human). The graphical trace leads only back to the medium of the book.

Despite this attempt at effacement (and paradoxical valorization of its opposite), Bolter and Grusin would remind us that

> Media function as objects within the world—within systems of linguistic, cultural, social, and economic exchange. Media are hybrids in Latour's sense and are therefore real for the cultures that create and use them. Photography is real—not just as pieces of paper that result from the photographic process, but as a network of artifacts, images, and cultural agreements about what these special images mean and do. (Bolter 58)

The materiality of the letters that form *Clarissa* receives constant citation, with characters referring to their pages, their pens, and concerned with who might find, read, or share letters they shouldn't. Media are, in other words, "quasi-objects that are in fact constitutive of our existence, entities that have *a life of their own* although they

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to think of Clarissa as *constituted by* her textuality, her representational status foregrounded.

originate in the social" (Lupton 18, glossing Latour, my emphasis), and constitute the necessary form within which literary arrangements can arrive. Media, in having "a life of their own," are by their nature excessive, contributing to the agential pressure literary arrangements exert. To put this another way, literary arrangements spread through the world because of media; literary arrangements, for all intents and purposes, *cannot* remain fixed due to media's inherent, and inextricable, reproductive qualities. Indeed, the novel's epistolarity makes it even more excessive: letters themselves transgress the closeted desk of the writer, and even seem to invite the later *reader* into conversation.

The bodies of these characters, these fictional humans, find alignment with the media that describes them. In *Clarissa*, the letters that will later constitute the novel are in constant proximity to the female protagonist's body, what Davis calls a "metonymy of… private letters in proximity to private parts" (185). While the example he pulls from is out of *Pamela* ("the attempted forcible removal of Pamela's deepest secrets from under her petticoats sets up an equation between her physical and spiritual being and the handwritten account of her being" [185]), the situation repeats in *Clarissa* in a number of scenes. Lovelace writes to Belford, "if I could find out that the dear creature carried any of her letters in her pockets, I can get her to a play or to a concert, and she may have the misfortune to lose her pockets" (569, L174.3), and he conspires with Clarissa's maid, Dorcas, to have her search Clarissa's belongings for the letters.[55]

[55] "Lovelace combines the theft of a letter, taken forcibly again from under Clarissa's skirts, with the 'most fervent kiss that I ever had dared to give her before.' Richardson seems to have unconsciously linked the state of his female character's [sic] sexual integrity to the state of the privacy of their discourse" (Davis

As I hinted earlier, Richardson's own denial of authorial agency in the case of both *Pamela* and *Clarissa* puts him in an awkward position when it comes time for him to dictate the responses his readers should take. "By denying that his work was fictional, Richardson had to maintain that *Pamela* was based on actual records and documents. But taking this tack, he had no way of preventing other authors from claiming to possess those very records…. However, for Richardson, it was morally and artistically important to maintain that his works were in some major sense genuine" (Davis 181). And Teri Doerksen notes that "Richardson wrote novels not simply to entertain, but to influence; he created models of moral behaviour for his readers to follow" (221). In this sense, Richardson's novels directly replicate the aims he had originally taken up in *Familiar Letters on Important Occasions*.

Familiar Letters

In this section, I continue using the framework of remediations to pursue the question of how *Clarissa* seemed to escape Richardson's intentions and authorial control—how the novel came to have a life of its own.

In a series of "restatements" that Bolter and Grusin enact in describing remediation's functions, one of them is that "The goal of remediation is to refashion or rehabilitate other media" (56). It is striking to lay this alongside the context behind Richardson's initial forays into the epistolary novel, spurring from examples meant to

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185). Perhaps this is one reason why the early novel seems so obsessed with rape: because media are *about* the spread of information, when characters are presented textually, especially via something so private as personal correspondence, the novels themselves become fascinated with the loss of control of that correspondence, actualizing the metaphor. (I don't include this to suggest that this is the only reason, far from it—longstanding traditions of misogyny that found root in eighteenth-century practices, and continue today, remain culpable, but media's *need to reveal* information remains an intriguing component in the early novel's mysterious fascination with the rape of its protagonists.) We find the same sentiment in the digital age: "Information wants to be free."

reform and instruct letter writers (particularly female letter writers) in the eighteenth century. Richardson needs to defend his novelistic characters and the morals their stories might impart:

> Your Dear Ladies will be so good as to honour me with their Censure and Correction, in such places… where my Clarissa wants Delicacy and Female Grace. I struggled, as I may say, to give her Failings, that I might not seem to have aimed at drawing a perfect Character. But that Delicacy and Propriety of Sex, which I think to be the Sex's Glory, I wou'd not have her want. (*Selected Letters* 101)

This letter, written to Aaron Hill, also shows something of Richardson's manner of composition, relying on outside perspectives to provide feedback and suggestions, and though he notoriously rarely used any of these suggestions, this is evidence that even before its completion *Clarissa* had ties to the non-fictional world. In a somewhat (to me) incredible letter addressed to his second wife, Elizabeth Leake, which accompanied the volumes of *Clarissa*, Richardson writes, [56]

> Dear Bett,

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[56] I've quoted the letter here in full, as the assignation of agency to Clarissa in this moment is noteworthy:

> Dear Bett,
>
> Do you know that the beatified CLARISSA was often very uneasy at the Time her Story cost the Man whom you favour with your Love; and that chiefly on your Account?
>
> She Was.
>
> And altho' she made not a posthumous Apology to you on that Account, as she did, on other Occasions, to several of those who far less deserved to be apologized to; I know so well her Mind, that she would have greatly approved of this acknowlegement [sic], and of the Compliment I now make you, in Her Name, of the Volumes which contain her History.
>
> May you, my dear Bett, May I, and all Ours, benefit by the Warnings, and by the Examples given in them!—And may our last Scenes be closed as happily as Her last Scene is represented to have done!—Are the Prayers of
>
> Yours most affectionate
> Whilst

S. Richardson (102)

> Do you know that the beatified CLARISSA was often very uneasy at the Time her Story cost the Man whom you favour with your Love; and that chiefly on your Account?
>
> She Was. (102)

Richardson's treatment of Clarissa as a living character, and his valorization of her conduct and character (even to his own spouse!) support Ross's (albeit likely unintentional) claim that the fiction itself *demanded* expansion. We might rephrase this by saying that *Clarissa* exerts pressure on the world around it, from its readers to its own author in a kind of recursive loop. In this vein, Thomas Keymer notes that

> Like all his contemporaries, when Richardson speaks of a medium, he generally means a middle position or compromise, or a conduit such as air or water that transmits impressions to the senses; when he speaks of mediation, he means third-party negotiation or intercession… or sometimes redemption by Christ. Even so… Richardson was far from lacking awareness of mediation as we now understand the term: as that dynamic set of processes between interacting literary genres, material states, text technologies, and transmission networks in which his writing took shape, and through which it took flight. (319-20)

Part-and-parcel with understanding *Clarissa*'s imbrication within a "dynamic set of processes," *Clarissa*'s characters exhibit the representational excessiveness typical of literary arrangements. *Clarissa*'s reception demonstrates this element of the novel's characters: Richardson's correspondence shows him on something of a back foot as he

attempts to modulate the interpretations (especially of women) who seem to find Lovelace attractive.[57] In a letter to Frances Grainger, Richardson writes,

> This must be inferr'd, without incurring ye Censure of Uncharitableness, that those Ladies who are fond of Lovelace, are not those who would have prov'd Exceptions to his haughty Triumph over the whole Sex, had he rated them in his *Attempts* as highly as he did the *too delicate* Clarissa.—Have you, Madam, well considered his letters to Belford…? If you have not, I wish you would, and inforce them upon the Young Ladies who may have the Benefit of your Acquaintance. You cannot imagine, Madam, how much the Characters of Clarissa, of Miss Howe, of Lovelace, of Mr. Hickman, have let me into the Hearts and Souls of my Acquaintance of both Sexes (143-144)

We see Richardson here both enforcing his own, rigid interpretation of the novel while simultaneously claiming that it extends into the very souls of his readership. Richardson would give his readers cake but not have them eat it. As Terry Eagleton says on Richardson's polarity on this issue, "the case contains a familiar empiricist flaw: if reading subject encounters literary object with no mediation but 'experience', and if experience is notoriously variable, how is it that there are not as many textual interpretations as there are readers? *Perhaps there are*" (26, my emphasis). The multiplying interpretations that swirl around *Clarissa*, and Richardson's inability to

[57] Indeed, Richardson is obsequiously self-aware of the didacticism in his letters: "I am at present engaged with a most admirable young lady of little more than twenty, Miss [Hester] Mulso, on the subject of paternal authority, and filial obedience, grounded on Clarissa's duty to her persecuting parents and on her dread of her gloomy father's curse…. Your Ladyship [Lady Bradshaigh] will be charmed with her part of the subject. I have been voluminous in my part; you know what a prolix writer I am" (184).

constrain them all to his purposes, evidences the novel's agency, the pressure it exerted on the eighteenth-century, non-fictional world.

Familiar Letters on Important Occasions, similarly, suggests multiple narratives (it representationally exceeds itself, refers beyond the limits of its pages) and perspectives on the same issues. The letters in this volume sometimes respond to one another and sometimes appear as distinct entities. One series begins with Letter LXXIX, "A Gentleman to a Lady, professing an Aversion to the tedious Forms of Courtship" (*Familiar* 111). This series continues across four letters, and obviously serves as a prototype for the *Pamela* and, later, *Clarissa*, model. The "gentleman," in the style of a proto-Lovelace, attempts to convince the lady to step outside the bounds of propriety in his courtship of her: "your good Sense and Endowments have raised you far above the Necessity of practicing the mean Artifices which prevail upon the less deserving of your Sex" (111). In "The Lady's Answer, encouraging a farther Declaration," Richardson depicts a female character of the same moral fiber he always felt compelled to portray. "I am very little in Love with the fashionable Methods of Courtship: Sincerity with me is preferable to Compliments; yet I see no Reason why common Decency should be discarded…. But I tell you fairly, that your present make no great Impression, yet perhaps as much as you intended" (112). Yet, despite the obvious role model whom Richardson intended (the lady), one could equally argue that Richardson has here also supplied a model of action in the manner of a rake, the gentleman, who nevertheless presents two letters with which to plead his case, both with the lady he intends to court and to Richardson's readers. Richardson writes in his preface to the volume that the author "has endeavour'd then, in general, throughout the great Variety of his Subjects, to inculcate the Principles of *Virtue* and *Benevolence*; to

describe *properly*, and recommend *strongly*, the SOCIAL and RELATIVE DUTIES; and to place them in such *practical* lights, that the letters may serve for Rules to THINK and ACT by, as well as Forms to WRITE after" (A 3).[58]

While contemporary responses to *Familiar Letters* are not as plentiful as those responding to the novels (for unsurprising reasons), it obviously sparked Richardson's interest in the epistolary format and earmarks his early investments in didactic and moralistic writing. And, even though these examples purport to serve "as Forms to WRITE after," Richardson's somewhat overenthusiastic portrayals of the less savory letter writers also gestures to the difficulties he'll later have controlling the afterlives of his novelistic villains.

Sören Hammerschmidt argues that the first collection of Richardson's personal letters (edited by none other than Anna Laetitia Barbauld), the 1804 *Correspondence of Samuel Richardson*, was imbricated into the same network of agential pressures and effects that we see in the reception history around *Clarissa*.

> As print publication distanced readers from and thus complicated personalized access to texts or their writers, [book publisher Richard] Phillips needed to find ways of mitigating some of these distancing effects by manipulating the very medium that introduced them. His answer was to construct himself as a bridge between Richardson, his letters, and their readers, by inserting himself into a voluminous apparatus of prefaces, appendixes, and images. Phillips thus offered his readers avenues of access to Richardson's letters where those

[58] The first edition of *Familiar Letters* uses an unusual pagination system in its preface and table of contents, labeling each recto page "A #," then leaving the verso unpaginated.

> avenues were inescapably mediated by the letters' transition from manuscript into print. (277)

In these ways, Richardson's letters, so tied as they were to his work on *Pamela*, *Clarissa*, *Sir Charles Grandison*, and *Familiar Letters*, wind up being just as much literary arrangements (and agential) as the novels themselves. Phillips, Hammerschmidt says later, "manipulated the voluminous visual and textual frameworks of his publications to restore some of the immediacy… between biographical subjects, epistolary archives, and the readers of those archives" (280). Hammerschmidt describes the complex process of remediation the letters undergo, including refraction through Barbauld's own writings ("where we can be sure that it is hers," he notes ironically [281]), Phillips's additions, biographical notes on the correspondents (whose authorship remains obscure), and the inclusion of portraits and engravings all seemingly based on one another and not the author.

I raise only some of the issues around the publication of Barbauld's edition of Richardson's *Correspondence* to show how the publication history around such things points to media's power to ensure its ongoing survival—media's inherent agency; we struggle with media of all varieties to represent the information we want to convey, whether our aims be didactic (Richardson), historical (Barbauld), or commercial (Phillips).

Clarissa Enmeshed

In this subsection, I continue my examination of Clarissa, as character, within her medium, and especially how the materiality of media produces the agential pressure of literary arrangement-characters. With this foot on the doorstep of material relations,

between fictional letter writers, their letters, and readers, I turn to a close reading of some of Lovelace's letters in the subsequent section.

Clarissa's network—the assemblage out of which the literary arrangement we call the character "Clarissa" forms—is in some senses easy to delineate, precisely because the media implicated in the letter network are so readily seen, and each aids in replicating the sense of immediacy. As I've noted above, the very genre within which Richardson is working, the epistolary novel, is predicated on using the medium of print production to replicate another medium, the manuscript letter. As Bolter and Grusin describe, "Media function as objects within the world," and thus are themselves socially mediated, discursive products. Christina Lupton, whose own work makes heavy use of *Remediation*, has this to say about media's agency (especially within narratives self-conscious of their mediatory processes):

> As Lisa Gitelman defines them, media are "socially realized structures of communication."[59] A text that refers to its own mediation therefore represents a process that *exceeds* the moment in which a text is written and published. Accordingly, a text's profession to know of its mediation *exceeds in scope and outlook the perspective of its author*. When played out well, this impossibility can cause the page to quicken with the impression of sentience. (Lupton 5-6, my emphases)

While Lupton's logic follows much of my own, she ultimately draws radically different conclusions. "At the most basic level," she notes in her introduction, "the

[59] On the same page in Gitelman she also says, "Media, it should be clear, are very particular sites for very particular, importantly social as well as historically and culturally specific experiences of meaning" (8). The emphasis on particularity and specificity is important, as it suggests the unique and phenomenal (and excessive) nature of media.

subject of this book is the human, rather than the technological, force behind texts displaying consciousness of their own production and circulation…. people do in fact control the technologies they use" (10).[60] As *Familiar Letters*, *Clarissa*, and Richardson's own correspondence make clear, however, while Richardson may have had some measure of control over the original composition process, the expansion of subsequent editions and his inability to legislate his readers' reactions proves precisely that he could *not* control the technology of *Clarissa*, despite his best efforts to do so.[61] Lupton skirts the issue by rooting media's agency as a social process, so that a medium's autonomy resembles something of an illusion: "books that refer to themselves as books become circuits open to what Hegel defines as the 'recognition' by one self-conscious being of another. A book that announces it is a book involves an author recognizing a reader who is conscious of reading a book" (15).

Lupton's emphasis on the materiality of media reinforces the ways in which materiality itself is leveraged in the production of apparent objectivity. But "Rather than dismissing literature that appears in the guise of paper," Lupton cautions (as she recites the various ways in which the eighteenth-century proliferation of paper made novelists nervous about their novels becoming "bum-fodder or grocery wrapping"), eighteenth-century narratives "reclaim the sheer materiality of literature as leverage in their production of a literal, rather than literary, objectivity" (56). Materiality produces the sense of objective being, an existence that seems outside of individual experience

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[60] I really could not disagree more strongly with this final clause.

[61] Indeed, Lupton makes a caveat to this effect: "I have introduced [literary self-consciousness] as a phenomenon to be explained in human rather than technological terms. But the fact is that the imaginative efforts of mid-eighteenth-century writers did have material effects: books whose primary mode is to expose the way the media work as human constructions do, in some sense, achieve a life of their own that makes them attractive as objects" (13). There's that phrase again, "a life of their own."

though perceptible by it. Novels like *Clarissa*, *Tristram Shandy*, and the circulating it-narratives so popular in the eighteenth century (more on them in chapter 3), produce recurring effects on and within the world, as objects yes, but also as phenomena and as literary arrangements. Our perception of them delimits and defines the very nature of their agency, an agential pressure perceptible in everything from physical bodies to "rhetorical ornaments" like the personification of things or an overwrought invocation of a "virgin saint" from one letter writer to another (Richardson, *Clarissa*, 722, L224).

