INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

UMI®

Bell & Howell Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

A

Romantic Revolutions: Discourse and Dissent

by

David Borkowski

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in English
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

1999

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

UMI Number: 9946143

Copyright 1999 by
Borkowski, David

All rights reserved.

UMI Microform 9946143
Copyright 1999, by UMI Company. All rights reserved.

This microform edition is protected against unauthorized
copying under Title 17, United States Code.

UMI
300 North Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Copyright

1999

David Borkowski

All Rights Reserved

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in English in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

6/28/99
Date

Chair of Examining Committee

7.9.99
Date

Executive Officer

George Otte

Sondra Perl

Ira Shor

Supervisory Committee

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Acknowledgments:

I would like to thank my readers, George Otte and Sondra Perl, for their support and thoughtful contributions. To Ira Shor, my advisor, I am grateful for his intellectual guidance, patience, encouragement, and friendship. The careful attention he paid to my work was invaluable. My wife, Deborah, made it worthwhile.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table of Contents:

Introduction 1

Chapter 1
The Problem: An Overview of Expressivism's
Relationship to Romanticism 9

Chapter 2
Class(*ifying*) Language:
The War of the Word 70

Chapter 3
Romanticizing Common Language and Common Themes 133

Chapter 4
The Sixties:
Break on Through to the Other Side 196

Chapter 5
Expressivism in an Age of Dissent 278

Conclusion 361

Works Cited and Consulted 380

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Introduction

Romantic writers, like Wordsworth and Shelley, did not call themselves "Romantic Poets," or consider their work part of a "Romantic Movement." As Raymond Williams points out in Keywords, the term was not applied until after 1880. The same can be said of "expressivism," for many leading expressivists, like Peter Elbow and Donald Murray, did not refer to themselves as "expressivists," or view their pedagogical theories as part of an "Expressionistic Movement," when they began to make their mark in Composition Studies in the late sixties and early seventies. In fact, right up to the present day, Elbow flatly denies that he is an expressivist. As a result, the most noteworthy compositionists in this rhetorical sub-field offer no clear-cut definition of "expressivism," per se. For the most part, expressivism has been categorized by its detractors who frequently define its position more in terms of what is missing from it rather than what it is, yet they largely agree that expressivism unwisely follows the Romantic model of the self-generating writer.

As near as I can tell, James Britton, in his classic Language and Learning (1970), was one of the first compositionists to use the word "expressive," although he borrowed the term from the anthropologist Edward Sapir who had distinguished between expressive and referential language. But Sapir, Britton pointed out, believed that even the so-called "'purely referential organization of the world,'" as found in scientific discourse, for instance, contained some element of "expressive" language. Based partly on Sapir's theory, Britton therefore insisted that "our representation of the world is affected also by the projection of our individual feelings, our needs and desires...a classification in accordance with 'the way I feel about things'" (106). Essentially, Britton was trying to compensate for an overemphasis on rationalistic views of language and culture by promoting the idea that emotive language is often the primary means for a culture to construct itself: "We each build our own representation of the world, but we greatly affect each other's representation, so that much of what we build is built in common" (19).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Language, in Britton's estimation, is both a private and a social construct. In his College Composition and Communication "Interchange" (1995) with David Bartholomae, Peter Elbow reiterated this concept following Bartholomae's charge that Elbow merely celebrates "'independent, self-creative, self-expressive subjectivity'" while ignoring the idea that students are socially constructed (88). Elbow insisted that "human life is *both* free and determined," and that expressivism—he doesn't use the term—creates the "freedom" for students to re-represent their views of the world while showing them how they are "constructed and situated" (89). But before students can discover how they are socially constructed, Elbow believed that the students must *first* be granted the right to use their own language. "Expressivism" is therefore another way of describing a student-centered curriculum that puts "a lot of faith in the long range benefits of helping students achieve *their* goals—helping them gradually relinquish their conditioned assumption that their job is to accomplish *our* goals" (91). In Elbow's view, expressivism begins with the student's own language and ends with the student being aware of language's social relevancy. Recently, Sherrie L. Gradin also claimed that expressivism should be more broadly classified to reveal how it includes both the private and the social determinants of language formation. In Romancing Rhetorics (1996), she thinks that the "solipsistic" label has been so unfairly hung upon expressivism that she would like to rename it "Social Expressivism" as a way of indicating its social applicability. Like Elbow, she believes that when students begin from "the position of subjectivity" they will then "understand how they themselves are products of their culture" (165). Expressivists like Gradin and Elbow therefore believe in honoring student writing as discovery, development of self and voice, and the importance of the individual, but, at the same time, not ignoring the fact that selves are socially constructed. Still, none of these descriptions compare to the more influential definitions assembled by expressivism's censors, who mostly appeared in the mid-eighties.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

James Berlin probably has had the greatest impact in shaping an understanding of current rhetorical theory. His two monographs, Writing Instruction in Nineteenth-Century American Colleges (1984) and Rhetoric and Reality in American Colleges: 1900-1985 (1987) along with "Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class" (1988), have essentially codified current rhetorics by examining their theoretical and pedagogical properties. In "Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class," the essay that practically secured the way Composition Studies defines contemporary rhetorics, Berlin described expressivism as so preoccupied with "the individual, acting alone and apart from others" (486) that any instructor who employed it would be "divorcing the self" from "authentic human activity" (487). Berlin identified "the most visible" figures who approached writing in this way as Ken Macrorie, Walker Gibson, William Coles, Jr., Donald Murray, and Peter Elbow, choosing to focus on Murray and Elbow in his explication of expressivism's shortcomings, thereby cementing Murray and Elbow in the discipline as "expressivists," par excellence. Berlin ascertained that expressivism's imprudent promotion of a self cut off from the world was a "descendant" of both "Rousseau" and the "romantic" belief that the individual artist must avoid "the urban horrors created by nineteenth-century capitalism" to find private inspiration (484). Thus, in perhaps the most well-known classification of contemporary rhetorics, expressivism and Romanticism were unfavorably connected, and both were deemed as celebrating discourse as a private construct at the expense of viewing it as socially determined.

In fact, expressivism and Romanticism have been linked ever since expressivism became a bona fide method of writing instruction in the early seventies. More often than not, that association has been categorized negatively. In 1971, for example, James Kinneavy in A Theory of Discourse declared "expressionistic theory . . . to be an unfortunate error of nineteenth century Romanticism" (394). That negative connection would continue. Twenty years later, James Berlin equated the alleged deficiencies behind contemporary expressivism with the Romantics' desire to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

create imaginative works of art disassociated from society or history. For Berlin, the ill-conceived emphasis placed upon a "sovereign subject who can transcend language" in an expressivist theory of discourse "is of course a development of the Romantic period in English literary history ("Rhetoric, Poetic, and Culture," 26). For many rhetoricians like Berlin, Romanticism and expressivism eliminate culture and society from consideration. According to these critics, expressivism borrowed from the Romantic desire to erase history and ignore politics from its discourse because such pedestrian concerns frightened the muse of inspiration. In addition, other rhetoricians attacked expressivism for lacking intellectual rigor, yet another unfortunate outcome of its relationship to Romanticism. For example, as Patricia Bizzell argued, expressivism is "a sort of debased Romantic version of creativity" that causes students to think passively because it advocates "instant text production" ("Composing Processes," 4). In this pejorative way, Romanticism and contemporary expressivism have been connected; it seems that the failure of one proves the ineffectiveness of the other.

Indeed, the most strident argument made against expressivism as a rhetoric and as a method of composition involves its association with the so-called Romantic idealization of the writer. According to this critique, expressivism simply replicates the false Romantic view of the self-generating writer. Taking its cue from the Romantics, critics charge, expressivism unwisely champions the author as an autonomous, creative force who possesses innate abilities to discover the truth, without considering the cultural and historical determinants of language and identity. Critics of expressivism such as Berlin, Karen Burke LeFevre, C.H. Knoblauch, and Susan Miller have maintained that an exaggerated reliance upon an a-historical "self" in composition reinforces students' social alienation by encouraging them to identify good writing with the ideal of the autonomous self. Because this focus on autonomy is allegedly intellectually debilitating, any writing strategy based in personal experience and "vision" essentially robs students of both

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the opportunity to acquire "standard" English, and to locate themselves socially within a discourse community.

However, critics of expressivism are correct to link it to Romanticism—but they do so with an incorrect reading of the political and historical genesis involved. I will be arguing that when expressivism and Romanticism view composing as exploring personal experience and voice, they do so from the historical concepts of the political rights of individuals, key concerns in England in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and in the social movements in the United States during the Sixties. Furthermore, Romanticism and expressivism have never denied the centrality of society, history, or politics, contrary to the claims of the above-mentioned critics. In short, I will maintain in the coming chapters that "Expressivist" rhetoric emerged out of two of the most politically charged periods of Western history, indicating that its historical origins demonstrate that it is a politically constructed theory.

In fact, a study of the historical origins of English Romanticism reveals that its political roots inspired discourse in opposition to received authorities and traditions, while an examination of the emergence of contemporary expressivism reveals that it reflects the social conflicts of the Sixties and emerged as an alternative to traditional teacher-centered writing instruction. Therefore, in order to understand the *positive* link between expressivism and Romanticism, I will examine the historical and intellectual conditions out of which the ideas of "personal vision" developed. I hope to recover and re-appraise "authentic voice" in both Romantic and contemporary expressivistic discourse as historical constructions. What might be described as their heightened sense of subjectivity is in fact rooted in the historical and social recognition of democratic discourse that attempted to contravene prevailing "institutional" traditions during the two turbulent periods under investigation. In brief, Romanticism and expressivism even can be considered "counter-hegemonic," in the way Raymond Williams defined "emergent" forms of discourse that defied the dominant culture of the time (Marxism and Literature, 123-127) In part,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the counter-hegemonic functions of Romanticism and expressivism were radical departures from cultural norms, discursive dissent of the *self* inside a specific history where the author was a disruptive agent.