Fictional literary arrangements have agency precisely *because* they represent, they mediate alternative worlds to the non-fictional one. Prior to the eighteenth century, Lupton argues (via John Guillory) that

> tools of communication such as ink and voice and paint were viewed primarily in terms of the thoughts or images they conveyed. In contrast, mediation "directs our attention first to the material and formal qualities of different kinds of cultural expression and only second to the object of representation." By this account, mediation, though not limited to print, *became visible* at the time when print and its dissemination was on the rise. (Lupton 7-8, my emphasis)

Louise Curran and Sören Hammerschmidt, additionally, argue that Richardson's life offers evidence of the visibility that mediation gained in the eighteenth century: "Richardson pursuing his literary activities within a nexus of social and textual interactions, and Richardson becoming the object of such interactions both during his lifetime and after, offer evidence of the close textual and material connections in eighteenth-century minds between socio-legal, religious, and literary forms of mediation" (124). This is one reason why the eighteenth century proves to be a valuable site for locating and tracing literary arrangements: their afterlives, the way

they reproduce through the media within which they are inscribed, are visible to their readers, and in some sense this visibility aids in the selfsame propagation. "By performing consciousness as the property of the text itself, [eighteenth-century authors] use the knowledge of mediation to *create the reality* of media having agency and autonomy" (Lupton 13, my emphasis). This reality, this agency and autonomy of media (which can be *traced* if not *predicted*) serves, as it were, as both the regulatory and reproductive system of literary arrangements. The "different reasons for making a book appear conscious of its mediation share, however, one effect, which is to support the idea of print having autonomy from and power over its message" (Lupton 11). When a text appears conscious of its own mediatory systems, that also serves to imply that the characters within that text (who themselves appear conscious of mediation by writing to the moment, by discussing their own textual habits) are conscious of their own textuality and capable of their own agential acts.

The closer we look at Clarissa, the more and more she, and especially her agency, comes to look like a human person.[62] Qua literary arrangement, the character Clarissa accretes out of the network of letters that also form the novel (making it all the more fitting that the novel bears her name). In the sense that *Clarissa* is formed out of hundreds of epistles, Clarissa herself forms out of the same collection. Lennard Davis's methodology when he investigates precisely this issue is similar to my own. "The aim is to understand the system of order that exists among texts, as well as between texts and society" (8). For Davis this is entirely discursive:

[62] I use the word "human" here to avoid using "real." The sentence "…comes to look like a *real* person" works against my aims, since I believe precisely that Clarissa *is* real, she is simply fictional at the same time. Saying that she is "*like* a real person" would prejudice the reader against the idea that Clarissa is in fact real, and so I use "human" as a shorthand for "non-fictional," "non-textual," and "biological."

> The model [of genre development] I am favoring in this study relies partially on the work of Michel Foucault. The novel, as such, is seen not as a biological entity, nor a convergent phenomenon, but as discourse—that is, in Foucault's usage, the ensemble of written texts that constitute the novel (and in so doing define, limit, and describe it)…. In opening the field in this way, it is possible to trace a discourse which may be considerably wider, with different limits and rules than our modern conceptions of fiction and the novel would allow us to apply to the eighteenth century. (7)

The appeal of this approach is obvious, and my own reading of the literary arrangement, too, relies on the discursive method described by Foucault. My own take, however, seeks to seal the bifurcation Davis describes here: discourse on the one hand, and entities or phenomena on the other. As gender theorists like Judith Butler or Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick have argued, *bodies*, too, are discursively constructed; and convergent phenomena like literary arrangements, precisely because they converge *from somewhere* (and extend into other phenomena that are themselves converging) are also discursive processes and functions. Not either/or, but both.

Agential Letters

In the close reading that follows, I read the figure of Lovelace across several letters, in an attempt to understand the pressure of his overwhelming agency—narratively, in the sense that he ultimately overwhelms Clarissa's body (though not her mind or soul), and, as a representationally excessive figure, reaching beyond the boundaries of the novel, to overwhelm the aims of the author himself.

In Letter 174 of *Clarissa*, Clarissa writes to Anne Howe, speaking of Lovelace, her captor, that "I am but a cipher, to give him significance and myself pain" (567). In

writing this sentence, Clarissa recognizes that her societal function, no matter the scandal she may now be embroiled in, is to serve as a reflection, stand in, or "blank counter" (to use Doody's language) for Lovelace's agency and self-worth. The intermixing of Lovelace as a character with Clarissa's self-identity points to the wider network out of which Clarissa forms.

Lovelace's actions bear out that Clarissa's "pain" directly correlates with his "significance," a significance we can read as a conglomeration of his gender (as Terry Eagleton does), his sexual desire, and his self-worth. Letter 225 describes, from Lovelace's perspective, the events around an accidental fire that occurred in the middle of the night. After the fire has been dealt with, and going to Clarissa's room, Lovelace finds her in a state of distress and near to fainting with fright. He capitalizes on the situation instantly: "And now, Belford, reflect upon the distance the watchful charmer had hitherto kept me at. Reflect upon my love, and upon my sufferings for her: reflect upon her vigilance, and how long I had lain in wait to elude it" (724, L225). Lovelace positions himself as the snake in the undergrowth, the patient prowler. While Lovelace entreats Belford to reflect upon Clarissa's anxious state during the fire (and Lovelace's subsequent abuse of it), it is really only to display the advantages he manages to gain from the surprise. In this passage, Lovelace cites Clarissa's several cries of "Oh Mr Lovelace!—" (726) in her distress, first from the fire and then her agitation at finding Lovelace in her rooms. (Indeed, the repeated inclusion of "Oh Mr Lovelace" seems intended to arouse the male reader, in this case, Belford.) Characteristically, however, Lovelace does not actually *quote* these cries except to indent them in a new paragraph—the separation between his dialogue and

her frantic replies is spatial only, not typographical. Again, the immediacy of the scene should be distressing for readers (and comes shortly after Lovelace's rhetorical questions about his own sexual agitation in Letter 224, shortly before the fire breaks out).

Letters 224 through 227 are all from Lovelace to Belford, though some contain notes to him, which Lovelace includes, written by Clarissa. In both "writing to the moment" and demonstrating self-consciousness of mediation, Lovelace discusses both his own writing practice and then punctuates the end of 224 with a fairly long in-the-moment description of his physical reactions to an uproar in the house, which turns out to be a small fire started by one of the servants. Even writing in shorthand, it stretches the imagination to picture him sitting at his writing desk, in his nightgown, listening to the confusion, and scribbling it down for Belford.

In betraying a self-consciousness of his own mediation, the literary arrangement we're here calling Lovelace seems to deny his own fictionality, thus entering a kind of dualistic, representationally excessive state (on the one hand, conscious of and acknowledging the fact of representation, and on the other refusing to cohere *solely within* representation, instead extending—agentially—beyond the page). Lovelace opens letter 224 acknowledging this representational self-consciousness: "Faith, Jack, thou hadst half undone me with thy nonsense,[63] though I would not own it in my yesterday's letter; my conscience of thy party before. But I

[63] In the earlier letter Lovelace references, Belford pleads with Lovelace to release Clarissa: "let me beseech thee to remove her from this vile house" (714, L222). In Letter 223, Lovelace writes an impassioned, circuitous, and argumentative letter arguing with Belford's stipulations, and by 224, as he says, Lovelace is his "own man again"—letter 223 does suggest, at least, that Lovelace may have been partially swayed by Belford's argument, or at least swayed enough he felt the need to defend himself so fervently.

think I am my own man again" (721). The impact of Belford's letter on Lovelace is plain, causing him to write his own long reply (letter 223), and then brushing it off with his usual arrogance at the start of 224. Lovelace even notes that Belford could have "overthrown" him were it not for the plans and preparation already in place: "So near to execution my plot! So near springing my mine! All agreed upon between the women and me." Aligned with these preparations, Lovelace sits down, uncaring that he is committing his crimes to the page, and writes to Belford that "I have time for a few lines preparative to what is to happen in an hour or two; and I love to write to the moment—" (721).

This letter provides an extended example of Richardson's program of writing to the moment (and it is notable that he puts this phrase into Lovelace's mouth), one in which we experience, alongside Lovelace, the physical, embodied manifestations of excitement, followed by spontaneous reactions to an emergency, and then—in the next letter—Lovelace has to make up for a temporal caesura by recounting recent events, which interrupted the course of Letter 224.

In the execution of his plot, Lovelace first convinces Clarissa to retire early. "When I parted with my charmer… it was upon her promise that she would not sit up to write or read." Here again we see Lovelace's control enacted through the domination of Clarissa's ability to write. "To have sat up reading or writing half the night," he continues, "as she sometimes does, would have frustrated my view, as thou wilt observe when my little plot unravels." The first interruption happens immediately after this line, marking a turn from Lovelace's future-oriented description to present-tense surprise: "What—what—what now!—bounding villain! wouldst thou choke me!—" Who exactly the "villain" is in this line Lovelace makes clear in the next: "I

was speaking to my heart, Jack!—It was then at my throat—And what is all this for?—These shy ladies,[64] how, when a man thinks himself near the mark, do they tempest him!" The next turn of Lovelace's letter is, to me, even more strange, for now he *imagines* exhorting his maidservant, ode-like, about their preparations, "Is all ready, Dorcas? Has my beloved kept her word with me?" (721). By this point, Lovelace's letter has entered an almost entirely internal, psychological space, forgetful that its destination eventually resides with a recipient. After questioning Dorcas (who, it's safe to say, was never present during the letter writing), Lovelace loses control of his body in the passage I quoted well above ("Limbs, why thus convulsed!—" [722]). This apparent loss of reason, Lovelace's surrender to the agitations of his body, comes hot on the heels of his claim to write to the moment. Despite the unlikelihood that Lovelace would commit to paper, at the exact moment it was occurring, these physical manifestations of excitement, it does suggest some of the psychological complexity of Lovelace's character.[65]

After a brief recession, Lovelace continues his letter, first with an invocation to Clarissa, "Soft, oh virgin saint, and safe as soft, be thy slumbers!—" (722). He pens this line apparently in the moments before he would creep up to Clarissa's rooms, but in the next line Lovelace continues with an even more unlikely in-the-moment description.

> I will now once more turn to my friend Belford's letter…. But, what's the matter!—What's the matter!—What a *double*—But the uproar abates!—What

[64] Lovelace means this sarcastically, as "these shy ladies" are prostitutes in the brothel he has sequestered Clarissa away in.

[65] And, it maybe doesn't go without saying, what we today term "psychological complexity," I would argue is a common example of representational excessiveness. We feel that a literary character has complicated thoughts and emotions, sometimes, even often, only alluded to by the author.

a *double coward* am I?—Or is it that I am taken in a cowardly minute? for heroes have their fits of *fear*; cowards their *brave* moments: and virtuous ladies, all but my Clarissa, their moment *critical*—

But thus cooly enjoying thy reflections in a hurricane!—Again the confusion's renewed!—

What! Where!—How came it!—[66]

Is my beloved safe!—

Oh wake not too roughly my beloved!— (722)

The dashes, which Lovelace employs regularly, here become markers of distraction, or even of auditory signals that cue *in real time*, as Lovelace pens his letter to Belford. It's important to note, I think, that this sense of "in real time" is a marker of the text's excessiveness—despite the seriality of the letters, we feel that this happens *now*.

Yet even "writing to the moment" must, occasionally, allow for the extra-textual passage of time. Between the end of Letter 224, quoted above, and the start of 225, the reader falls into a lacuna full of questions. In Letter 225, Lovelace relates the events around the fire that have conspired against his machinations, for now. Once again, we see Clarissa spurn Lovelace, and we see her represented through Lovelace's prose. This letter's concern with an ekphrastic exposé of Clarissa serves as one of the most voyeuristic moments in the novel; "*Imagination* cannot form; much less can the pencil paint; nor can the soul of painting, *poetry*, describe an angel so exquisitely, so

[66] In my own head-canon I like to imagine that the title of Samuel Beckett's infamous *What Where* comes from this line, although there's absolutely no evidence for this and the content of that piece seems totally disparate from *Clarissa*—though I'm sure we would find more resonances if we looked more closely at both.

elegantly lovely!" (722, L225). Again, the excessiveness of Lovelace's narration suggests that the reality of Clarissa lies beyond the pen.

But first, Lovelace is again self-consciously aware of how his prose affects—or should affect—his reader. "Didst thou not," he asks Belford, "by the conclusion of my former, perceive the consternation I was in, just as I was about to re-peruse thy letter?" Lovelace describes the fire that had taken place on the floors above his own: "I was alarmed by a trampling noise overhead, and a confused buzz of mixed voices, some louder than others, like scolding, and little short of screaming, all raised to vocatives, as in a fright: and while I was wondering what could be the matter, downstairs ran Dorcas, and at my door, in an accent rather frightedly and hoarsely inward than shrilly clamorous, cried out Fire! Fire!" (722-23).

Lovelace's reaction to the "little short of screaming" is, to me, at least a little humorous—for we know, by the conclusion of Letter 224, that he remains sitting at his desk, "in my gown and slippers… to oblige thee, writing on" (722, L225) until the moment Dorcas arrives. We may imagine that his use of shorthand made the whole transaction much shorter than reading it would seem to imply, but at present I cannot help but imagine Lovelace leisurely narrating the kerfuffle he has been thrown into without doing anything about it. Anyway.

And, of course, by the time Lovelace arrives the fire has been put out, the flaming curtains torn down and tossed into the fireplace. The fire had been started by "Mrs Sinclair's cook-maid, who, having set up to read the simple history of Dorastus and Faunia when she should have been in bed, had set fire to an old pair of calico window-curtains" (723). Precisely what valence we're supposed to read this cause by is unclear: a note in the Penguin *Clarissa* states that Robert Greene's *Pandosto*,

published as *The History of Dorastus and Faunia*, was a prose romance that had served as inspiration for Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale* (1518-19), and there are overtones from the narrative that fit *Clarissa*: a virtuous daughter estranged from her family, an eventual reconciliation (though this is a tragic turn in *Clarissa*), and a repentant father. (If it isn't already clear, what I'm trying to do here is show how a literary arrangement constantly draws new elements to itself as a kind of ever-expanding constellate. In this case, through the process of allusion.) Jonathan P. Callis argues that "Lovelace obsessively alludes to Renaissance romances ranging from Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* to Robert Greene's *Pandosto* to create a 'secular scripture' that he uses to imprison Clarissa in an allegory of possession and rape" (614).[67] This allusion on Lovelace's part is subtly made, "Dorastus," Callis notes, "tries to force love just as Lovelace does. He isolates Faunia from her family and then attempts to intimidate this supposed peasant girl by boasting of his power and exalted station" (620). For Lovelace, *Pandosto* is a perfect analogy to his aims: "According to the logic of *Pandosto,* Lovelace's forceful and fraudulent seduction of Clarissa should end in marriage. *Pandosto* offers one more satisfying moral for Lovelace: the story disposes of tyrannical fathers while rewarding bold lovers. Richardson relies on allusions to romance either to assert or to undermine class-based privilege" (621). (Ironically, "Lovelace acknowledges his disdain for tragedy and his preference for comedy and romance" [Callis 620] in Letter 194, to Belford, "I believe, generally

[67] "Clarissa's resistance to Lovelace's secular allegory owes its success to her numerous counter-allegories, modeled not only on the Protestant exegesis of scripture but also on Spenser's *Faerie Qveene,* which provides a Christian version of romance to combat Lovelace's secular allegory of sexual possession. Ultimately. Clarissa manages to enclose Lovelace within her narrative of Christian forgiveness and renunciation" (Callis 614).

speaking, that all the men of our cast are of my mind—They love not tragedies but those in which they themselves act the parts of tyrants and executioners; and, afraid to trust themselves with serious and solemn reflections, run to comedies, to laugh away the distresses they have occasioned, and to find examples of as immoral men as themselves" [618].) In this brief moment, the quick explanation of what had caused a small, in-the-grand-scheme-of-things-insignificant fire, we find *Clarissa* entering into another literary arrangement, one tied to *Winter's Tale*, Elizabethan allegory, and the very structures that bind Clarissa and Lovelace into mutually incompatible social positions.

Yet, again Richardson's aims may be at odds with his methods. Lovelace's reference to *Pandosto* suggests marriage as a happy outcome for the couple, but we know that marriage is not Lovelace's aim (in Letter 224 he exclaims, "for what all these convulsions? This project is not to end in matrimony surely!" [722]). On one hand, Lovelace's allusions make him seem interested in marriage, while his lack of moral fiber demonstrates otherwise.

What follows is a painful passage wherein Lovelace attempts to console Clarissa against her fear of the fire, while what she wants most is for Lovelace to leave her rooms. Lovelace discovers Clarissa "ready to faint": "You may believe how much I was affected. I trembled with concern for her, and hastened down faster than the alarm of fire had made me run up, in order to satisfy her that all the danger was over" (723). It is here that Lovelace's pleasure for describing Clarissa, voyeuristically, to Belford takes over.