To make this case, I have structured my discussion as follows: Chapter One is an overview of the relationship between expressivism and Romanticism, as viewed by both critics of expressivism, who condemn this association, and expressivists, who all too often side-step the *British* Romantic connection, and even avoid the expressivist label altogether. Here I also reveal how the negative link between Romanticism and expressivism is entangled in the rise of postmodern criticism, as well as the tenuous position of Composition and Rhetoric within English departments, wherein Rhetoric was forced to evolve as a "lower" form of discourse compared to literary criticism.

Next, Chapter Two examines how language and literature in the eighteenth century were conventionally classified to promote cultural hierarchy and rigid social controls. Radical democrats, on the other hand, like Thomas Paine, were at odds with aristocratic customs and traditions in both language and politics. This chapter therefore draws a path from political radicalism to the politics of Romanticism.

To examine this path in the life of a major Romantic figure, Chapter Three focuses on the work of Wordsworth, particularly his position in the debate on language, thought, and society. While closely examining Wordsworth, I would suggest that my analysis is generally applicable to other leading Romantic writers. Like Wordsworth, they too can be identified as representing the historical and social awareness of Romanticism. Even Keats, sometimes considered the least political poet of the era, reveals a relationship to the political climate of his times, as Nicholas Roe demonstrates in his recent study, John Keats and the Culture of Dissent. Still, a focus on Wordsworth is sensible because many contemporary rhetoricians refer to him as the epitome of Romantic sensibility, usually meaning that he lacks intellectual depth, is a-

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

political, and is engrossed in being an "Artist." To critique these positions, I will argue that Wordsworth indeed *is* the epitome of Romanticism, but that is because of his historical scope, his engagement with democratic politics, and his preoccupation with championing "common" people, principles shared by other Romantics. Then, to demonstrate that Wordsworth was not an anomaly, I will conclude this chapter with a brief examination of other Romantics.

In making the transition from English Romanticism to American Expressivism, Chapter Four presents an overview of the Sixties and the political movements that questioned American society, leading some commentators to describe it as a "romantic" vision of social change. The bulk of the chapter explores how these movements launched a radical reassessment of "authority" at all levels, in politics, relationships, discourse, and—especially—education. Student activists who rallied against the educational establishment's link to the corporate-military complex, I argue, may have paved the way for "professional" reform initiatives.

Chapter Five examines these reform proposals, and explores how expressivism as a composition pedagogy emerged out of the radical re-examination of traditional schools and writing, just as Romanticism emerged out of the radical reassessment of aristocratic customs. The chapter also makes clear the social and political aspects of expressivism, especially the work of Ken Macrorie, Donald Murray, and Peter Elbow, who are perhaps the most well-known "expressivists," largely because their notoriety is rooted in being the most frequently vilified by many compositionists. As such, I will confine my analysis to their early work—roughly from 1968 to 1972—to illustrate how it relates to other Sixties' reform initiatives. In this final chapter, I argue that their discursive theories displayed a commitment to democratize the writing classroom, stemming from the politics of the Sixties. Like Wordsworth and the Romantics, voice and self-expression to them had social contexts.

In my Conclusion, I briefly return to the causes behind contemporary critiques of Romanticism and expressivism. I also offer a brief analysis of my own "expressivist" experiences

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and practices, arguing that expressivism can move students toward the growth of imaginative intellects—in *any* classroom, not just writing courses. I explore the way in which a reliance on "the self" across the curriculum, rather than a dependency on authority, or being spoon-fed by top-down information, empowers students—a Romantic vision of classroom practices, if you will.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM: AN OVERVIEW OF EXPRESSIVISM'S RELATIONSHIP TO ROMANTICISM

Some critics of expressivism denounce Romanticism as an a-historical literary movement in order to magnify the failures of expressivism, while others argue that expressivism lacks intellectual rigor due to its association with Romanticism's insipid desire to enchant lovers or worship nature. In most cases, connecting expressivism to Romanticism is a key component of their argument. For the most part, critics who find expressivism to be intellectually irrelevant tend to occupy the traditional camp within Composition and Rhetoric, while critics who fault expressivism for being socially irresponsible tend to bivouac on the left. For critics on the left, expressivism not only follows an a-historical course, but also unwittingly operates to serve an unjust corporate state with its idolization of individualism, the central component of competitive capitalism. And both of these unfortunate traits bear a remarkable resemblance to Romanticism.

In the opinion of its critics, the overriding Romantic sentiment was to escape from the ravages of time and history so as to place the work above the spoils of society. The work itself would represent the artist's individuality, a profoundly spiritual enterprise that could not be achieved in a fallen material world. According to its detractors, the Romantic artist sought to create something purer than society would allow, forever striving to invent an artistic gem that might shine through the dirty materialism of the burgeoning industrial order. The late James Berlin frequently presents this view of Romanticism, an opinion shared by some Marxist *literary* critics, who probably had a hand in shaping the perception of Romanticism as an a-historical genre in the field of Composition and Rhetoric. Therefore, for a rhetorician like Berlin, expressivism denies the social function of language by relying solely on the consciousness of student writers.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Much of Berlin's criticism of expressivism involves its avoidance of the social factors that comprise student consciousness, a charge Marxist literary critics wage against theorists who analyze literature through a mostly aesthetic perspective. Berlin, for instance, repeatedly cites Raymond Williams in an article attacking Romanticism for inaugurating "a creative and imaginative response to the dehumanizing conditions of the new social order" in an attempt to "introduce the aesthetic into ordinary daily experience" ("Rhetoric, Poetic, and Culture," 27). Indeed, a great deal of Berlin's estimation of Romanticism mirrors much of Marxist literary criticism.

For example, in Culture and Society, Raymond Williams maintains that although Romantic writers were "deeply interested" and even directly involved in the "study and criticism of the society of their day" (30), the artists themselves unwittingly created the paradox of *The Romantic Writer* as one who is indifferent to the crude worldliness of politics and society. According to Williams, Romantic artists steeped their work in utopian visions of community, love, and sensibility as poetic alternatives to the brutal realities of the existing economic social order. Meanwhile, any Romantic critique of the increasing harshness of industrialization in society became the "high calling" of their art, which inevitably led toward a disassociation from the very social situation they sought to change. As a result, Williams states, by erecting a privileged place for their unique cultural insights the Romantics ironically painted themselves right out of the historical picture. With their claims of the "artist's autonomy" and the artist's ability to reveal "a higher kind of truth" (44), the Romantics actually demonstrated "the helplessness of a generation" (47) of self-deluded authors.[1]

Terry Eagleton's indictment of Romanticism cuts even deeper. Romantic art not only failed to properly critique the age's social upheavals, but also deliberately tried to escape from it. Eagleton asserts that literature was becoming "virtually synonymous with the 'imaginative'" during the Romantic period, and to "write about what did not exist was somehow more soul

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

stirring and valuable to pen" than the "dehumanizing factory system in Birmingham" (18). Romantic artists were determinedly disengaged from their own material surroundings in search for the sublime. The "callous" nature of early industrial capitalism managed to "uproot whole communities, convert human life into wage-slavery, enforce an alienating labor-process on the newly-formed working class," all the while as the "privilege accorded by the Romantics" was turned into "idle escapism" (19). To make matters worse, the more the Romantics stressed "the sovereignty and autonomy of their imaginations" the more they fell back upon their "splendid remoteness," increasingly "driven back into the solitariness of [their] own creative mind[s]" (20). The Romantic artist was extricated completely from the real problems of the day, intentionally keeping his art safely isolated from the contaminating by-products of history. The purity of the artist's art and the mystery of the imagination acted as "a comfortingly absolute alternative to history itself" (20). For Eagleton, history was a nightmare from which the Romantics were trying to escape.

In a work devoted exclusively to Romanticism's historical amnesia, Jerome McGann's Romantic Ideology amplifies Eagleton's and Williams' critique that the Romantic flight from history follows from the artist's belief in his own select powers of invention. At the heart of Romantic poetry, McGann argues, is the individual who exists as "the determining center of the human world" (132). By focusing on "the centrality of the Self," the Romantic writer casts his ideas into a "trans-historical" exhibition of "eternal truths" (134). As such, the Romantic artist wants to escape from the "world through imagination and poetry." For the Romantic, art can transcend time and place. Indeed, the Romantic fixation on the transcendental qualities of art allows the artist to set himself "free [from] the ruins of history and culture" (89). In time, this becomes "the grand illusion of every Romantic poet" (91). Romanticism, in the broadest sense of the term, is therefore a calculated attempt to refashion the material self into a far more polished subject than the rags of history will allow. In McGann's opinion, Romanticism's emphasis upon

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the creative energies of the individual artist merely represents a solipsistic showcase for historical negligence.

Contemporary expressivism succumbs to the same pitfalls, according to a host of influential figures in the field of Composition and Rhetoric. Like the Romantic artists, who were supposedly preoccupied with the transcendental qualities of writing, expressivism also clings to a misguided view of liberating student writers through private inspiration; in reality, it only sets them free from caring about history or social problems. To its critics, expressivism occupies this socially irresponsible position within the discipline because it adheres to the Romantic conception of composition, whereby the so-called infatuation with the writer's personal voice lets the student remain safely sequestered from either the consequences of history or from fully engaging in it. In this way, language serves no other purpose than to exist for its own sake; student discourse becomes divorced from the reality of language's social origins and power relations. Only the "self" matters. For the student who practices expressivism, "reality is a personal and private construct," Berlin argues. (Rhetoric and Reality, 145). What's more, like Eagleton's conception of the Romantic poets who preferred to write about what did not exist, the student writer who follows an expressivist model will also "view the material world as only lifeless matter" (ibid). Language for the expressivist exists as a private abstraction. In short, just as some literary critics complained about Romanticism's inability to critique the evils produced by England's burgeoning industrialization, so some rhetoricians implicate expressivism for failing to critique America's corporate culture. As far as many critics of expressivism are concerned, if Romanticism can be categorized as an a-historical literary invention that ignores social ills, expressivism must also be condemned because it originated from the Romantic model of the inspired writer.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Berlin's Wall of Resistance

James Berlin makes this connection continuously. Throughout his significant career in the field, Berlin remained one of the most ardent critics of expressivism's capacity to negate the social aspect of writing, while postulating the purely personal qualities of it. Berlin persistently included the Romantic myth of personal creativity as an unfortunate influence on contemporary expressivism. In one of his earliest works, Berlin argued that expressivism in America comes into being in the 1920's and thirties with the advent of "liberal culture," the direct development of a philosophical idealism which encouraged "the cultivation of the self." Joined at the cultural hip, liberalism and expressivism were "derived from [their] ties to Brahminical romanticism" (Rhetoric and Reality, 73). Romanticism made in America is not simply caught up in a misguided celebration of the self. It's also elitist. Meanwhile, its elitism cannot save it from being just as preoccupied with tales of private inspiration or from becoming disengaged from history. For the expressivist writer, "reality is a personal and private construct" (145) and anyone who follows an expressivist model will turn away from the material. Acts of self-expression disengage writers from society so completely that the "real" world ceases to exist.