> I beheld the charmingest creature in the world, supporting herself on the arm of the gasping Dorcas, sighing, trembling, and ready to faint, with nothing on but an under-petticoat, her lovely bosom half-open, and her feet slipped into her shoes.
>
> …
>
> Oh Jack! how her sweet bosom, as I clasped her to mine, heaved and panted! I could even distinguish her dear heart flutter, flutter, flutter, against mine; and for a few minutes, I feared she would go into fits. (723)

Clarissa, however, is wisely having none of it:

> But what did I get by this my generous care of her, and by my *successful* endeavour to bring her to herself?—Nothing, ungrateful as she was! but the most passionate exclamations: for we had both already forgot the occasion, dreadful as it was, which had thrown her into my arms; I, from the joy of encircling the almost disrobed body of the loveliest of her sex; she, from the greater terrors that arose from finding herself in my arms, and both seated on the bed from which she had been so lately frighted.
>
> And now, Belford, reflect upon the distance the watchful charmer had hitherto kept me at. Reflect upon my love, and upon my sufferings for her: reflect upon her vigilance, and how long I had lain in wait to elude it; the awe I had stood in, because of her frozen virtue and over-niceness; and that I never before was so happy with her; and then think how ungovernable must be my transports in those happy moments! (723-24)

Belford, through much of Lovelace's correspondence, serves as a cipher for the reader (a function Anna Howe provides in relation to Clarissa), someone who—generally—

likes Lovelace but finds his treatment of Clarissa shocking, and whose indignation at the eventual rape matches the reader's own. Here, Lovelace's address, while meant for Belford, entreats the reader instead to "reflect on" the circumstances, partly Clarissa's, but mostly Lovelace's own. "[H]ow ungovernable must be my transports…!" While I'm sure that Richardson intended for Lovelace to seem like a cad and a scoundrel in this sequence, giving the villain so much first-person narration, so much opportunity for direct address (and general rhetorical skill), just might convince certain readers that Lovelace was indeed "carried away."[68]

Lovelace then quotes six lines of a poem "altered to the first person," (accruing more allusive elements into the arrangement) which describe his bodily reaction to being in Clarissa's chambers, with Clarissa herself in such a compromised position. While this poem has gone untraced (at least in the Penguin classics edition), I think it safe to say that Richardson, with his numerous other citations of extant poetry and plays, would have claimed these as Lovelace's invention if they were not sourced from another author.[69] After this (apparently) spur-of-the-moment quotation, Lovelace's gaze lights again on Clarissa's physical form:

> But, oh the sweet discomposure!—Her bared shoulders and arms, so inimitably fair and lovely: her spread hands crossed over her charming neck; yet not half concealing its glossy beauties: the scanty coat, as she rose from me, giving the whole of her admirable shape and fine-turned limbs: her eyes running over, yet seeming to threaten future vengeance: and at last her lips uttering what every

[68] Again, this is not to excuse such a reading, but as the narratives around female rape victims bear out, those who would believe them over their male attackers are sometimes hard to find.

[69] Here, too, a text finds surprising renewed life—propagation—a fragment of a longer poem, one expects, from an unknown author and now extant only in a far-more-famous novel.

indignant look and glowing feature portended; exclaiming as if I had done the worst I could do, and vowing never to forgive me; wilt thou wonder that I could avoid resuming the incensed, the already too-much-provoked fair one? (724-25)

Clarissa is more a sculpture in this passage than a human—as a literary character-arrangement, we (grotesquely) receive most of our information about her physical form (and in this sequence of letters, all of it) from Lovelace, privileging his attempts to physically dominate her.

Lovelace next apparently transcribes his and Clarissa's argument in her bedchambers. Changing speakers in the dialogue are noted only by indentations on the page, without the use of quotation marks:

> Impute not everything, my best beloved, to design; for design it was not—
>
> Oh Mr Lovelace!—
>
> Upon my soul, madam, the fire was real—(and so it was, Jack!)—The house might have been consumed by it, as you will be convinced in the morning by ocular demonstration.
>
> Oh Mr Lovelace!—
>
> Let my passion for you, madam, and the unexpected meeting of you at your chamber door, in an attitude so charming—
>
> Leave me, leave me, this moment!—I beseech you, leave me; looking wildly and in confusion, now about her, and now upon herself. (726)

The strange graphical effect of this moment in Lovelace's letter is that his description of Clarissa ("looking wildly in confusion") blends into both her dialogue and his. It is only by context (and Clarissa's occasional cry of "Oh Mr Lovelace!") that we can tell who is speaking in any given line—spoken or typographical. Lovelace-qua-arrangement is *literally drawing Clarissa-qua-arrangement* into itself as a new element.

> But I had no sooner entered my own apartment, than, reflecting upon the opportunity I had lost, and that all I had gained was but an increase of my own difficulties; and upon the ridicule I should meet with below, upon a weakness so much out of my usual character; I repented, and hastened back, in hope that through the distress of mind which I left her in, she had not so soon fastened her door; and I was fully resolved to execute all my purposes, be the consequences what it would… and if fits and desperation ensure, I can but marry at last, and then I shall make her amends…. But I was justly punished—for her door was fast: (727)

One reason why I have cited this letter at such length (though there are still great swathes of it we've not touched) is to contrast it against the letter that finally reports Lovelace's rape of Clarissa. Here is that letter in full, from Lovelace to Belford, well over a hundred pages later:

> Tuesday morn. June 13
>
> And now, Belford, I can go no farther. The affair is over. Clarissa lives. And I am
>
> Your humble servant,
>
> R. Lovelace

(L 257, 883)[70]

Lovelace's frustrations in the earlier Letter 224 manifest in page upon page of description, cited poetry, and claims to his own righteousness; here, in what is the novel's perhaps primary focal point, the funneling point where the two halves of the hourglass meet, Lovelace reduces his actions to three short sentences, the date, and a closure. Despite the offending sentence's briefness, its *pressure* on the novel as a whole is immense. While this is the total of *Lovelace's* letter, the "collection's" editor adds a postscript stating that "The whole of this black transaction is given by the injured lady to Miss Howe, in her subsequent letters, dated Thursday July 6. To which the reader is referred" (883).

The reader "is referred" because, up to this point, Lovelace's overwhelming agency has done just that—it has overwhelmed contemporary readers (to Richardson's chagrin) and Clarissa's virtue—but here, in this crucial turning point of the novel, Lovelace's agency withdraws to such an extent that it *forces* the "editor" of *Clarissa* to send the reader to a fresh hermeneutic site. L226 describes Lovelace's machinations to acquire Clarissa's letters, which she has hidden from him, and includes a note to Lovelace from Clarissa:

> These are the contents—No inscriptive Sir! No Mr Lovelace!
>
> I cannot see you: nor will I, if I can help it. Words cannot express the anguish of my soul on your baseness and ingratitude…. Vilest of men! and most detestable of plotters! how have I deserved from you the shocking

[70] Lady Bradshaigh even, somewhat brashly, tried to convince Richardson to remove this letter from the novel (Barchas 94).

indignities—But no more—only for your own sake, wish not, at least for a week to come, to see

The undeservedly injured and insulted,

Clarissa Harlowe

(L226, 730)

Lovelace fumes that she refuses him the dignity of a salutation. Finally, Letter 227 contains notes passed back and forth under a door between Lovelace and Clarissa (since she refuses to admit him to her room), which he then packages for Belford, and concludes with a verse of poetry.

This series of letters, from 224 to 227, show how the novel's hypermediate epistolary form, including not just letters, but failing to fully represent, for instance, Clarissa's manuscript notes, which are simply replicated in type. Lovelace's own self-awareness of his writing practices and the ways in which the printed page seeks (at the same time) to replicate the handwritten letter and fails to produce an accurate reproduction, all call attention to the novel's oscillations between immediacy and hypermediacy. In this series, Lovelace's agency, his ability *to affect*—from Clarissa to contemporary readers—generates out of the movement of remediated epistles.

Reading Clarissa, Rewriting Clarissa

With "Reading *Clarissa*, Rewriting Clarissa," I argue for the propagative ways in which literary arrangements give birth to new elements (and thus to new arrangements) beyond the bounds of their originating texts. As I discussed in earlier sections, the process begins with mediation, the reproductive system of literary arrangements.

In a special issue of *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* dedicated to issues of mediation around (none other than) Samuel Richardson, Louise Curran and Sören Hammerschmidt write, "As novels thus recursively perform the mediations that they simultaneously embody—between their readers' lived realities, on the one hand, and the speculative worlds that readers learn to inhabit by virtue of reading novels, on the other—they offer excavation sites as well as laboratories in which the layered histories of readers' media engagements might be investigated" (123). Here, Curran and Hammerschmidt refer to novels (specifically eighteenth-century novels) as "excavation sites," suggesting an archaeology of media studies that can draw connections between "the layered histories of readers' media engagements." Curran and Hammerschmidt's take on authorial agency conceives of a novel-location wherein "authorship [is thought of] not so much as individual agency and original creativity, but rather as the product of a variety of sociolegal and economic discourses coupled with historically specific material constraints that govern textual composition and dissemination" (122). Few texts have sponsored as much critical work on their contemporary responses as has *Clarissa*.

Take by way of example The Clarissa Project, which appeared in three volumes (*Reading Clarissa*, *Rewriting Clarissa*, and *Clarissa and Her Readers*) as a companion to AMS Press's eight-volume reprint of *Clarissa*'s third (1751) edition. As Lois Bueler writes in her preface to *Reading Clarissa*,

> The original intention of the Clarissa Project's reception volumes was to present whole texts. I heartily applaud the principle; anthologies of excerpts are the bane of historically committed readers. But the use of whole texts only

> has proved impossible as far as this volume of eighteenth-century materials goes, for good reason. *Clarissa* and its author were eighteenth-century readers' contemporaries; those readers discussed the work as people discuss contemporaries, within the matrix of their daily lives: comparing the novel to other novels they had read; comparing the characters in the novel to their friends, neighbors, and enemies…. *Clarissa* was everywhere, but not primarily in discrete articles or essays. In fact, it is the very ubiquity of the novel that this volume seeks to present, the sense of intertwined conversations throughout Britain and across the Continent and Atlantic. (VII)

Bueler acknowledges that the complete historicization of *Clarissa*, or a complete tracing of the novel's network, is next-to impossible (the novel and its extensions are simply *too excessive*), earmarked by the inconvenience of including "whole texts" in the project. The Clarissa Project itself is a literary arrangement forced to define its own boundaries, to pick and choose from the available marginalia despite its encyclopedic aims, to limit its historical purview to a range of years between 1747 and 1804. In the introduction, Bueler notes that the two volumes cover a historical period from *Clarissa*'s "serial publication in 1747-48 to the artificial but useful terminus represented by Anna Laetitia Aikin Barbauld's edition of Richardson's correspondence in 1804" (XI). *Reading Clarissa* is itself a useful analogy for the idea of the literary arrangement, as it brings together the threads of so many eighteenth-century thinkers and correspondents and employs boundary-drawing practices through the work of another canonical turn-of-the-nineteenth-century author, Anna Laetitia Barbauld.

Clarissa seemed to speak to every facet of eighteenth-century society:

> a remarkable feature of Richardson's work was that the conversation was not for novelists or public intellectuals alone, but for any person, of either sex and any age, who could read and write and thus develop and share a perspective. So we also meet an elderly Anglo-Irish clergyman, a French civil servant, American Abigail Adams and her family, a rural English shopkeeper writing up his account book, a German girl suicidally depressed about her life and prospects, an Oxford University student trying his hand at the fashion of the critical essay, a Spanish lawyer, a young Scotswoman writing to a friend about reading, travels and courtship. (Bueler XII)

I list all these merely to illustrate the impossibility of truly defining the bounds of *Clarissa*-qua-arrangement. The novel's eighteenth-century impact influenced each of these individuals to the extent that they produced their own written works—whether intended for publication, private correspondence, or personal use[71]—now collected, arranged, in these volumes of the Clarissa Project.

One of Richardson's most prolific correspondents, Dorothy Bellingham Bradshaigh recommended plot developments and heavily annotated her own copy of the novel. Janine Barchas has preserved these in *The Annotations in Lady Bradshaigh's Copy of* Clarissa, which the Clarissa Project references several times. Lady Bradshaigh's own insertions had at least some influence on Richardson, even if it was merely negative, as Richardson "saw and responded to" her annotations (Bueler, *Reading Clarissa* 5).

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[71] "One of the most vibrant features of the eighteenth-century conversation about Clarissa is the way it moved among modes of written and spoken language both literary and quotidian." (Bueler XIII)

> Lady Bradshaigh used the margins of her book to 'overwrite' Richardson's text with hundreds of annotations—they range from corrections of phraseology to criticisms of plot and character—partially re-authoring *Clarissa* in the course of her active reading. Richardson, who saw Lady Bradshaigh's copy of *Clarissa* after she had annotated it, responded to many of her comments, correcting her marginal readings with his own marginal notes. The result is an almost Talmudic array of glosses upon glosses. (Barchas 9)

These "glosses upon glosses" get to the exegetical heart of how critical literary arrangements function, drawing upon themselves interpretation upon interpretation. (Barchas, describing this correspondence written into *Clarissa*'s margins, says that "Some of the exchanges between Lady Bradshaigh and Richardson are so extensive that they surround the printed page with a holograph frame of marginalia" [9].) As I have little doubt, the readers of this dissertation have encountered some of my own readings with doubt and their own counter-interpretations.

Remediations around *Clarissa* complicate an image of Lovelace (and of Clarissa) that was already complicated in Richardson's telling. Even Oliver Goldsmith tried his hand at adapting the wildly successful novel, this time into a much more compact volume titled *The Paths of Virtue Delineated*, which became a success in its own right. Lois Bueler argues that "Eliminating multiple perspectives," as *The Paths of Virtue Delineated* did, "could also temper a troublesome feature of the novel, the unnerving attractiveness of its villain" (*Rewriting* XI). But this temperance, at least so far as the fire scene is concerned, is not always apparent.

Clarissa's remediations make much use of the fire, which weaves its way into these retellings as a turning point. *The Paths of Virtue Delineated* (which reads like a plot summary of *Clarissa* with the occasional added detail) quickly covers Lovelace's plans, and how the fire interrupts them: "They had passed several happy days together, and she having spent the evening with Lovelace, he suffered her to leave him sooner than usual, on her promising not to sit up to write or read, but to retire directly to rest" (Goldsmith 29). Perhaps as a modulation of Richardson's techniques, used to characterize Lovelace (first-person narration, in-the-moment letters to Belford, long passages allowing Lovelace to justify himself), Goldsmith portrays him as altogether more relatable (the circumstances around Clarissa's imprisonment notwithstanding). After admonishing Dorcas for frightening Clarissa, Lovelace embraces Clarissa and tries to comfort her,

> Clarissa already forgot the occasion, dreadful as it was, and burst into the most passionate expressions. She appealed to heaven against his treachery, while he, by the most solemn vows, pleaded his own equal fright, and the reality of the danger that had alarmed them both. She conjured him, in the most solemn and affecting manner, by turns threatening and soothing, to quit her apartment, and permit her to hide herself from the light, and from every human eye. (30)

In Goldsmith's retelling, Clarissa comes across as prudish, if not shrewish, while he plays Lovelace up as honest and concerned about "the *reality* of the danger": "taking all his protestations of this kind, as an indication that he intended to proceed to the last extremity, she would hear nothing that he said" (30). Clarissa's refusal to hear Lovelace now reads like callousness, "*she* would hear nothing that he said." This interpretation is certainly of the model that Richardson found infuriating, one which

portrays Clarissa in any less than the most sympathetic light, and evidences the ways that representational excessiveness propagates into new tellings (new arrangements of elements).

What struck me most about *Clarissa* the first time I read it was the way in which Clarissa herself comes to be framed by those around her, by the great (huge, tremendous) volume of letters that circumscribe her life and present her to us, her readers. Now, when I read *Clarissa*'s remediations, I'm struck, like Louise Curran and Sören Hammerschmidt, that we should "consider Richardson and his texts as the products of configurations of writers, readers, and the publishing industry within the period's media landscapes" (Curran, "Mediation" 124). Peter Sabor points out that "Richardson, after all, never thought of the texts of his novels as stable entities. They were, instead, thoroughly malleable" (148), and it is the malleability of elements within a medium that allow readers the opportunity to insert themselves, to add to the expanding network of an arrangement.

Peter Sabor traces two of these "alternate" endings, which were suggested by Lady Bradshaigh herself[72] and by another of Richardson's correspondents, Lady Echlin. The former's ending supplied the novel with a happy, rather than tragic, end, while Lady Echlin's retained the tragic nature, "concluding with the deaths of both the heroine and Lovelace, but without any assault on the heroine" (Sabor 139). Despite praising Echlin for her "Piety" and "excellent Heart," Richardson retained authority over his ending, primarily by noting character inconsistencies (elements that conflicted with one another in character-arrangements) that he believed Echlin succumbed to:

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[72] Till now I have neglected to mention that Lady Bradshaigh first initiated correspondence with Richardson under the pseudonym "Belfour," "echoing the name of Belford" (Sabor 135).

"Would Belford, he enquires, really have forced himself into the presence of Clarissa and Lovelace at Hampstead when he thought them married?" (Sabor 141; 142). For Richardson, maintaining some kind of internal character logic remains important; for instance, a logic that states the retiring Belford would not presume upon a married couple. "Far from being wounded by Lady Echlin's and Lady Bradshaigh's interventionist responses to *Clarissa*, Richardson welcomed them—to the point of assaying an alternative conclusion of his own" (148)—even for Richardson, his novel (which "grew under his hand" when he intended to trim it [Ross 24]) took on an inspirational life of its own, compelling reinterpretations not only from its readers but from the very man who should have had, supposedly, the most "authority" over it. *Clarissa* proved, and continues to prove, exceedingly excessive, exerting an inescapable pressure on eighteenth-century literature, provoking the creation of new stories and critical examinations—it propagates into new literary arrangements.

CHAPTER 3: VITALITY OF THE THING: SELF-ACTUATING MATTER

> "Grant only that organized matter is endowed with a principle of motion, which alone differentiates it from the inorganic."
>
> Julien Offray de La Mettrie, *Man A Machine* (140)

The literary animal as a category has been the recent subject of intense scrutiny, especially (though hardly exclusively) within eighteenth-century studies. Partly for this reason, and especially because of the animal's tendency to exceed its literary bounds and extend into the nonfictional world, "the animal" forms a particularly valuable avenue along which we can encounter and interrogate the literary arrangement**.** The animal has already appeared in this project, when we examined the *traineau* in Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's *Turkish Embassy Letters* in chapter 1, and the sled, in that context, which remained incomplete without its horse-driving element or its human handlers.