Berlin continues this line of attack in his most well-known classification of rhetorics within the field (1988), charging that expressivism relies on the Romantic idolization of "the self" and therefore turns students away from the reality of their material surroundings. In "Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class," perhaps the most provocative taxonomy Berlin devised, the field was divided three ways: cognitive rhetoric, expressionistic rhetoric, and social-epistemic rhetoric.[2] In that essay, he denigrates cognitive and expressionistic rhetoric, while celebrating social-epistemic rhetoric as the best course for socially empowering students. On the other hand, Berlin considers cognitive and expressionistic rhetorics as essentially "preparing students for the world of corporate capitalism" (482), a mission he finds academically and

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

socially repugnant. Berlin reserves some of his harshest words for expressivism, however, which he considers historically disengaging and socially dissembling.

In his broad outline of expressivism's ineffectuality, Berlin reiterates his observation that expressivism descends from Romanticism, although this time around he links it to nineteenth-century British Romanticism, departing from his original remarks regarding twentieth-century, American "Brahminical romanticism." Contemporary expressivism now is akin to the "romantic recoil from the urban horrors created by nineteenth century capitalism" (484). Expressivism likewise places student-writers in an idyllic space that shields them from contemplating the disruptive nature of present-day capitalism or from recognizing its oppressive activities—although expressivists will never admit to this, Berlin claimed. Enlarging his attack against expressivism, Berlin insisted that expressivists fraudulently claim they are being socially responsible because students *are* empowered (one-at-a-time) in an expressivist classroom. Thus, Berlin included another fault with expressivists: They're disingenuous. He points out that expressivists believe that the "discovered self" found through the "self expressed" automatically positions the writer squarely at the center of political and cultural dissent. That simply can't be, Berlin insists. Language is not a private matter, and therefore any writing theory based on privacy is inherently ill-conceived. To add insult to injury, advocates of expressivist rhetoric claim it can resist the imposition of "current economic, political, and social arrangements." But this resistance is "always constructed in individual terms" (487), and the individual is incapable of such herculean opposition to society, Berlin contends. Resistance can only be achieved through a communal effort, and expressivism is clearly not a socially constructed writing pedagogy.

Berlin augments his case against expressivism with an additional accusation: expressivist rhetoric actually serves the elite state apparatus in establishing and maintaining its hegemony. This unfortunate fact can be attributed to expressivism's commitment to self-discovery or private

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

inspiration. Whatever social goals expressivism presumes to incorporate into its system will fall short of its mission since that power of resistance rests on the false assumption that "discovering the self" (484) or "realizing one's unique voice" (486) truly empowers the writer. No single self can go it alone, Berlin argues. Fighting single-handedly against all of the tyrannical forces of the corporate state, or lashing out against cultural authority with only private vision as a weapon is like that philosophical tree that falls in the woods and no one is there to hear it: does it make a sound? For one thing, a lone writer does not possess the fortitude or insight to marshal an assault against the dark forces of the corporate state. Meanwhile, a veneration of individualism inside the classroom ultimately plays into the hands of those very satanic forces a writer is presumably critiquing. In the long run, Berlin asserts, "expressionistic rhetoric is easily co-opted by the very capitalist forces it opposes" (487). Expressivism is actually an unwitting partner in a system that ultimately enslaves the very students expressivists so proudly claim that they are freeing. As a rhetorical device, expressivism unknowingly becomes employed to bolster the individualistic, entrepreneurial spirit that capitalism prizes so dearly (and that expressivists claim to be criticizing).

> After all, this rhetoric can be used to reinforce the entrepreneurial virtues capitalism most values: individualism, private initiative, the confidence for risk taking, the right to be contentious with authority (especially the state). It is indeed not too much to say that the ruling elites in business, industry, and government are those most likely to nod in assent to the ideology inscribed in expressionistic rhetoric. (487)

Expressivism is merely the rhetorical handmaiden of the "ruling" establishment. So while Berlin accuses expressivism of being an a-historical construct, he also insists that expressivism unwittingly serves to reinforce the position of those most likely to wield social power. As it turns out, then, expressivism *is* actually a part of the history-making process according to Berlin—but

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

for all of the wrong reasons. Expressivism ultimately arrives in the classroom bearing all of the rhetorical strategies that charm students into false consciousness.