The animal's association with the human is of constant concern to eighteenth-century authors, for good reason: the proximal relation of the animal to humankind undergoes a dramatic flux in the period, including in literature, where the speaking voice of the animal gains pronounced traction among the reading and writing populace. Circulation narratives like *The Biography of a Spaniel* or *The History of Pompey the Little* grow increasingly popular, and novelists like Swift imagine wise races of beings who take the form of horses (*Gulliver's Travels*' Houyhnhnms). Harriet Ritvo, in *The Animal Estate: The English and Other Creatures in the Victorian Age*, notes that "The circumscription of the legal role of animals reflected a fundamental shift in the relationship between humans and their fellow creatures, as a result of which people systematically appropriated power they had previously attributed to animals, and animals became significant primarily as the objects of

human manipulation," (2) and, as Ritvo also shows, as structural metaphors with which humans diagnosed their own society. This shift in status is symptomatic of a larger concern with both the animal and the human, and especially with their physical proximity to one another.

Animal narratives turn out to be important proving grounds for the literary arrangement model, as these narratives repeatedly exert an eerie influence on the outside world (that is, they propagate). As we study the ways that the agencies of literary arrangements propagates both through other texts and through extension into the nonfictional world, animal narratives serve as a rich source for examining this extension and consequent propagation among both texts and reading beings. Wojciech Małecki, et al., in their *Human Minds and Animal Stories: How Narratives Make Us Care About Other Species*, marvel at Anna Sewell's *Black Beauty*'s ability to effect change in the nonfictional world. "Moved by the story of suffering inflicted upon its protagonist by callous humans, its nineteenth-century readers wrote angry letters of protest to newspapers, joined humane societies, and urged their political representatives to implement legal measures banning widespread forms of cruelty toward horses" (1). The authors of this study wonder, somewhat incredulously,[73]

> But why use stories for that purpose [of espousing animal rights]? Aren't there better instruments of persuasion? Wouldn't it be simpler to confront the public with scientific data on the similarities between human and animal suffering… and with arguments that make use of that data to argue that many of our current practices involving animals are morally wrong? (2)

[73] (and somewhat insultingly to literary critics)

Yet the power of narrative to drive sympathy for the animal conditionally demonstrates the ways that animal agencies—specifically as they occur within fiction—extend both across the texts they appear within and propagate outward, driving not only social change but the very way we encounter the supposed divide between the "dirty" town and the "natural" country, our perspective on encounters with the feral beast, and even the ways we love, care for, console, and get angry with our domestic pets.

In this chapter I examine agential animals in *Robinson Crusoe* and another circulation narrative, *The Biography of a Spaniel*. Part of this argument hinges on eighteenth-century thinking about animation—are humans ensouled, or mere animate matter? In Julien Offray de La Mettrie's controversial *L'homme Machine* (*Man A Machine*), La Mettrie denied the existence of the soul and posited that humans were mere machines, made active by an as-yet unknown process. This line between matter and animation is one of the great questions of the period, and animals were the frequent proving ground. For this chapter, literary animals demonstrate animation through the fact of their literariness: by featuring as elements of literary arrangements, these animals are agential through the sheer fact of their propagation, moving across texts and within the nonfictional world.[74]

In addition to animation, the issues of sympathy and pity are hotly contested philosophical categories in the period, with proponents on one side arguing that the

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[74] This sentence suggests a recursiveness to the literary arrangement that I've yet to fully explore. In chapter 2 I make the argument that the representational excessiveness of a literary arrangement produces an agential pressure, which then leads to an arrangement's propagation through new elements. However, propagation itself also produces more of this pressure, driving its own ongoing expansion. (If arrangement A propagates into arrangement B, then arrangement B's propagations, on the one hand, come from the excessiveness of B, *but also* from A's originl propagation into B.)

animal's response to pain is mere mechanism, while others cannot help but note the gross similarities between animal and human suffering. (These arguments are inextricably linked to mechanism's gradual replacement of the concept of the soul that concerns La Mettrie.) And, of course, sympathy is an issue we have at least touched on in passing already in the previous chapter: Richardson intended *Clarissa* to operate upon the reader's sympathetic nerves, so that they would pity and identify with the title character, while feeling revulsion for Lovelace (while many seemed to sympathize with him, as well). Heather Keenlyside notes, in reference to Robinson Crusoe's parrot Poll, that "This is why patently figurative animals like Crusoe's Poll… are so central to any effort to restore animality. In an important sense, animals really are rhetorical figures, as well as living beings. Indeed, they are rhetorical figures because they are living beings" (7). By aligning rhetorical figuration with the material lives of animal beings, Keenleyside insists on both their rhetorical and their material agencies (indeed, rhetoric *is* a material force in that it has material effects on the nonfictional world—just look at *Black Beauty*). The terrified lowing of the cow being taken to slaughter has material effects on the world, if not on *every* person certainly on *some* people.[75] And, because novels also have real effects—the call to join humane societies, write letters, etc.—the agency of animals both fictional and nonfictional begin to seem less and less dissimilar. (Indeed, there is something special about literary animals, especially as we come to consider their excessiveness—somthing

[75] Because I am not a behavioral zoologist, I am not qualified to comment on the effects that one animal's cry has on another animal, except anecdotally; we know, for instance, that gorillas will *sometimes* rescue children that have fallen into their cages, and species that are commonly thought of as antagonistic toward one another will *sometimes* care for their enemy's orphaned, and, conversely, we know that sometimes the orphaned animal's plaintive cry will simply call the predator.

about literary animals force us to consider the matter of their minds, and allows us to imagine them with "more human" voices.) Keenleyside's argument hinges on the idea that a restoration of "animality" also restores the animal within us, who yet remain certain of our separation from the animal world: "It means restoring our own animality, in the sense of either a species identity that could shore up the newly unsettled relationship between myself and humankind, or of the more capacious and creaturely identity that inheres in the relation between the first person and the living body." The animal as literary arrangement bolsters this connection, makes *not* connecting impossible, but rather "raise[s] the inverse possibility: that among the numberless objects with which the globe is covered, animals may not simply be one sort of object among others—they might, instead, be people like me," (Keenleyside 6) or us. Keenleyside's insistence on the actuality, the reality, of the animal, both in literature and the nonfictional world around us, is something I will try to hold onto as this chapter progresses.

Holding onto the features of excessiveness (by which an arrangement extends into new territory) and propagation, *The Biography of a Spaniel* serves as a surprisingly fitting example. *The Biography of a Spaniel*'s remarkable narrative—which begins, of all things, with a parliament of dog-souls on the moon—follows the usual generic conventions of a circulation narrative, including a long peregrination from and return to a benevolent owner, and tracks the spaniel's journey through a variety of tragic circumstances. The titular spaniel's own animation within the text calls into question the primacy of the human character, even while positing a pseudo-religious (if satirical) view of animal souls. And yet *The Biography of a Spaniel* is

more than a three-hundred-and-fifty-year-old novel of idiosyncratic interest: in its day it (and other dog narratives like it) was wildly popular, and *Biography* survives today (has impressed itself) through a very particular set of tropes encountered in contemporary films like *Homeward Bound* or *Lassie*, and novels like Phyllis Reynolds Naylor's *Shiloh*, or Susan Wilson's aptly titled *The Dog Who Saved Me*.

The literary animal arrangement, as it accretes in the eighteenth century, both as response to individualistic and proto-capitalistic novels like *Robinson Crusoe*, and as a commodity itself in circulating it-narratives, operates as a broad literary arrangement that has reverberations across both the culture and the texts of the period, and continues its extension into current works of literature and other media. I begin by interrogating, alongside thinkers like Tobias Menely and Rae Greiner, how sympathy extends from an originating text onto a reader.

Animation and Sympathy

In this subsection, I begin my arguments about the "life" of literary arrangements, especially through the process of self-propagation. To reach that point, however, I first examine eighteenth-century understandings of matter and mind, and interrogate how changes in that understanding make the literary arrangement more apparent, more easily observed, in the eighteenth century.

In the introduction to this chapter, I noted that sympathy for eighteenth-century animals seemed predicated on the suffering animal's plaintive cry. Tobias Menely, in *The Animal Claim: Sensibility and the Creaturely Voice*, argues that Sympathy is the generative responsiveness produced within the human encountering a cry, and he "recovers a discourse in which the human appears—in the self-difference, the nonidentity, of a creature uniquely subject to history's impress—in its responsiveness

to a voice that precedes it." A little earlier, he notes that (unsurprisingly considering this chapter's topic) this voice is "not necessarily human" (15). If Menely is right, and sympathetic responses are indeed tied to the vocative, then the literary arrangement's implementation of sympathy should come as little surprise, considering the proximity the written word has always had to orality. For Rae Greiner, in *Sympathetic Realism in Nineteenth-Century British Fiction*, the eighteenth century developed a "tradition that portrays sympathy as a mental action involving the creation and exchange of *imagined* feeling, a way of sharing attitudes and modes of thought *independent of the need to verify* another's feeling" (4, my emphasis). As I've emphasized in the above quotation, the exchange of emotion between feeler and feelee (so to speak) can be entirely imaginary (this is why Diderot became so obsessed by David Garrick's ability to contort his face into perfect likenesses of numerous emotions, quickly and seemingly mechanically: "'all great copyists of Nature'… can penetrate into nature's truths through observation, imagination, and interpretation: 'It is we who feel; it is they who watch, study, and give us the result'" [Roach 139]) and unpredicated upon the burden of proof: in other words, a non-verifiable sufferer (such as an animal, when we remain trapped in our solipsistic view that only humans can truly suffer) can still inspire true sympathy, and consequently inspire real, radical action in the non-imaginary (read: nonfictional) world.

Contemporary eighteenth-century discourse around the animal focused precisely on whether the suffering animal *deserved* such sympathy, or if they should simply be considered mechanistic, biological automata, indeed, whether they were capable of reason, possessed of a mind. Samuel Johnson was actively in the mechanist

camp, and two anecdotes out of Boswell show that not everyone was (or is) capable of pity when faced with the suffering of an animal.

> I told [Johnson] that I had several time, when in Italy, seen the experiment of placing a scorpion within a circle of burning coals; that it ran round in extreme pain; and finding no way to escape, retired to the centre, and like a true Stoick philosopher, darted its sting into its head, and thus at once freed itself from its woes…. I said, this was a curious fact, as it shewed deliberate suicide in a reptile. (392-93)

Johnson rebuts that the scorpion simply "dies of the heat… that its turning its tail in upon its head is merely a convulsion" (393). Yet this attitude assumes a duality between matter and mind that even in the eighteenth century was eroding, an erosion suggests another reason why the literary arrangement becomes suddenly more viewable in the eighteenth-century: matter itself was beginning to suggest itself as something *productive*, no longer inert, but active.

One heretical scholar in particular, Julien Offray de La Mettrie, would claim that matter and mind are not only not dissimilar, but that one (matter) gives rise to the other (mind). The thrust of La Mettrie's *L'homme Machine*, or *Man A Machine*, is that

> To be a machine, to feel, to think, to know how to distinguish good from bad, as well as blue from yellow, in a word, to be born with an intelligence and a sure moral instinct, and to be but an animal, are… characters which are no more contradictory, than to be an ape or a parrot and to be able to give oneself pleasure…. I believe that thought is so little incompatible with organized matter, that it seems to be one of its properties (143)

What La Mettrie here claims is that, to him, “thought” seems not only indistinguishable from matter, so intricately are they linked, but that *all* organized matter must by necessity contain within it something of thinking. For La Mettrie, the division between thought[76] and matter is utterly null: one is the prerequisite of the other.

Refracted through the lens of animal characters and actors, the eighteenth-century obsession with the mechanical functionality of life seems more and more understandable. As we encounter the agency of animals and things (all supposedly soulless beings) so do radical eighteenth-century thinkers, like La Mettrie, begin to see the human as part of the same spectrum. Like Jane Bennet’s argument in *Vibrant Matter*, La Mettrie’s emphasis on self-actuating parts posits an agency inherent in *matter*, not just the human.[77] Even were we to accept the idea that animals are unthinking, purely material, to deny their agency would be inane. Sometimes a dog bites the hand of its owner, and sometimes it does not. The resemblance between La Mettrie’s thinking here, in 1748, and Eduardo Kohn’s interest in form’s self-propagation, is unusually apt. Organized matter not only replicates itself, as Kohn argues, but (as in La Mettrie’s concern with the human’s own formal qualities qua material) seems—not imbued—to naturally contain the quality of thinking.[78]

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[76] I have tried to parse whether by “thought” La Mettrie is more interested in sentience, the awareness of one’s own self, or sapience, the ability to reason. In this particular passage he seems to be talking about sentience, but in other passages he seems to refer to sapience.

[77] Amanda Goldstein’s work on *De Rerum Natura*’s influence to Romantic thought (in *Sweet Science: Romantic Materialism and the New Logics of Life*) is an important touchstone for me here.

[78] Historically minded readers may argue that nearly fifty years pass between the publication of *L’homme Machine* (1748) and *Life of Johnson* (1791), and Johnson doesn’t seem to have taken La Mettrie’s thinking to heart. This is true, and we should be careful to situate La Mettrie in the context that many viewed him: a heretic with out-there notions about the mechanization of biological systems. Nevertheless, his arguments are important to hold onto as an early signal of how many in the scientific community will later come to

Frederic the Great eulogizes La Mettrie as an outside thinker who nevertheless dogeared changing times, stating that "any other scholar would have adopted the opinions of his teacher but that was not enough for young La Mettrie," who learned that "if he wished to live in peace, it was better to translate than to compose," and who nevertheless "believed that he could clearly see that thought is but a consequence of the organization of the machine… he found only mechanism where others had supposed an essence superior to matter" (La Mettrie 3, 5, 6). By refuting the traditional concern with the "soul" of humankind, La Mettrie proposes a radical correspondence between the human and other material beings, including (but not, in my estimation, limited to) the animal.

Thus we see that the eighteenth century's growing concern with the forces productive of life, with questions about life's very constituents, demonstrates another reason why literary arrangements proliferate through the period so plainly. This chapter especially (along with chapter two's interest in historicizing texts into their original media) is deeply concerned with materiality, in a specifically Marxist sense. Matter *acts* because it exists, and the animal qua literary arrangement, I argue, exists both on the page and beyond it (in readers, in criticism, in the continuing trope, et al.). If matter acts and represents, if the literary arrangement acts agentially, perhaps it thinks as well.

Yet there is a difference between the capacity for thought and "intelligence." For La Mettrie, intelligence is defined by the ability to identify chains of relation and association:

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describe the human organism.

> But if the brain is at the same time well organized and well educated, it is a fertile soil, well sown, that brings forth a hundredfold what it has received: or… the imagination, raised by art to the rare and beautiful dignity of genius, apprehends exactly all the relations of the ideas it has conceived, and takes in easily an astounding number of objects, in order to deduce from them a long chain of consequences, which are again but new relations…. Such is, I think, the generation of intelligence. (110)

For La Mettrie, intelligence is inherently networked, drawing relations and connections between possibilities and ideas. (Literary arrangements may, then, be something like an "intelligence network," demonstrating intelligence and decision-making *because* they are, at their hearts, networks.) La Mettrie gleans that all things are bound together in webs of cause and effect, many of these untraceable, try as hard as we may:

> Why then would it be absurd to think that there are physical causes by reason of which everything has been made, and to which the whole chain of this vast universe is so necessarily bound and held that nothing which happens, could have failed to happen, —causes, of which we are so invincibly ignorant that we have had resource to a God (125)

La Mettrie's universe is still a clockwork universe—"so necessarily bound and held that nothing which happens, could have failed to happen"—but it is a clock that has no origin and no end, and which is too complex to accurately ascribe any one effect to any one cause (all La Mettre is lacking here is the language of the Butterfly Effect and Stephen Hawking's Big Bang). David Hume has this to say on the issue of choice-

making: “the judgment may be compared to a clock or watch, where the most ordinary machine is sufficient to tell the hours; but the most elaborate alone can point out the minutes and seconds, and distinguish the smallest differences of time” (Hume 7). There is, despite continuing rhetoric on the soul, a throughline in the eighteenth century of “mind” tied to mechanism, an agency imbued in matter.

La Mettrie places all his emphasis on the production and continuation of life through material—and, specifically, materially networked—processes. (“The soul is therefore but an empty word, of which no one has any idea, and which an enlightened man should use only to signify the part in us that thinks” [La Mettrie 128].) La Mettrie’s trust in the material not only signals an important turn in eighteenth-century scientific discourse, it also makes the claim that *material thinks*; stripping the soul from the machine of the body, perhaps unwittingly, suggests that thinking life may be found (and be just as *vital*) outside the human.