Berlin repeats this argument in a later essay included in The Politics of Writing Instruction: Post-Secondary. Once again, expressivism's inability to oppose the actual lines of power embedded in corporate capitalism spring from its relationship to Romanticism. According to the Romantic view of self-worth and the power of self-expression, liberating creativity is supposed to be a response to the dehumanizing conditions of productivity, and "this is of course a development of the Romantic period in English literary history" (26). For Berlin, expressivism's response to the growth of global capitalism in the United States is comparable to Romanticism's response to the rise of industrial capitalism in England: both rhetorical philosophies view writers as capable of *creating* their way out of the material mess. By their own designs, Romanticism and expressivism seek to transcend time and place. Private inspiration must stand above social concerns. An even more fundamental flaw exists, according to Berlin: Romanticism and expressivism could never and will never adequately fulfill their claims of substantially critiquing social hierarchies since their self-prescribed imaginative superiority places them outside of history. Romanticism and expressivism have too much at stake in keeping the "aesthetic safe from [the] fallen realm" of a material world "made ugly by the ruthless pursuit of profit" (27). Clearly, expressivism's grand illusion of empowering the self through the magic of invention can be traced directly to its Romantic heritage. As both traffic in the lie that history can be shaped by the power of the solitary, imaginative writer, neither positions the author within social consciousness, and therefore one is as hopelessly misguided as the other.

More Connections and More Detractors

Berlin's objection to expressivism is mirrored by other rhetoricians who similarly fault it for feverishly solemnizing individualism, which not only causes students to view the historical world as a mere side-show, but actually turns them off to real social problems entirely. For

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

example, James V. Catano argued that expressivism's preoccupation with personal identity contributes to America's obsession with "the myth of the self-made man," a myth that "helps to mask the disturbing presence of corporate power" (421). Although Catano mainly focuses on American "myth-makers" like Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson, the Romantic legerdemain remains a presence in his critique.

> By appealing to a neo-romantic sense of individual self-creativity and personal expression, the myth implies that a true self is available to the select individual who achieves the necessary economic power or the truly expressive voice. Unfortunately, the myth also urges its audience to ignore the actualities of mundane social training, sexual bias, and institutional determination. (ibid)

Expressivism encourages students to believe that their private visions may amount to scoring an economic jackpot by attaining "true" selfhood inside the classroom. Moreover, while students buy into the myth rhetorically they will necessarily equate it with economic fortune since both expressivism and the marketplace reward individual initiative. Such assumptions then wrench students from caring about social issues and their own "social training." In the end, expressivism fosters a rather indolent attitude towards the more serious business of training students to exist in a society that Catano identifies as racist, sexist, and corrupt. Each student will be personally damaged by such a curriculum, while society suffers as well. Expressivism is a "self"-deluding curriculum, and expressivism's dependency on "neo-romantic ideology" is socially debilitating.

Catano directs some of his severest criticism toward Peter Elbow, perhaps the most recognized proponent of expressivism. Catano sees a connection between the self-making myth and a masculine conception of reality, a decidedly flawed concept that commits "a fundamental error by downplaying the importance of social definition and equating masculine growth with an escape from the boundaries of origins (sex, race, class), and institutions" (422). By practicing an expressivist rhetoric, students will disregard how society influences individual development,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

while inaccurately believing that the material world is borderless for every other individual. In the expressivist classroom that Catano outlines, no *others* exist. Catano also argues that expressivism, at best, is ignorant of its own gender bias, or, at worst, its leading figures are sexists themselves. Catano states that Elbow clearly betrays a "masculinist vision of writing behavior" throughout his own work, especially in Writing with Power. In Catano's opinion, Elbow markedly identifies with the masculine belief in "self-expression and self-creation" that essentially "rejects the feminine" (430). In this view, expressivism's underlying machismo smoothly blends with the entrepreneurial orientation of the myth as well. As students attempt to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps through personal inspiration, Catano argues, they mirror the bourgeois myth that all it takes is personal motivation or hard work to succeed economically. By advocating a "neo-romantic" version of the self-made man inside the classroom, expressivists like Elbow preserve the shabbier side of the myth: a "downplaying of social needs, rejection of the feminine, and subtle endorsements of aggression, competition, selfishness, and class bias" (435). For Catano, students who participate in an expressivist classroom will not only be prevented from caring about social ills, they can be seen as contributing to them. Expressivism, then, causes students to see the world as a mean, nasty, and brutish place, and in turn act with equal cruelty. Expressivism offers students little choice. After all, only those who master the rhetoric of individualism will come out as winners. This cut-throat "rhetoric of masculinity" exists because expressivism appeals "to a neo-romantic sense of individual self-creativity and personal expression" (423).

It is also obvious to Karen Burke LeFevre that expressivism fuels selfishness and hinders students from social engagement. LeFevre believes that these problems can be traced directly to the Romantic conception of personal creativity, which has its own tarnished lineage. For LeFevre, Romanticism follows in the wayward footsteps of a "Platonic view of the writer who works alone in search for truth" (15). Together, they are equally myopic to view invention taking

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

place "largely through introspective self-examination" (15). Singularly, Romanticism's faults run even deeper. In Invention as a Social Act, LeFevre relies heavily on Berlin's work in the field and echoes Eagleton's accusations that Romantic artists sought to separate themselves from the debilitating influences of a corrupt material world. "In the Romantic tradition," she maintains, "the inspired writer is apart from others and wants to keep it that way, either to prevent himself and his creations from being corrupted by society or to maintain a necessary madness" (17).[3] Apparently, Romantic artists were so anti-social that insanity was preferable to a healthy coexistence with other humans. LeFevre contends that expressivism borrows the idea of invention occurring "within an introspective, isolated writer" (14) from the Romantics and therefore becomes just as a-social and a-historical. Furthermore, any teacher who practices expressivism in the classroom will automatically "abstract the writer from society" (29). An expressivist pedagogy isolates student writers.

Nonetheless, LeFevre insists that expressivism indeed impairs students by short-circuiting their chances of recognizing the social aspects of writing. Instead, an expressivist rhetoric celebrates a "private, asocial" view of writing that does "not require others" in its quest for "uncovering the ultimate truth." She adds that "echoes of Rousseau and Wordsworth are evident in these views" (15), which characteristically glorify the innate processes of invention found in children. LeFevre assumes that expressivists insist that offering anything less than this in a classroom would stifle "what we naturally possess" (16). LeFevre accuses Elbow of harboring a similar infantile conception of the writing process as well. Like Catano, she cites Elbow's Writing with Power as evidence, a text that seems to be frequently cited as one of the most obvious examples of expressivism's failures, according to some social epistemicians. "This romantic view of composing," LeFevre points out, perceives "the social and material world" as hindering "what we naturally possess" (17). The outside world remains a threat to an expressivist curriculum because the material world imperiled the purity of the individual writer during the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Romantic era, too. Like Romanticism before it, expressivism presumably wants to save the rhetorical child by advocating an indifference to mature worldly matters. For LeFevre, expressivism and Romanticism are fixated with juvenile images of the writing process that negate the more sophisticated social structure of writing. Like other rhetoricians, LeFevre thus condemns expressivism via Romanticism. By coupling the two, rhetoricians can demonstrate the flaws in one by proving the fallibility of the other.

C.H. Knoblauch also faults expressivism for depending on the Romantic model of discourse. An expressivist rhetoric, Knoblauch argues, ignores or "reduce[s] the visibility of grammatical, generic, and other massively real social constraints on language use in favor of 'expressive' discourse, presumably the signature of the individual language user and presumably associated with a degree of authenticity or sincerity inevitably compromised in more public statements" ("Rhetorical Constructions" 133). Although Knoblauch credits expressivism with de-emphasizing "the degrading and largely delusory preoccupation with standards, [and] measurements" (132) in a writing curriculum, he believes it does more harm than good. Students in an expressivist program will cultivate ideas about "self-actualization and personal freedom" which are ultimately "dangerous" since the "stern, politically intransigent world outside the (usually beleaguered) 'romantic' classroom" (131) will mock students for believing in such impractical and sentimental notions as personal liberty or individuality. Unlike Berlin, Knoblauch does not think that the "real" world beyond the classroom views individualism or self-actualization as socially redeeming. The world beyond the classroom is harsh, and personal freedom, although a sound theory, is rarely practiced or embraced by the society at large. Impersonal, unfriendly institutions rule. An expressivist curriculum therefore merely creates a safe-house that temporarily shelters students from the hostility beyond the classroom. In the end, Knoblauch maintains, expressivism suckers students into believing in their own self-

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

empowerment, only to be ridiculed by society as hopelessly "romantic" once they leave the unreal sanctuary of the classroom.

What's more, a teacher will likewise be duped by the false promises of expressivist theories. Like students, an expressivist instructor is rendered incapable of handling "real" social questions beyond the "(usually beleaguered) 'romantic'" classroom. "Failing to assess objective social conditions," Knoblauch contends, "students end up cynical about the manipulating liberalism of their teachers while teachers eventually blunt their energies struggling against institutional realities whose power they have not fully enough come to terms with" (134). In the overall scheme of things, expressivism's ability to mar teacher and student alike can be attributed to its Romantic origins and its a-social doctrines, a view Knoblauch shares other social epistemic rhetoricians. "The tendency of expressionist rhetoric, from such British romantics as Coleridge to contemporary advocates of 'expressive writing,'" Knoblauch asserts, "has been to privilege imaginative consciousness apart from any explicitly social shaping of its character" (133). Once again, expressivism fails to work as an appropriate writing strategy because of its dependency on a Romantic view of composing.

Knoblauch, in collaboration with Lil Brannon, repeats this argument five years later in Critical Teaching and the Idea of Literacy. Little has changed after five years in Knoblauch's mind regarding the failures of expressivism and its ties to Romanticism. In fact, Critical Teaching includes the Coleridge passage from his 1988 College English article verbatim. However, a book-length study of rhetoric now allows Knoblauch and Brannon to devote even more space to a condemnation of expressivism. Once again, a passing reference is made praising expressivism for subverting traditional rote theories of writing, while Knoblauch and Brannon manage to go so far as to suggest that "the pedagogies of expressivism are the precursors of critical teaching" (126). But the authors ultimately round-up the usual defects regarding expressivism's infractions: "its myopic focus;" its tendency to "emphasize the power of the free

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

individual to change society;" its failure "to study or even acknowledge the dynamics of institutional power," and its "tendency to mislead well-intentioned teachers" (126-7). According to the authors, all of these faults stem from a contemporary "expressivist ideology" that borrows "from such British Romantics as Coleridge" the assumption that "individual, autonomous consciousness ... comprises social and cultural experience" (135). Expressivism misses the rhetorical mark owing to its Romantic ancestry. In this particular case, Coleridge is the culprit.