Here, La Mettrie’s arguments presage Eduardo Kohn’s primary interlocutor, C. S. Peirce. Peirce claims that even “protoplasm,” the most primordial mixture of base chemicals, possesses a kind of mind. “Protoplasm certainly does feel; and unless we are to accept a weak dualism, the property must be shown to arise from some peculiarity of the mechanical system” (“Man’s” 347). Further, and perhaps most surprisingly, “all mind is directly or indirectly connected with all matter, and acts in a more or less regular way…. It would be a mistake to conceive of the psychical and the physical aspects of matter as two aspects absolutely distinct. Viewing a thing from the outside, considering its relations of action and reaction with other things, it appears as matter. Viewing it from the inside, looking at its immediate character as feeling, it

appears as consciousness" (349). Crucially, for Peirce, the only distinction in matter/mind is whether we view a thing from the inside or from the outside (what I'm largely arguing for is a willingness to view literary arrangements *from the inside*, where we can observe an intentional acting on their part).

La Mettrie's answer to the question of just *how* material thinks (notably not too dissimilar from Peirce) is decidedly, explicitly formal, in the sense that how a thing thinks arises from how a thing is formed.

> If now any one ask me where is this innate force in our bodies, I answer that it very clearly resides… in the very substance of the organs not including the veins, the arteries, the nerves, in a word, that it resides in the organization of the whole body, and that consequently each organ contains within itself forces more or less active according to the need of them. (La Mettrie 131).

If thought arises from form, but specific and idiosyncratic ways according to that form, then relationality, too, the ability to effect change on another thinking creature, arises out of the interplay between two formal elements.

But why is thought necessary to the production of sympathy? Or is rationality a prior first step mandatory to the acquisition of either "true" or "valid" suffering or emotion? (To put these in terms closer to Peirce's, how do we observers look to the "inside" of something?) Indeed, to drive this point uncomfortably home, La Mettrie asks, "What was man before the invention of words and the knowledge of language? *An animal* of his own species with much less instinct than the others" (103, my emphasis). Menely notes that "Determining the range of creatures we will communicate with is a political question, perhaps the political question" (Menely 219,

e.n. 23 citing John Durham Peters), and here La Mettrie notes that the distance between the human and the animal is increasingly slight, that, indeed, the primary distinction between the two is humankind's use and abuse of the linguistic faculty, whereas animals subsist without. For La Mettrie, the difference between the animal and the human is not even the use of language, but rather the particular organization of the human body which provides for our use of language (a line of thinking not dissuaded by current scientific trends, which suggest that the reason we cannot speak with certain simians or aquatic mammals is not a lack of rational thought on their part, but rather a significant alterity between each species' communicative biology). To put this another way, humans are only different from animals in that humans are organized in such a way that creates language, as distinct from thinking, which, it seems, any "organized matter" is capable of.

This long excursion into La Mettrie's (admittedly) controversial mechanistic thinking isn't to cite him as a literary theorist in our examinations of literary arrangements, but rather as an example of how the eighteenth century witnessed a shift in its understanding of both matter and mind. For someone like Samuel Johnson, a strict dualist, the animal was purely mechanical, the human something combinatory. For La Mettrie, however, matter's *production of* mind renders the dualism incoherent. (And, if I can make something of a cheeky observation, La Mettrie's mechanical thinking itself represents a kind of literary-philosophical arrangement that extends through Peirce, Kohn, and the present text.) Literary arrangements, in my thinking, are not only decidedly material but also evidence this space of "insideness" that concerned Peirce, and, especially through the fact of their propagation, even come to seem alive.

The largest obstacle to considering literary arrangements "alive" may be that they rarely seem to respond to external stimuli, whereas "Animals," even without the linguistic faculty, nevertheless often seem to "address us and may, in turn, be addressed" (Menely 27). And yet we are in a constant process of responding to the literary arrangement, anytime we engage with a text. (And this is another reason why the animal is a fruitful example of the literary arrangement—we feel sympathy for a suffering literary animal, a la *Black Beauty*, and react in response to it.) As Rae Greiner argues about the processes of sympathy,

> historical thinking re-creates without copying its object, the "act of thought" motivating historical actors, through what we have identified as a sympathetic form of imagining. One thinks not merely *of what* others thought but *as* they thought. Moreover, their ways of thinking are the object pursued because, unlike events (which are dead and gone), these are already representational and for that reason can be renewed in living minds. (56)

Here Greiner claims that sympathy, and sympathetic thinking, requires that the sympathizer attempt in some way to inhabit the other figure (in La Mettrie's terms, one form imagines itself as another form, or, in Peirce's terms, the observer examines "the inside" of the object), whether, as in many of our examples, that other figure is a suffering animal, or if that figure is a historical arrangement located in a literary environment, from which one can begin to expand upon the workings and interweavings of former creators and creations. As Menely also notes, in a turn that seems especially connotative of La Mettrie's thinking, "the linguistic sign turns out to be one of those mysterious ontological intersections, resistant to dualistic explanation,

where the rational soul penetrates and controls physical matter" (26). While La Mettrie would of course object to the language of the soul here, the visualization of an "ontological intersection" is especially connotative, as it implies both the visual metaphor of the literary arrangement as networked or constellated elements (or of a manifold), and La Mettrie's conception of rational thought as springing from an organization of the body.

Organization is, as a category, shared between both animals and humans, but also between biological beings and literary ones: we have long taught and examined the organizational principles behind literary texts, and behind representation itself. Menely, glossing Aristotle, notes that "It is not that in Aristotle's analysis of meaning there is no difference between animal voice and human speech, signs and symbols… but that these phenomena meet at a point of semiotic indistinguishability" (Menely 25). In this case, in the aporia that Menely has identified where animal and human "signs and symbols" intersect, we can see again that the textual implementation of representation is in itself largely indistinguishable, lacking only in the ability to *respond* to immediate stimuli (that being said, we must allow for the fact that literary beings exist in a different temporal mode than do all currently known biological organisms—what I have called "seriality" in chapter 1—and that they certainly do respond to cultural changes and shifting attitudes, simply over a longer timescale than day-to-day human or animal communication).

The somewhat recursive arguments I am making here are largely intentional: the literary arrangement looks like the literary animal precisely because literary animals are often the central nodes of their arrangements, and simultaneously elements

in other arrangements, rhizomatically, depending on where the critic chooses to locate the rhizome's center. Animal literary arrangements are highly agential (overagential?) in that the creaturely call incites the human participant to intercede in some form or another, an intercession that sometimes occurs intra-text (as we shall see in *The Biography of a Spaniel*, or *Robinson Crusoe* to a lesser extent) and sometimes extra-text, as in the case of Sewell's *Black Beauty*.

> To be addressed by a voice—and, as we will see, particularly an animal voice—is to be placed in what Derrida regards as the exemplary situation of ethics: to experience *an injunction in the interruption of the very categories (self, human) that stabilize identity*, to experience a claim irreducible to any categorical imperative, to be confronted with a decision for which there is no rule to follow. (Menely 39, my emphasis)

The destabilizing force of the address decenters the literary arrangement's seemingly fixed center: when the human subject of a text (say, Robinson Crusoe) experiences the animal's injunction, the reader or critic is suddenly confounded by the radical experience of *another center*, one that lacks the very comfortable and familiar adjective "human"—we are drawn *inside* a new, perhaps unexpected, arrangement. Jacques Rancière might call these formations "distributions of the sensible"—"the system of self-evident facts of sense perception that simultaneously discloses the existence of something in common and the delimitations that define the respective parts and positions within it" (7). In other words, recognizing a distribution of the sensible involves recognizing both a self-evident organization of terms (A, B, C…)

while nevertheless recognizing its exclusions (α, β, γ…).[79] Like Barad's phenomena, which is careful to attend to the observer within the structuring of the phenomena, the distribution of the sensible "Occasionally translated as the 'partition of the sensible', *le partage du sensible* refers to the implicit law governing the sensible order that parcels out places and forms of participation in a common world by first establishing the modes of perception within which these are inscribed…. Strictly speaking, 'distribution' therefore refers both to forms of inclusion and to forms of exclusion" (Rancière 89). (Elsewhere, in an appendix, Rockhill defines the police as "first and foremost an organization of 'bodies' based on a communal **distribution of the sensible**, i.e. a system of coordinates defining modes of being, doing, making, and communicating that establishes the borders between the visible and the invisible, the audible and the inaudible, the sayable and the unsayable" [Rancière 93, bolded in original]. I invoke these definitions in relation to the literary arrangement in order to try and better understand the political implications of how elements draw towards and push away from one another, as we will see in *Robinson Crusoe*.) Rancière uses his distribution of the sensible to identify several "regimes" of aesthetics, and studies these systems of inclusion and exclusion in relation to politics. The distributions themselves become objects of study as institutions of power find themselves decentered by (proletariat-like) margins ("the disturbance of the **police**… by the **subjectivization** of those who have no part in it" [89, bolded in original]).

[79] Gabriel Rockhill, in his introduction to Jacques Rancière's *The Politics of the Aesthetic*, calls "the distribution of the sensible… the system of divisions and boundaries that define, among other things, what is visible and audible within a particular aesthetico-political regime" (Rancière xii).

A text like *Robinson Crusoe* would seem to hold animal *subjects* in its list of exclusions, but as we shall soon see, the decentering power of the animal address forces us to recognize other subjects of examination beyond the king on his little island. As Slavoj Žižek says, “As Rancière emphasizes against Habermas, political struggle proper is therefore not a rational debate between multiple interests, but, simultaneously, the struggle for one’s voice to be *heard and recognized as the voice of a legitimate partner*” (66).

The political injunction on Rancière’s part is “to consider aesthetic acts as configurations of experience that create new modes of sense perception and induce novel forms of political subjectivity” (Rancière 3). “Novel forms of political subjectivity” is precisely the aim not only of this chapter but of this dissertation more broadly, to conceive of many different forms of life than our own, extending to the animal, but also to recognize forms of agency that inhere within literary arrangements and within representation, and representing media, itself.

The political, too, drives the work of Małecki, et al., in their work *Human Minds and Animal Stories: How Narratives Make Us Care About Other Species*. They acknowledge that they arrive at the question of how animal narratives influence humans through animal rights, but their somewhat remarkable study (one component of which was hiring a popular Polish author, Marek Krajewski, who wrote a novel with a carefully designed animal narrative meant to produce an affective and political response within the reader, and whose responses they tracked on a notably large scale through the use of social media questionnaires [13 ff.]) nevertheless yields results (that are, perhaps, unsurprising if not gratifying for literary scholars): “By saying that

animal narratives can be widely used for improving attitudes toward animal welfare we also mean that, according to our data, they appear to work in a broad range of contexts and settings…. they can be effective in almost any circumstances in which someone might freely choose to read a narrative" (Małecki 154). Something about the novels and narratives studied by the group "not only exerted an *emotional pressure* that went against many readers' *exclusivist* intuitions, but simultaneously provoked them to lower their ideological guard, so to speak" (Małecki 8, my emphases). While some of these conclusions may seem self-evident to literary scholars, who (with some regularity) see lives change (including their own) in response to a piece of literature, the confirmation that narrative nevertheless has a wide-ranging impact on a reading populace fits with the model of literary arrangements, in which an arrangement spreads to new ground, propagates, and influences new and ongoing communities. (To hearken back to Rancière, briefly, we could say that literary-animal arrangements disturb the easy distribution of the sensible some of us would maybe prefer, one that acknowledges human, but not animal, suffering, agency.)

And, perhaps sadly, Małecki notes that "Consistent with our hypothesis, and the extended fear motivation theory, the story which had the greatest positive attitudinal impact was… the one that depicted cruelty most explicitly" (141). While this is a disturbing fact it is probably not all that surprising, and would not have been so to eighteenth-century thinkers. Jeremy Bentham's flattening, yet nevertheless apt, question still holds true: "The question is not, Can they *reason*? nor, Can they *talk*? but, Can they *suffer*?" (Menely 41, citing Bentham). If we recall that sympathy seems

most motivated by the suffering of another creature, then the ability of an animal narrative to influence a reader may well be tied to its depiction of cruelty.

And cruelty is a common subject of eighteenth-century texts, from *Robinson Crusoe* to *The Biography of a Spaniel*. On the final page of their study, Małecki, et al., note "the one final general truth about investigations… which is this, that every investigation always points to new cases that need to be solved" (156). (Their investigations represent, in other words, a *lack* that suggests a prime *excessiveness.*) We now turn back to *Robinson Crusoe* to examine that novel's treatment of its animals, especially the bear-baiting scene, and the ways in which it binds up the character of Friday into the same discourse.

Friday and the Bear

Here, in my return to *Robinson Crusoe*, I argue that the animal-literary arrangement destabilizes the individualistic/monarchical/proto-capitalist protagonist of the novel, providing us an alternative "center" to the discourse of the novel. The animal, to put this another way, pulls elements away from Crusoe that he would dominate into new "distributions of the sensible" (to use Rancière's term). I use the animal-literary arrangement as an in-road to the character of Friday, who ultimately remains bound up by the novel's structure.

While *Robinson Crusoe* has proved an important theoretical locus for thing theory (even, in some sense, Walter Benjamin's aura), elsewhere the novel is fully populated by animals: the bear-baiting scene, goats on Crusoe's libertarianly plentiful island, and the dogs who arrive on the island with Crusoe only to die in the span of a throwaway clause. *Crusoe* remains resolutely anti-animate; or, if there is animism in his world, it exists only for the benefit of man: "That all the good Things of this

World, are no farther good to us, than they are for our Use" (94). Animals in Crusoe's world exist for (specifically) men, and their deaths are cause for little concern. However, by way of one example, what pressure does the bear-baiting scene exert on the rest of the novel? When Friday confronts the bear, the two figures seem capable of at least some sort of communication: "when [Friday] sees him stand still, he calls out to him again, as if he had suppos'd the Bear could speak *English*… and the Bear, just as if he had understood what he said, did come a little further" (213). So even here, in a scene that hallmarks Crusoe's indifference to the death of animals, even when the only "use" their death provides is entertainment, we get flashes of mutual representation, suggesting something beyond the flat signifier of "Bear."

For Robinson Crusoe, the human soul and the soulless animal seem distinct, but Alex Mackintosh notes that the consumption of animals in *Robinson Crusoe* suggests a spectrum along which humans and animals both lie: "The eating of animals—which have often been named and individualised by Crusoe—is presented as having potentially cannibalistic overtones, as is the colonial violence that Crusoe unleashes" (24). It is hard to tell if anything is self-moving in *Robinson Crusoe* other than Crusoe himself, but the appearance, and his treatment, of animals over the course of the novel troubles the apparent use-dominance of humanity over animals (or sovereigns over their subjects).[80]

In the latter part of *Robinson Crusoe*, after he has returned to Europe and is now touring, Crusoe, his party, and Friday have a series of encounters with violent

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[80] Other questions about *Robinson Crusoe* are less solidly formed (what agency do the goats contain, beyond food for Crusoe?), but I hope that close reading some of these animals with the same care and attention that Crusoe himself has so long received will demonstrate their animalistic, if marginalized, capacities for action.

animals that ends in a famous scene wherein Friday toys with, and finally kills, a bear. Crusoe's party, preparing to cross a mountainous pass from Spain to France, are first warned by a prospective guide that "he would undertake to carry us the same Way with Hazard from the Snow, provided we were armed sufficiently to protect our selves from wild Beasts; for he said, upon these great Snows, it was frequent for some Wolves to show themselves at the Foot of the Mountains, being made ravenous for Want of Food, the Ground being covered with Snow" (209). The encounter with the bear is preceded by discussion (and eventually a battle with) wolves, which seem imminently more dangerous to the human characters. Yet despite the danger the natural world presents, Crusoe and company seem flippant about the prospect "We told [our guide], we were well enough prepar'd for such Creatures as they were, if he would ensure us from a Kind of two-legged Wolves, which we were told, we were in most Danger from, especially on the *French* Side of the Mountain" (209-10). This flippancy (and nationalistic banter) bespeaks the overwhelming confidence that Crusoe now holds when it comes to the non-human elements of life: he was king of an island; what other terrors could the world hold after he has faced and bested cannibals? Yet the coming experience proves almost more than Crusoe is ready for, in a great general confusion of humans and (multiple) beasts.

> It was about two Hours before Night, when our Guide being something before us, and not just in Sight, out rushed three monstrous Wolves, and after them a Bear, out of a hollow Way, adjoyning to a thick Wood; two of the Wolves flew upon the Guide, and had he been half a Mile before us, he had been devour'd indeed, before we could have help'd him: One of them fastned upon his Horse,

> and the other attack'd the Man with that Violence, that he had not Time, or not Presence of Mind enough to draw his Pistol, but hollow'd and cry'd out to us most lustily; (210)

Crusoe sends Friday up to investigate what the matter is, and Friday, "like a bold Fellow, rode directly up to the poor Man, and with his Pistol shot the Wolf that attack'd him into the Head" (210). Before looking at the characterization of Friday in this passage, it's worthwhile to acknowledge the multiplicity of animals here, in nearly as diverse an arrangement as they were present on the island—an arrangement accompanied by a host of preconceived notions about both the "natural" and "human" worlds. The wolves are followed by a bear—though its relationship to the wolves (had it been chasing them? Why is it out in the middle of winter?) is unclear. After the wolves and the bear, we have not the horse, but the guide who is attacked, whose cry of panic (not unlike a suffering animal) draws his companions—specifically Friday—to his aid. How are we meant to read the arrangement of animals in this battle? The wolves carry the valence of monsters ("monstrous Wolves"), while the bear, as Heather Keenleyside will point out, instead more resembles the men who eventually kill it. So while we have an unclear picture of the relationship between the bear and the wolves, the overall impression is that we have a united front, a collective force of nature setting upon the company of "civilized" men astride their horses, and it is no accident that it is the most "uncivilized" among them, the islander Friday, who saves both the guide and ultimately executes the bear.

Crusoe's use of "Fellow" in the quote above suggests the connective tissue that binds Friday to Crusoe. In the *Oxford English Dictionary*, most of the definitions for

the noun usage of "Fellow" describe connections or relations: "I. A partner, companion, or peer of another specified person." The second definition concerns certain members in academic circles, and the third definition reads simply "III. A man, a male person, and related senses" ("Fellow"). Yet while Crusoe seems to be praising Friday here (once again merely as a companion, or possibly merely as a male), "like a bold Fellow," the simile he draws simultaneously undercuts that aim. Friday is "*like*" a bold fellow rather than *being* one, and will never be fully welcome into that party of men. (Friday's racialized speech will drive this point home further later in this scene, when he begins baiting the bear for the company's amusement.) The use of "Fellow" here also links *backward* to Crusoe's discovery of another wreck, when he "never felt so earnest, so strong a Desire after the Society of my Fellow-Creatures, or so deep a Regret at the want of it" (136). In this line, fellowship, too, is located along the creature-human axis, so that Friday's only possible approach to Crusoe's position is when Crusoe relegates himself to creaturely status, as well—Crusoe forces Friday into the animal arrangement, or at least into a kind of mediating node between the divided (in Crusoe's patriarchal formations) human and animal arrangements.

But first Friday takes to the bear, creating an amusement for Crusoe and his company, "the greatest Diversion imaginable":

> never was a Fight manag'd so hardily, and in such a surprizing Manner, as that which follow'd between *Friday* and the Bear, which gave us all (though at first we were surpriz'd and afraid for him) the greatest Diversion imaginable. As the Bear is a heavy, clumsey Creature, and does not gallop as the Wolf does, who is swift, and light; so he has two particular Qualities, which generally are

> the Rule of his Actions; First, As to Men, who are not his proper Prey; I say, not his proper Prey; because tho' I cannot say what excessive Hunger might do, which was now their Case, the Ground being all cover'd with Snow; but as to Men, he does not usually attempt them, unless they first attack him: On the contrary, if you meet him in the Woods, if you don't meddle with him, he won't meddle with you; but then you must take care to be very Civil to him, and give him the Road; for he is a very nice Gentleman… for sometimes if you stop, and stand still, and look steadily at him, he takes it for an Affront…if he be once affronted, he will never leave you, Night or Day, till he has his revenge; but follows at a good round rate, till he overtakes you. (211)

In this passage, Crusoe demonstrates, once again, his mastery of nature, this indicated by his knowledge of the ways of the bear, now placed over against both the wolves (whose former monstrosity makes the bear a more sympathetic figure) and the human (who are "not his proper Prey," and who, if they "don't meddle with him, he won't meddle with them," suggesting a creature of greater rationality) as points of comparison. These are not the only correlations made between the bear and other animals: "The Bear soon came to the Tree, and we follow'd at a Distance; the first Thing he did, he stopp'd at the Gun, smelt to it, but let it lye, and up he scrambles into the Tree, climbing like a Cat, though so monstrously heavy" (212-13); the bear, in its connections to other non-human creatures, signifies a node in a greater literary arrangement of animals-in-general. Once again the language of monstrosity is invoked in relation to an animal from nature, though this time in reference to a physical attribute rather than a general temperament, and now we find that bears are not only in

a closer relation to the human by some form of rationality and set up sympathetically distinct from the wolves, but it is also capable of climbing trees "like a Cat," in other words, like a domestic animal kept and cared for by people (the practice of keeping and caring for pets changes greatly in the nineteenth century, as the practice becomes much more popular, but the correlation still stands). Further, we know that for Crusoe the cat is an eerily humane creature: shortly after wrecking, "I found no sign of any Visitor, only there sat a Creature like a wild Cat upon one of the Chests… she sat very compos'd, and unconcern'd, and look'd full in my Face, as if she had a Mind to be acquainted with me" (41). This visitation rears up as a surprise, not unlike the appearance of the footprint, and he shares "a Bit of Bisket" with it before it dances away. But its calm repose, and the sudden revelation that Crusoe is not really *alone* on the island, continues the suggestion that the bear's proximity to the human is indeed a troubling sort of decentering of the novel's interest in Crusoe as the sole focal point.

Crusoe and his riding companions wish to kill the bear outright, but Friday has a better idea: "when *Friday* saw him, it was easy to see Joy and Courage in the Fellow's Countenance; *O! O!* Says *Friday*, three Times, pointing to him; O Master! *You give me te Leave! Me shakee te Hand with him: Me make you good laugh*." Friday's language emphasizes his subservience to Crusoe, with his actions predicated on Crusoe's delight. "*Eatee me up!* Says *Friday*, twice over again; *Me eatee him up: Me make you good laugh*" (212). Friday wishes to make Crusoe and his companions laugh, at the expense of his own safety. He begins by initiating a call to the bear, "as if the Bear could understand him; *Hark ye, hark ye*, says Friday, *me speakee wit you*" (212). And shortly thereafter Crusoe repeats the formulation, when Friday sees it

"stand still, he calls out to him again, as if he had suppos'd the Bear could speak *English*" (213). Heather Keenleyside tracks this exchange of calls, wherein the bear's proximity to the (English-speaking) human grows more and more apparent.

> For Friday, the notion of eating up a bear seems equally to imply throwing stones, shooting a gun, and speaking. He begins with speech… [then] continues the conversation by shifting from speech to stones… and back to speech.... The exchange continues, bringing speech and action together in a series of responses…. Friday might imagine that by shooting the bear, he could extract himself from creaturely conversation and acquire the status of a sovereign human subject. But by the end of the novel, this status has been utterly undone. In this closing scene, then, Friday is repeatedly figured as the bear himself, dancing for Crusoe and the company. (87-88)

Friday taunts the bear, climbs a tree with it, and eventually shoots it through the head. As Crusoe then says, "This was indeed a great Diversion to us"; this is an "us" that excludes Friday in favor of Crusoe's new European crew (214). It's difficult to tell if Crusoe diminishes Friday as a fellow human, or is simply incapable of finding a human beneath Friday's skin: "never Man had a more faithful, loving, sincere Servant, than *Friday* was to me; without Passions, Sullenness or Designs, perfectly oblig'd and engag'd; his very Affections were ty'd to me… and I dare say, he would have sacrific'd his life for the saving of mine" (151). Friday is passionless, apparently desireless, and seems composed of a single affect: loyalty.

Friday's discursive predication on Crusoe's whim nullifies desire's individualistic, subjective component in the agent, Friday. Friday says, "*so we kill*

Bear in my Country," further distancing his action from himself, aligning the bear baiting with (a supposedly amusing) cultural distinction rather than personal agency. Indeed, the fact that bear-baiting should have been a familiar cultural pastime to Crusoe and his companions, while it would be very unlikely for bears to be anywhere near Friday's home islands, further suggests the strange in-betweenness that Friday fulfills in this moment. David Fausett takes note of this tension, between culture and individual, which appears throughout castaway literature: "Marooning has been variously interpreted as a religious, an economic or a psychological phenomenon, but is ultimately none of these things. It gathers together all aspects of the general problem of reconciling individual and communal goals." The marooning literary arrangement, in other words, forms a confluence of social and individual issues, so it is only natural that, in a novel like *Robinson Crusoe*, the animal arrangement is drawn into the field of the social human. We further see this gathering around Robinson Crusoe through semiotic referents: Friday's language acquisition, "footprints, writing materials or parrot are all signs that point, beyond their immediate referent, to the signifying activity itself and, beyond that, to the community that exchanges signs" (Fausett 172). The character Robinson Crusoe (the literary arrangement we *call* Crusoe), then, takes up the space of an entire community via a kind of capitalist acquisitiveness—"gathering"—that replicates a hegemonic monarchical structure.

While *Robinson Crusoe*, in the early eighteenth century, suggests the hegemonic ideology privileging the individual (human) over the communal (animal), as the eighteenth century progresses other trends re-orient subjectivity in relation to the multiple, creating a discourse that pushes against the dominant forces of the

colonial cult of the individual. This turn toward multiplicity reflects a growing self-awareness of networked selves, selves who become the nodes within larger configurations of arrangements. The logic of *Robinson Crusoe* would push against this new form of relationality to continue privileging the individual or the monarch, but other texts continue to bend toward multiplicity.

Kant's *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, which appears (in German) in 1790 (Kant xiii), bridges the gap between Kant's first two critiques, those of experience (or understanding) and reason:

> in the family of the higher faculties of cognition there is still an intermediary between the understanding and reason. This is the power of judgment, about which one has cause to presume… that it too should contain in itself *a priori*, if not exactly its own legislation, then still a proper principle of its own for seeking laws, although a merely subjective one. (64)

The third *Critique* aligns understanding and reason through a mediating faculty of pleasure, rooted in the body's senses, and by locating a "subjectively universal validity" in each individual, within which one's belief attempts to locate another's personal judgment of taste (Kant 100). ("*I* believe that *you* will like this painting.")

By routing the fields of understanding and reason through aesthetic pleasure, Kant sets up a field wherein multiple subjectivities can play for priority, via the universal agreement any individual subject can claim to make toward an aesthetic object. There is, thus, a social drive to the experience of beauty, which Kant's translator, Paul Guyer, calls "intersubjective validity," (xvii) a term that corresponds with the general social expansiveness of eighteenth-century conceptions of Taste. The

expectation that another subject will agree with my judgment *presupposes my belief in another's constitution as subject*. This "Copernican revolution in philosophy" (T. Brown 106) reorients the twinned aspects of agency and subjectivity from the solipsistic self of *cogito ergo sum* into the multiplying statement *cogito quod cogitas*—I think that you think.

Intersubjectivity serves as an excellent model of the literary arrangement, in that it posits a complicated multiplicitous field of actors vibrating against one another. Further, Menely extrapolates from the third *Critique* an argument for the intersubjectivity not only of human subjects, but human *and animal* subjectivities:

> [Imagination] is the cognitive faculty, shared by humans and animals, that mediates through time between sense impressions and internal images or between images and ideas. Imagination enables a living being to perceive meaningful information in an environment, to compare experiences, and to transform information and experience into purposeful activity, including communication. To apprehend meaning in a vocal sign, then, is to recognize the one who emits it as a sensing, imagining being—as an interpreter and creator of signs. (Menely 24)

This recognition is at the heart of intersubjective thinking—a "vocal sign" most easily recognized through the sympathetic cry.

None of this is to say that Kantian aesthetics *creates* or invents this new field of subjectivities, but that the third *Critique* had a major impact on "the West's" reception of these subjectivities—universal judgment of taste suggests an opening into which alterity can flow, adapt to its new surroundings, and even change those

surroundings. Tony Brown notes that, after an insular, delayed response, Europe's increasing association with the East "plays a critical role in challenging the authority of European thought similar to the role played by the Americas and the South Seas. [China's] five-thousand-year-old tradition of written records, for example, challenged the dominant European understanding of world history, namely the biblical chronology" (xiii)—this challenge to European authority is taken up by Kant, who, despite employing racist and colonial examples, developed a philosophy that would (eventually) find in servants, slaves, people of color, women, the LGBTQ community—and animals—an intersubjectivity which acknowledges multiplicities just as demanding of equal recognition as that of hegemonic society—what Brown calls "a breach in anthropological security" (xvi). By distorting white Europe's vaunting of itself, Kantian aesthetics exerts pressure on hegemonic agendas, agendas which find themselves gripped by ever-pluralizing subjectivities jostling for acknowledgment.[81]

Kantian ethics represents subjectivity by positing the feeling of the universal, which, by extension, suggests that a subjugated people can possess a belief in their own taste to the point that they foresee equaling and outstretching the moral bounds of their masters. (A destabilization of a prior distribution of the sensible, or a plenitude of elements that draw an arrangement into a new configuration.) *Robinson Crusoe* attempts to disallow this notion:

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[81] Following along Kant's destabilizing project, Jacques Rancière argues that "equality only generates politics when it is implemented in the specific form of a particular case of dissensus" (48-49). Similar to Kant's universal validity, or agreement, Rancière's negative formation suggests the agency produced by desire, even if that desire is unknowable to the author.

> My island was now peopled, and I thought my self very rich in Subjects; and it was a merry Reflection which I frequently made, How like a King I look'd. First of all, the whole Country was my own meer Property; so that I had an undoubted Right of Dominion. *2dly*, My People were perfectly subjected: I was absolute Lord and Lawgiver; they all owed their Lives to me, and were ready to lay down their Lives, *if there had been Occasion of it*, for me. It was remarkable too, we had but three Subjects, and they were of three different Religions…. However, I allow'd Liberty of Conscience throughout my Dominions (174).

By positioning himself as conqueror, Crusoe obviates Friday's own subjectivity. "[M]y Man Friday accompanying me very honestly," Crusoe says, "through all these Ramblings, and proving a most faithful Servant upon all Occasions" (201). As Crusoe's servant, (and through Crusoe's first-person control of the narrative) any distinguishing thought or opinion on Friday's part is precluded at the outset, overwhelmed by the novel's structure.

And yet, just as Crusoe is destabilized by his encounter with the footprint, the novel's intense focus on Crusoe is destabilized and decentered by the intersubjective pressure animal beings exert on the protagonist. Crusoe first decides that he wants to capture a parrot in order to speak to it:

> I saw Abundance of Parrots, and fain I would have caught one, if possible to have kept it to be tame, and taught it to speak to me. I did, after some Pains taking, catch a young Parrot, for I knock'd it down with a Stick, and having recover'd it, I brought it home; but it was some Years before I could make him

> speak: However, at last I taught him to call me by my Name very familiarly. (80)

The pages around Crusoe's capture of the parrot (which he eventually names Poll) proliferate with animals, most of which come to serve as food sources for Crusoe: "I had no Need to be venturous, for I had no Want of Food… especially these three Sorts, *viz*. Goats, Pidgeons, and Turtle or Tortoise" (80). The import of these latter animals are specifically tied to their use-value. And while Crusoe's justification for the hunting of them is his survival, he also discovers a population of goats that he plans to domesticate and add to the property of his monarchy:

> my Dog surpriz'd a young Kid, and seiz'd upon it, and I running in to take hold of it, caught it, and sav'd it alive from the Dog: I had a great Mind to bring it Home if I could; for I had often been musing, Whether it might not be possible to get a Kid or two, and so raise a Breed of tame Goats, which might supply me when my Powder and Shot should be all spent. (81)

Indeed, the training of the goats is brought into a kind of domestication arrangement, as it occurs simultaneous with Crusoe's training (and entrapment) of Poll:

> most of the Time was taken up in the weighty Affair of making a Cage for my Poll, who began now to be a meer Domestick, and to be might well acquainted with me. Then I began to think of the poor Kid, which I had penn'd in within my little Circle, and resolv'd to go and fetch it Home, or give it some Food…. it was so tame with being hungry, that I had no need to have ty'd; for it follow'd me like a Dog; and as I continually fed it, the Creature became so

> loving, so gentle, and so fond, that it became from that Time one of my Domesticks also, and would never leave me afterwards. (82)

Crusoe's sovereignty over his island accretes through the intersubjective arrangement of domestic animals that he binds to himself—by constructing this literary arrangement of animal domestication, Crusoe metaphorizes the subjectivization of subjects by a monarch. There is sympathy at work in these scenes of domestication, even if we do not fully feel "sorry" for the creatures: Crusoe imagines that he knows the internal state of his captured goat, "tame with being hungry," and he aligns its willingness with the common domestic pet, the dog (not unlike the comparison of Friday's bear with a cat, above). Crusoe's domestication continues until he finally has his parrot both respond to its name and capable of speaking:

> Within Doors, *that is*, when it rained, and I could not go out, I found Employment on the following Occasions; always observing, that all the while I was at work I diverted my self with talking to my Parrot, and teaching him to Speak, and I quickly learn'd him to know his own Name, and at last to speak it out pretty loud P O L L, which was the first Word I ever heard spoken in the Island by any Mouth but my own. (87)

Once again the animal disturbs the easy alignment of Crusoe as the master of the island, the lone ruler and inhabitant of his island. The pronouncing of its own name, coming as "the first Word I ever heard spoken in the Island by any Mouth but my own," marks a radical shift in the individualistic distancing that Crusoe normally affects. There is an important question of volition inherent in the character of the parrot. Even the common Englishism of "parroting speech" implies that the parrot's

voice is one of copying and replication rather than self-motivation, and this is how the mechanists like Johnson would read Poll in the novel; but for Heather Keenleyside,

> Poll may be imprinted (and so given speech) by Crusoe's voice…. But Defoe locates this imprinting in the interaction of two living creatures…. Crusoe's personification of Poll arises from uncertainty about the distinction between speaking and moving, and it ultimately opens the possibility that "the Society of… Fellow-Creatures" might be composed of animals as well as human beings. (59)[82]

Poll's unsettling ability to destabilize Crusoe's position at the top of the food chain becomes apparent again in a later scene, when Poll, acting of his own volition—that is, self-moving, animate—captures Crusoe in a disturbing dream:

> dozing between sleeping and waking, thought I dream'd that some Body spoke to me: But as the Voice continu'd to repeat *Robin Cruose*, *Robin Crusoe*, at last I began to wake more perfectly, and was at first dreadfully frighted, and started up in the utmost Consternation: But no sooner were my Eyes open, than I saw my *Poll* sitting on the Top of the Hedge; and immediately knew that it was he that spoke to me; for just in such bemoaning Language I had used to talk to him, and teach him; and he had learn'd it so perfectly, that he would sit upon my Finger, and lay his Bill close to my Face, and cry, *Poor* Robin

[82] In the ellipses bouncing around this quotation, Keenleyside discusses the difference between Poll and Wilson, the volleyball that stands in the same structural space as Poll in Robert Zemeckis's 2000 film *Cast Away*, in which Tom Hanks plays Chuck Noland, the Robinson Crusoe figure. Keenleyside is somewhat dismissive of the possibilities of non-animate agency in this passage ("Despite the vividness of Wilson's persona or the animation of Noland's address, there is never any question that Wilson is, in a strong sense, only in Chuck's head" [59].) It is ironic, then, that Keenleyside is effectively tracking a literary arrangement of minor characters, whose animacy remains in question, that help protagonists mentally cope with their situations, through *Robinson Crusoe* to its re-iteration in *Cast Away*, an arrangement that relies on the agency of fictional tropes and structures to propagate.

> Crusoe, *Where are you? Where have you been? How come you here?* And such things as I had taught him. (104)

Crusoe attempts to nullify how disturbing the dream is for him by relegating the parrot's phrases to "things… I had taught him," but it's obvious that Crusoe's name in Poll's mouth upsets the protagonist.

> as I was well satisfied it could be no Body but honest *Poll*, I got it over; and holding out my Hand, and calling him by his Name *Poll*, the sociable Creature came to me, and sat upon my Thumb, as he used to do, and continu'd talking to me, *Poor* Robin Crusoe, and *how did I come here?* And *where had I been?* just as if he had been overjoy'd to see me again; and so I carry'd him Home along with me. (104)

Poor Poll, sadly, can only ever carry an "as if" in the designation of its emotions. Why could Poll not truly be overjoyed to see its master? One convenient answer would be that Crusoe's a jerk, but in a more analytical sense, the "as if" formulation functions just as Friday's "*like* a bold Fellow" does, accepting the destabilizing term into itself and then attempting to negate that term through the simile. (Crusoe makes this move, again, in the short scene with the cat I mentioned above, "*as if* she had a Mind…"). Poll's "as if" reappears elsewhere, in a famous passage that describes Crusoe's imposed monarchy over the island:

> It would have made a Stoick smile to have seen, me and my little Family sit down to Dinner; there was my Majesty the Prince and Lord of the whole Island; I had the Lives of all my Subjects at my absolute Command. I could hang, draw, give Liberty, and take it away, and no Rebels among all my

> Subjects.[83] Then to see how like a King I din'd too all alone, attended by my Servants; *Poll*, as if he had been my Favourite, was the only Person permitted to talk to me. My Dog who was now grown very old and crazy, and had found no Species to multiply his Kind upon, sat always at my Right Hand, and two Cats, one on one Side the Table, and one on the other, expecting now and then a bit from my Hand, as a Mark of special Favour. (108)

Here, remarkably, we see a replication of Poll "as if he had been [Crusoe's] Favourite" at court, but also the literalized "was the only *Person*." In this moment, Crusoe's grammar cannot help but assign a kind of ambiguous personhood to Poll, "as if" in one clause, "was" in the next. Poll destabilizes the Crusoe arrangement, which would maintain itself as sole "Person," to the extent that grammar begins to recognize a new arrangement of intersubjective relationality coming into effect. Seeing the full array of animals here makes the fact of their intersubjective relationship to Crusoe that much more plain, physicalized in this ironic, monarchical banquet scene.

While we see Crusoe increasingly try to cement his hold over his animal subjects, and ensure that they aren't allocated any influence in his little monarchy, by the turn of the eighteenth century a popular new genre of travel narrative—the circulation story—will come to rewrite the kinds of relations possible between humans and animals, and provide an imaginative space for human readers to inhabit animal subjects and narrators, literary arrangements focused on peregrinating (and often suffering) animals.

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[83] The invocation of the word "Rebels" suggests strange forward-looking parallels with a large rebellion that would occur within the British Empire sixty years later and an ocean away.

The Biography of a Spaniel
(and a personal detour into Homeward Bound)

The Biography of a Spaniel, anonymously collected in *Interesting Tales Selected and Translated from The German* (though likely composed in English by someone called Mrs. Showes [L. Brown 131]), begins with an opening paragraph that sets the reader down on uncertain—that is, lunar—ground.

> In the midst of one of the large seas our astronomers have lately discovered in the moon, lies a large island, that, for ages innumerable, perhaps from the beginning of time, has been the appointed Elysium of dogs—those constant and faithful companions of man. There the serious Newfoundland dog, playful greyhound, choleric Pomeranian, and the fawning spaniel, are united in the most fraternal affection; nor is the stupid Bolognese and indolent lap-dog excluded from the society of their brethren; for they, as well as the alderman and fop, are deprived of the affirmed dignity of their stations, at the moment they lay aside their sublunary clothing. (*Biography* 1-2)

This heavenly abode for expired pets serves as the framing device for *Biography of a Spaniel*. The titular character (the spaniel) arrives on the moon after recently dying on Earth, and he is invited by the parliament of dogs to tell his story. More specifically, “an old dog, who seemed to be the president of the society” tells him that “the laws of our republic oblige you to give an account of your terrestrial pilgrimage. Speak; we are impatient to hear the history of your life” (2-3). *The Biography of a Spaniel*, then, positions itself from the beginning as an intersubjective dialogue. This opening, while a seemingly simple framing device, makes the somewhat profound claim that the animal—specifically the dog, in this case—is not only worthy of narrative focus and

attention as a protagonist, but also suggests that *all* dogs might be worthy of such narrative attention; as Margaret Doody suggested of *Clarissa*, that other novels are implied by its complexity, this scenario, too, suggests that among the "republic," Jolli's story will become one among many (the suggestion of further, unsupplied but worthy, narratives being a deeply relevant example of representational excessiveness).[84]

Unlike *Robinson Crusoe*, *The Biography of a Spaniel* presupposes a network of relative equality, at least from the outset, at least from Jolli's opening interlocutors. The character-arrangement of Jolli seems much more stable than Crusoe's, even as he is tossed about in the storm of life. So how are we meant to read Jolli? As a literary figure, are we meant to read him anthropomorphically, or personified? He is not anthropomorphized in any significant way in which we would recognize—he does not wear human clothing, speak with people, etc. His ability to speak, however, and the reader's privileged glimpse into his interiority, bespeaks a condition of personification necessary for the continuation of the *Biography*; this is, however, the *only* thing I can directly identify as a personified element in Jolli's text: otherwise, he does not seem to act unlike the ways a nonfictional dog would. Heather Keenleyside says that personification "is a figure of words and of thought that is essential to apprehending certain kinds of beings, to distinguishing them from things" (7). In this way, personification is a linking element that connects the different nodes of this particular literary arrangement: the animal, the animal above the thing, the human (or, perhaps, the person). Jolli especially benefits from the personification that appertains to his

[84] Perhaps it's true, that all dogs *do* go to heaven.

speaking condition, as it in many ways sets the reader up for their sympathetic encounter with Jolli's life story. If sympathy "is how we go along with the hearts and minds of others… [and] comes to serve as the basis for reality itself," then encountering the fictional animal creates a kind of extended reality, one in which *our feeling* for Jolli is decidedly nonfictional: nonfictional feeling for a fictional character (Greiner 23). Ivan Kreilkamp, in *Minor Creatures: Persons, Animals, and the Victorian Novel*, notes how the centering of the human is a constantly contested position, one perhaps invented by critics less comfortable with encountering the animal than the writers who are comfortable inhabiting them:

> The capacity to be rendered as a novelistic character becomes part of what it means to be human… the novel gains power as a cultural force of meaning making and humanizing. … [Kreilkamp's] goal is less to deny the novel's own anthropocentrism than to call for greater awareness of this anthropocentrism as a *contested and constructed status*—and as an inconsistent and shifting one—and thereby to call for a less anthropocentric critical practice. (3, my emphasis)

Using Kreilkamp's logic, we can see how the eighteenth-century it-narrative served as a historical proving ground for the novelistic protagonist: *who will we decide worthy of our focus?* one can almost hear the writers of the period asking themselves. It is notable that in the eighteenth-century, writers increasingly decide that *animals*, despite the animal's decentering of the human, are worth major narrative focus.[85]

[85] From a historical perspective, the it-narrative rises around the mid eighteenth century (Blackwell), and reaches its zenith as a genre around the turn of the century, which, not coincidentally, coincides with the publication of *The Biography of a Spaniel* in 1797.

Considering the animal forces us to consider life unlike our own—as it did for Crusoe, despite his attempts to overwhelm it—and to try and compare the two, searching for differences and commonalities. The Comte de Buffon, for instance, "pictures human relations as different in degree rather than in kind from those of other animate beings and so configures the order of nature in conspicuously social terms" (Keenleyside 2). These "conspicuously social terms" fits within Jolli qua literary arrangement. Jolli is a character, from the outset, imbricated into a "republic," whose social relations are constantly at task. The social, for Jolli, is largely defined by his circulation through the world, both as commodity and as wandering protagonist. In his "Introduction" to Francis Coventry's *Pompey the Little*—one of the earliest of the circulation novels, published in 1751—Nicholas Hudson writes that

> dogs are surrounded by a richly ambivalent atmosphere of associations, both positive and negative. On the positive side, dogs are traditional symbols of fidelity. Yet Pompey displays an entirely understandable willingness to switch his allegiance to his various owners in order to survive. On the negative side, dogs have historically reminded people of the squalor, brevity, and dirtiness of human existence. (Coventry 14)

And yet, Hudson also notes that Pompey, the hero of Coventry's story, "cannot be a real 'hero' because his creator doggedly[86]… presents him as an animal rather than as the sort of personified beast familiar from Aesop's *Fables* or folk and fairy tales" (13). Coventry's insistence on adhering to this realism, his "choice not to write a beast fable, but a biography of a real dog," also casts a shadow over the human characters of

[86] Ha.

the novel, raising “the possibility that humans are, in fact, just animals” (14). Heather Keenleyside, again, argues that while personification leaves aside specifying the qualities that define “the animal,”

> eighteenth-century personification does treat as known the properties of the *person*. The constitutive attributes of personhood are routinely identified in eighteenth-century texts: speech, action, and the social relations that both enable and result from speaking and acting. But there is much that remains epistemologically unresolved. *What counts as evidence of speech, action, or sociality? Who or what might bear such attributes*, or participate in such relations? (6-7, my emphasis)

Heather Keenleyside’s work is overtly political, as she tries to re-enact an understanding of the animal always already as subject. “One of the central tasks of literary animal studies is to liberate animals from the confines of Enlightenment figuration and abstraction—to bring animals into view… not as figures for human beings or ideas, but as subjects in their own right” (9). For *Pompey the Little*, and, indeed, for the hero of *The Biography of a Spaniel*, the real animal is overtly present: besides the capability of narration (and we get no indication that Jolli contained this ability prior to his death and induction into the lunar dog society), Jolli does definitively dog-like things. As a young dog, Jolli is motivated by rewards of “delicate morsels,” (9) and later he is confused by one of his master’s commands to perform for the emperor, “not knowing what sort of creature an Emperor was” (13), demonstrating his only partial understanding of language cues. Jolli ultimately dies when he bites a child who is attempting to steal him from his owner and is shot by villagers. By now

he has returned to his original master, LaFleur, who has gone blind, and when Lafleur attempts to protect his dog, "the same ball that passed through my head penetrated his heart" (73). Jolli is very much a dog: Rae Greiner (through Catherine Gallagher), argues that in the "oscillation between generality and particularity" (which is, in our example, from the type of the "domestic dog" to the specificities of Jolli's wanderings and narration to the society of dogs), "fiction is the only place where [marginalized characters] can gain particular embodiment, for fiction alone grants 'nobodies' like [them] the specificity that distinguishes them from the (fictional) generality out of which they emerge. Fiction is where generalities can be realized, where abstractions gain human dimension, shape" (47). Personification can, in some senses then, be seen as a direct mechanism of generating sympathy, and sympathy as a mechanism of drawing connections between subjects (read: Kant-like intersubjectivity).[87]

To turn briefly toward the eighteenth-century's pre-Kantian concern with networked relations, Heather Keenleyside discusses Lord Shaftesbury's synechdochic vision of an ethics wherein

> every particular creature essentially *is* an element in some *composition*. Whether one is a human or an animal or even an organ, one's virtue and one's identity depend on "that whole of which he himself is a part."…Shaftesbury's various terms would seem to designate wholes of significantly different scope and kind (some social, some natural). But Shaftesbury does not discuss these differences, or even appear to view them as such. Instead, he insists that the

[87] Ivan Kreilkamp would call this mode of "fictional representation of animal signification" the "sentimental solution," and then make his own comparison to Sewell's apparently ever-present *Black Beauty*.

> same logic underwrites what might look like different types of relation: between two bodily organs, between the male and female of a species, between spider and fly, and potentially, between all living and nonliving beings. Everything in nature, Shaftesbury suggests, is a part of an ever-expanding whole (40-41, my emphasis)[88]

This ever-expanding whole, the recognition of individual elements "in some *composition*," in an arrangement, presages the inter-tangled webs of agencies that Thing and Actor-Network proponents begin espousing in the twentieth century—relationships defined, as Shaftesbury might agree, rhizomatically. We might re-postulate that in *Robinson Crusoe* we observe the literary arrangement of the protagonist as a sharp central node, pulled in many directions by other elements that destabilize the (at-first-blush) centrality of Crusoe himself; conversely, in *The Biography of a Spaniel*, Jolli, despite being the creature we follow throughout the novel, remains a fairly flat element tossed and turned among other elements. (Note that I do *not* mean that Jolli is a "flat character" in the E. M. Forster sense of the term, simply that his preeminence in relation to the novel's other elements is less pronounced.)

These rhizomatic connections are especially clear in the eighteenth-century it-narrative, in which circulating items are so transparently imbricated into the capitalist system, and peregrinate through diverse environments (in *The Adventures of a Guinea*,

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[88] Keenleyside also makes what is, for me, a somewhat startling reading of James Thomson: "Thomson takes up Shaftesbury's expansive vision as both an epistemological challenge and an ethical imperative. Like Shaftesbury, Thomson wants to ground a universal ethics on an ontology in which one's identity essentially depends on the whole of which one is a part—a whole that again is alternately presented in economic, social, and ecological terms" (41). The dependence of individual *identity* as a constituent of a larger whole predicts some rather Romantic-era inclinations, but also goes further to show the eighteenth-century's already-burgeoning interest in connection and networked feeling—that is, sympathy.

the guinea encounters legal, criminal, artistic, and more aspects of eighteenth-century English life; Jolli finds love with a particular master and a group of children, cruelty, he turns tricks for food, and is bought and sold as a commodity). Liz Bellamy argues that what it-narrators "have in common is the use of a plot that focuses on the way that an object passes through a diverse range of hands. The protagonist can be sold, lost, found, given, and exchanged and thus come into contact with very different social groups" (118).

Jolli, of *The Biography of a Spaniel*, is tied into the capitalist system—repeatedly bought and sold—which he consistently attempts to escape; his death is ultimately the only way we can escape it and enter a new system of relationships with the other dogs on the moon. True to form, *The Biography of a Spaniel* is a circulation narrative interested in coming full circle. Whereas many other narratives in the circulating "tradition use the first-person narrative format and avoid resolution of the central story," *The Biography of a Spaniel* brings Jolli full circle through his wanderings. The spaniel is first born into the home of a shoemaker, who not long after trades him for a brass tobacco box: "When I was a month old, I was weaned, and exchanged in a formal manner for the tobacco-box" (7). This point of exchange, especially so early in the dog's life, hallmarks the importance that transactional actions will have through the novel. The dog's new master, a French grenadier named LaFleur, calls the dog "Jolli," and immediately begins training him to be an attraction—something that will have to work for coin. This training upsets Jolli, at first, "I was disagreeably surprised one morning, by Monsieur LaFleur seizing me by the nape of my neck, and placing me erect against the wall: this posture, strange as well as troublesome, did not please me, and I endeavoured to remove from it… but my

mentor *knew how to pervert the laws of nature*, for, with a stick… he gave me a smart rap on my fore-paws" (8). (Even for Francis Coventry's character of Pompey, part of the dog's apparent agency is subsumed by the rising tides of capitalism, as he "is himself a nebulous form of exchangeable property, and even a form of money" [17].) So, while Jolli doesn't return to the shoemaker, he does, after further peregrinations, return to his good master LaFleur before their simultaneous death (indeed, this is actually Jolli's *second* return, after they're split up following an ill-met performance before an emperor). To think about Jolli's narrative in the terms of the literary arrangement (or in the manifold model I described in Chapter 1), LaFleur is a particularly powerful node or element that the arrangement we term "Jolli" passes through at the beginning of the plot and returns to at its end, its especial strength marked by LaFleur and Jolli dying in the same moment. (The long journey home being a particularly powerful, cross-text literary arrangement, featuring in western literature since *The Odyssey*, at least). While these returns seem coincidental in the context of a single story, I argue that subsequent circulation narratives (in our modern-day, contemporary tradition) return the narrator to their origin so that it becomes a trope, albeit a trope that's now interfacing with, serving as, a genre convention.

I raise the issue of the return here at the end of my animal studies chapter to point out that *Robinson Crusoe* was also about, ultimately, a journey home, back to Europe—only Crusoe finds that he can't keep still, and goes wandering. Jolli, too, returns home only in time to be killed, and thence to wander into a spiritual realm, and so in some senses both *Robinson Crusoe* and *Biography* sit within a particular literary arrangement of returning. The circulation narrative has held sway in the modern

consciousness *particularly* in association with animal narratives (part of these narratives' success likely stems from our joy at the more-than-occasional news story that announces a lost pet's discovery of its family a full continent away, a journey that *suggests*, expansively, excessively, much like *Clarissa*'s breadth suggests further stories, adventures and hardships overcome—that is, plot). *The Biography of a Spaniel*, coming at the end of the eighteenth century and the height of its genre's popularity, prefigures twentieth- and twenty-first-century iterations of the circulation narrative, so that we might even say they are *propagations* of stories like Jolli's—pets and loved objects who (here's that generic convention again) are lost and must *return* home, complete the circle in circulation: *Toy Story*, *Homeward Bound*, *The Brave Little Toaster*.

As someone who grew up with dogs and with the film, *Homeward Bound* speaks to me on a personal level, and exemplifies the kind of strange agential pressures that literary arrangements exert on the world. (If you aren't familiar with *Homeward Bound*, it's the story of two dogs and a cat temporarily left behind on a family friend's property while their human family moves cross country. The animals, not understanding that their people intend to return, escape, journey across the country [with some terrifying close calls for someone who saw it at the age I was when it came out], and finally rejoin their family.) *Homeward Bound* adapts the premise of the 1963 film *The Incredible Journey* (itself already an adaptation of a 1961 novel of the same name by Sheila Burnford), and obviously lives in a structural lineage coming alongside *The Biography of a Spaniel.* First, as I've mentioned, is the premise of the long journey home—forced separation from one's rightful and good owner and a

subsequent return to them. We can hear the thoughts of the animals in *Homeward Bound*, and they communicate with one another by either an apparent form of telepathy or a body language too arcane for human eyes; Jolli doesn't speak to other animals in *Biography*, but we have access to his thoughts even while he does specifically "dog" things (similarly, in *Homeward*, we see Chance the Bulldog repeatedly get in trouble for doing dog-things: chewing on items he shouldn't, chasing chickens, etc.). The animals in both *Homeward* and *Biography* have a limited understanding of human speech, only recognizing common words that refer to things they've been trained for. And while none of the animals in *Homeward Bound* die (thank goodness), our last shots are of the animals in the arms of the children who care for them—as Jolli's last moment on earth is in the arms of LaFleur.

While neither Sheila Burnford nor the creators of *Homeward Bound* may have ever heard of *The Biography of a Spaniel*, or even of a circulation narrative, they nevertheless operate in a similar tradition, a literary arrangement that extends from the turn of the eighteenth century, and *Homeward Bound*'s agency again comes full circle, in a sense, here, in a kind of formal mirroring of the genre's plot; here, at the end of this chapter, a 1993 film that had a profound impact on this author in his childhood is reunited with one of the progenitors of its genre, *The Biography of a Spaniel*. *Homeward Bound* is, in other words, a link in the arrangements of elements that make up *The Biography of a Spaniel*, itself an agential node in the literary arrangement of it- and circulation narratives.

Closure Among Infinite Linkages

With this chapter, I have tried to engage with the increasingly prominent theoretical conversation around animal studies in order to seriously elucidate my claims regarding

literary arrangements' propagation through the "real" (nonfictional) world. In *Robinson Crusoe*, we see how some literary arrangements can be leveraged to serve particular ideologies—in this case, one that bolsters the cult of the individual and a capitalist, colonialist way of encountering the world. And yet, even in *Crusoe* we see how animal arrangements destabilize the (pretended-to) coherent center of the novel. Robinson Crusoe's monarchy of the island forever stands contested, as the animation and agency of both animals and subjugated men draws the novel into new configurations.

Conversely, in *The Biography of a Spaniel*, we see an altogether different arrangement of elements place the protagonist in a new ideological space, one more interested in republics than in kingdoms, in foregrounding proximity between animals and humans rather than obscuring it. In the circulation narratives that *Biography* typifies, while imbricated within an increasingly globalized capitalist economy, we come to witness the surprising agency of things both living and (seemingly) not.

Both *Crusoe* and *Biography* have propagated into our contemporary centuries, in films like *The Martian* (also, of course, an Andy Weir novel) and *Cast Away* for the former, and *Homeward Bound* or *The Brave Little Toaster* for the latter. Some have called reiterations and adaptations like these "afterlives," but I think it would be more accurate to consider them evidence of these literary arrangements' continued *life*.

CODA: CHIASTIC LOGIC

The literary arrangement is, at its core, an attempt to model the ways that products of the *imagination* apply agency across texts and then come to have life in the non-fictional world, propagating into networks of further imaginative production. And by *imagination*, I mean any work of creation, not the narrower understanding of something purely fantastic or simply "fictional": literary critical works are of the imagination, as is a reader's idiosyncratic mental picture of a literary scene. It is a remarkable act of *play* to both engage with and produce literary arrangements, a subjective act entering into relations of intersubjectivity, engaging with other minds (fictional and nonfictional) as we move across an arrangement's constellate nodes.

This short coda looks at a figure that has repeatedly risen to my attention over the course of this project: the chiasmus. For some reason, the chiasmus has shown up across a surprising number of sources I've investigated, in both primary and secondary sources, and I have found myself unconsciously utilizing it in my own prose. The chiasmus represents a crossing of terms, a reflection that reveals, simultaneously, both connection and profound gulfs: "Two lines cross each other turning their hierarchy upside down: the one that was up goes down, the one that was down goes up. The center of chiasm is a meeting point of two diagonally opposed movements, an event that functions as a principle of reflection and reversal. It brings two lines together, but also separates them from each other" (Korhonen xiii).[89] (Isar puts this a slightly different way: "through chiasmus the opposites are linked together into pairs of parallel and inverted oppositions, which manifest them as an inverted unity".) There

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[89] Thanks to my good friend Madeline Reynolds for her recent and provoking article "Chiastic Species Mixing in *Wuthering Heights*" and for pointing me to Korhonen's work.

are few other figures that could better encapsulate the nature of the literary arrangement: terms (or elements) connected by a web of relationality (in this case, both rhetorically and grammatically) that are in constant tension with one another, in a play for relevance (not unlike the animal arrangement's play for relevance in the competition for priority in *Robinson Crusoe*[90]). The chiasmus illuminates the gaps between the literary arrangement's nodes, "The in-between, that interstitial stuff of which chiastic reality is made" (Carter).

As I began writing this coda, and reading deeper into the figure of chiasmus, it quickly became clear that this rhetorical device functions as more than ornamentation, and even more than a mnemonic tool in oral traditions. Cedric Whitman, in *Homer and the Heroic Tradition*, acknowledges the chiasmus's mnemonic usefulness, but also describes it as "an architectonic principle," a "ring composition" (253) reminiscent of hysteron proteron:

> This device, doubtless of mnemonic purpose to assist the singer… is also pregnant with stylistic possibilities; like ring composition, it returns to its point of origin and effects circularity of design, while the inverted elements may also be spread out to include as a centerpiece a whole scene or scenes, as in a frame. Thus hysteron proteron and ring composition, too, suggest not only circularity, but also framing and balance (254).[91]

Rodolphe Gasché, further, argues that "grammatical, rhetorical, or psychological explanations cannot exhaust the role of chiasm…. Chiasm, then, is no longer a merely

[90] Of a slight tangent, Reynolds shows how species "similarity," through the chiasmus, "is always attended by divergence and difference, reminding readers that the categories ultimately remain separate."

[91] "Ring composition," for Whitman, defines a structural inversion, whereas hysteron proteron is closer to the sentence-level chiasmus I'm most concerned with in this coda.

ornamental or psychological device but, rather, reveals itself as an originary form of thought”. Gasché makes this somewhat extraordinary claim because he believes the figure of the “chiasm is what allows oppositions to be bound into unity in the first place. It is a form that makes it possible to determine differences with respect to an underlying totality” (“Reading Chiasms,” xvii). This, then, suggests that my ability to *consider* the differential elements within the “totality” of a literary arrangement is itself *only possible* through chiastic thinking. (Chiasmus “allows the drawing apart and bringing together of opposite functions or terms and entwines them with an identity of movements,” and, further, “opposites are linked into pairs of parallel and inverted oppositions on the ground of an underlying unity” [“Reading Chiasms,” xvii].) If we are to think of the literary arrangement framework as the “underlying unity” of the character we call Clarissa, then it is also to think of the epistolary letters that constitute her as separable, discrete elements available for analysis. The ambiguity that this produces leads Gasché to Derridean arguments about “chiasmic invagination,”[92] that is, “the structure according to which a border, which is always seemingly the limit of an interiority against an exteriority, [which] cannot but re-mark and reapply that reference to the outer within its interiority, between its center and its circumference” (xix-xx). The ambiguity that this produces, ultimately, means that “it is impossible to settle upon the limits of the border…. the edge *of* a form turns out to be a fold *within* the form” (xx). I cite Gasché at length here because I find his deconstructive thinking propulsive—I have argued that the literary arrangement is observable only through (in Barad’s terms) the “boundary-drawing practices” of critical engagements (I decide where “Clarissa” begins and ends). The border of the literary arrangement, in other

[92] A strange way to phrase it, but to each their own.

words, might turn out to be “a fold,” which fits nicely with the spatial metaphors I have already applied in this project, especially that of the manifold at the end of chapter 1.

Much of this coda has the feeling of a retrospective, and I want to acknowledge that it is, largely, exactly that. While the form of the chiasmus has been settling in the back of my mind, I largely ignored until now (here I am, writing to the moment); the deconstructive and philosophical thinking around the chiasmus has come of something of a shock (a *surprise*). For Stéphane Mosès, the chiasmus represents precisely the relationship between “the I and the other” that so concerns Emmanuel Levinas. “In fact it is indeed the asymetry [sic] between the I and the other, the transcendence of the other in my regard” (254). Here, the asymmetry of the chiasmus comes to reflect a collapse in the false binary of subjective/objective, as the “self” comes to be *defined by* relationality—that is, there is no subject without *inter*-subjectivity.

Briefly, in the interest of disclosing relevant nodes of the literary arrangement I’m currently tracking through my own project, I’d like to include a list of (some of) the chiasmi I’ve stumbled across in this dissertation, before turning to some closing remarks, via Maurice Merleau-Ponty.

- The title of Sara Ahmed’s “Willful Parts: Problem Characters and the Problem of Character.”
- “Crusoe is at once true and false; he is a fiction with a true existence and a true story with a fictional structure” (Lennard Davis 157).
- “the subject *defines* praxis and praxis *defines* the subject” (Christoph Menke 22).

- “the sun has a power to blanch wax; and wax a power to be blanched by the sun” (John Locke 155).
- “If we are right in characterizing remediation as reform, then it would be fair to say that among those things that *Remediation* reformed were ourselves” (Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin ix).
- “Let me ask—Have you read Lovelace’s Bad, and not his Good?—Or, does the Abhorrence which you have for that Bad, make you forget, that he has any Good?” (Samuel Richardson, *Selected Letters* 89).
- “We are talking about characteristic elements… specifically affective elements of consciousness and relationships: not feeling against thought, but thought as felt and feeling as thought” (Raymond Williams, *Marxism* 132).
- “if life is constitutively semiotic, is all semiosis life?” (Lloyd 10).

If this list is productive of anything, it is hopefully to show again the surprising agency of literary arrangements. If the rhetorical figure of the chiasmus, across texts, is a literary arrangement (and each chiasmus a microcosmic example of literary arrangements themselves), then this arrangement has exerted sufficient agential pressure upon me, when writing this dissertation, that I had no choice but to respond, in this case *propagating these examples of the chiasmus into a new literary context*. The chiasmus is, as I’ve tried to show through Gasché and others, by nature representationally excessive and productive of generative tensions between elements.

Finally, investigating the chiasmus to write this coda led me to a theorist whose name cropped up a few times in my reading, but never so overwhelmingly that I felt compelled to seek him out: Maurice Merleau-Ponty. In one of Merleau-Ponty’s

last works (indeed, it was left unfinished after his death in 1961), he makes a compelling turn (presaging Deleuze and Guattari in some significant ways) toward a "new conception of the body, as a 'chiasm' or crossing-over… which combines subjective experience and objective existence" (247, this specific citation from Thomas Baldwin's introduction). While this notion of embodiment as a crossing-over is compelling, what interests me most is its implications on networked worlds (and in extending his thoughts about subjective observers into objective relationality). "Seeing, speaking, even thinking," those "irrecusable and enigmatic" experiences, for Merleau-Ponty, "have a name in all languages, but a name which in all of them also conveys significations in tufts, thickets of proper meanings and figurative meanings" (248). I cannot help but read these "thickets" of information as the nodes or elements of networked arrangements—hubs of information that draw the attention of an observer, like tobacco, a footprint, or Clarissa, or chiasmi themselves. In an even more startling formulation, Merleau-Ponty describes how the color red "forms a constellation," serves as "a certain node in the woof of the simultaneous…. a concretion of visibility."

> The red dress a fortiori holds with all its fibers onto the fabric of the visible, and thereby onto a fabric of invisible being. A punctuation in the field of red things, which includes the tiles of roof tops, the flags of gatekeepers and of the Revolution, certain terrains near Aix or in Madagascar, it is also a punctuation in the field of red garments, which includes, along with the dresses of women, robes of professors, bishops, and advocate generals, and also in the field of adornments and that of uniforms. And its red literally is not the same as it

> appears in one constellation or in the other…. If we took all these participations into account, we would recognize that a naked color… is rather a sort of straits between exterior horizons and interior horizons ever gaping open, something that comes to touch lightly and makes diverse regions of the colored or visible resound at the distances, a certain differentiation…. Between the alleged colors and visibles, we would find anew the tissue that lines them, sustains them, nourishes them, and which for its part is not a thing, but a possibility, a latency (250)

I have quoted this passage at such great (hopefully not unwelcome) length because it reflects so much that I have been trying to convey through the literary arrangement. For Merleau-Ponty, the color red (which is only an example), "A punctuation in the field red things," has a unity to it, a conceptual whole that we can identify, but which also *punctuates* its specific, particular occurrences. What Merleau-Ponty calls "possibility, a latency, and a *flesh* of things," I call agential pressure, sustaining because it replenishes, propagates. And these "interior horizons ever gaping open" reflect that representational excessiveness, the sense of literary limitlessness, so necessary to the literary arrangement. The chiasmus, to meander toward a conclusion, by its very nature is representationally excessive, blowing through its boundaries at great speed.

Merleau-Ponty's connections to my argument don't stop there. For him, the observer and the observed always form a kind of unity, an impossible separability. Turning to the issue of the observer, "The look, we said, envelops, palpates, espouses the visible things. As though it were in a relation of pre-established harmony with them…. finally one cannot say if it is the look or if it is the things that command"

(250). Observation of an object by a subjective viewer becomes impossible, as the subject must enter the field of the object in *the process of viewership*. “It suffices… to note that he who sees cannot possess the visible unless he is possessed by it, unless he *is of it*, unless… he is one of the visibles, capable, by a singular reversal, of seeing them he who is one of them” (252). This profound collapsing of the viewer and the viewed is the same turn at the heart of Levinas, which brings the “Other” into the “I” and the “I” into the other. The truth within the oft-quoted “pleasure of a contact at the heart of a chiasm” (Levinas, cited in Mosès 266)[93] is that the pleasure is at the moment of reversal, the moment when two terms have been drawn into mutual indistinguishability, but before they have shot off again in opposite directions, the moment when we are neither “I” nor “Other,” neither viewer nor viewed, but both.

We might redescribe this moment as the precipice of critical observation. In the “strange adhesion of the seer and the visible,” literary arrangements come to have life. They propagate. And they *do* have agency, and perhaps even a will. In tracking the chiasmus, a figure I had an interest in but no real overwhelming compulsion toward, I was ultimately brought back round to discovering Merleau-Ponty, whose thinking is so close to my own, here in the final days of my dissertating. What could be more emblematic of how literary arrangements not only propagate, but exceed themselves, press on the nonfictional world with tangible effects? “The seer and the visible reciprocate one another and we no longer know which sees and which is seen”

[93] I first stumbled on this quote in Isar, who was citing Gasché’s introduction in Warminski (Gasché, “Reading Chiasms” xvii) (Gasché uses the same quotation and attribution in *Of Minimal Things* [273]), which was citing Greisch (216), whose original french, “plaisir d’un contact au coeur du chiasme,” is attributed to Levinas but ambiguously; after futilely checking all four Levinas titles in Greisch’s bibliography, I finally found the proper attribution to *Noms propres* in Mosès’s “At the Heart of a Chiasm: Derrida and Lévinas, Lévinas and Derrida” (266). It is, of course, also cited in easily received fashion in Korhonen, which I only discovered later.

(Merleau-Ponty 256). We lose ourselves in reading, in the moment of indistinguishability when the distinctions between fictional and nonfictional worlds collapse. Authors lost in their writing see their characters assume new agency to come alive, to act *surprisingly*. And literary critics produce new worlds, too, drawing boundaries around arrangements in order to make them visible, but the closer we examine those boundaries, those borders, the more we find that they go back and back into infinitudes. Perhaps, ultimately, literary arrangements are alive *insofar as we are literary*.

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