The Postmodern Problem with (Self)Expression

In her denunciation of expressivism, Susan Miller hauls another Romantic poet into the picture when she characterizes Blake's attempt to work outside traditional modes of mass production typifying "the editorial fiction of the unified, consistent, controlling author" (Rescuing the Subject, 17). Miller considers this previously fanciful (but historically impossible) depiction of the artist being capable of transcending the realities of social influences so preposterous in the postmodern era that it is now "easily deniable claptrap" (3). Due in large part to "contemporary theorists in other fields" who have "so thoroughly deconstructed" the legend of "unitary 'authorship'" (3), rhetoricians can now move on to the more serious business of identifying the social influences behind discourse while refuting it as solely a private matter. Self-expression is so thoroughly discredited in Miller's opinion that she does not even bother to mention it by name. It's simply a dead issue.

Miller appears to take Roland Barthes' declaration that the author is dead in the postmodern era one step further when she assumes that the "writing self" never existed in the first place. "Textuality," she asserts, "the concatenation of texts that have accumulated and formed discourse communities over time, has provided us with this metaphor of the writing self." Even the writing self *itself* functioned "within specifically textual institutions" (17). Discourse occurs only in its relationship to institutionally inscribed conditions. For Miller, the writer-ly subject comes to life within the purview of institutionally defined practices. And to support her

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

case, Miller refers to Blake's artistic existence taking place *only* in the aftermath of being institutionally discovered. "Blake was not an author," Miller maintains, until the works "were made significant when they were 'found' by a patron who could get them into the academic discourse that would 'appreciate' them" (ibid). Blake's poems magically appear as artifacts once they are officially recognized. Prior to that, Blake's writing was socially stillborn material incapable of coming to life on its own. One aspect of Miller's argument therefore centers on the premise that the 'subject' of writing can only emerge through official reception and response, by a highly selective academic audience. But Miller never allows the institutionally sanctioned theory of discourse to become the focal point of solving the mystery behind lost subjectivity in the postmodern age. So how will she rescue the subject? Miller's plan involves coining a new term: "textual rhetoric." Textual rhetoric, she argues, reveals the "virtuoso performance in writing [that] takes place within cultural, textual, situational and graphic conventions" (150). Yet, that appears to contradict her other statements about the autonomous qualities existence of a text since a "virtuoso performance" strongly suggests that the writer does engage in some aspect of personal creativity in order to *perform* before a linguistic community.[4] Granted, it's a performance that occurs inside a cultural context, but if no one is around to listen does that mean the act of writing never takes place in and of itself? Nonetheless, in order to curtail the dominance of the *personal* writing subject, Miller, like so many other critics of expressivism, hauls some aspect of Romanticism into her formula. If the writing "subject" is to be saved in these postmodern times, then the so-called Romantic fiction of subjectivity must be destroyed, or quickly labeled as "deniable claptrap."

In a later work, Miller remains concerned with the position of the subject in the writing class, slightly varying her stance on what constitutes a worthwhile writing curriculum. She maintains that only the "situational" characteristics of writing are important. In Textual Carnivals: The Politics of Composition, Miller adopts the concepts of high and low forms of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

cultural development outlined in Peter Stallybrass and Allon White's The Politics and Poetics of Transgression, and applies them to the historical evolution in English departments between high and low forms of discourse. According to Miller, courses devoted to the study of literary texts are privileged over courses dedicated to student writing. In part, the "great tradition" of literature reveals to students how language can be mastered by the authorized voice, wherein the literary texts under examination embody profound examples of cultural, universal, or national interests. On the other hand, Miller argues, student writing occupies a significantly lower place on the totem of what constitutes "good" writing. A composition course is presumably designed to raise the student to the rhetorical standards contained in valuable literary works. This obligation in turn justifies the "lower" elementary work of learning and teaching vernacular grammar, syntax, and spelling. (It also means that lower-status, non-literary courses will be taught by low-status adjuncts, graduate students, and other "non-professionals.") Thus, the field of Composition and Rhetoric within departments of English deals with "lowly" student writing, and maintains a lower position of importance relative to the higher position afforded to literary writing (1-83). However, Miller reserves some of the blame for Composition's lowly status on theorists and practitioners within the field who have concentrated on the student's subjectivity over the past three decades rather than "situating" student writing in a social context, and some of the onus rests on the concepts associated with a "romantic" view of writing.

In Miller's estimation, Composition's preoccupation with subjectivity actually began with an earnest attempt to reform writing courses. From the inception of required composition courses around the turn of the century, writing instruction in the United States frequently sought to diagnose "bad" or grammatically "contaminated" student writing in an effort to cleanse it or promote better rhetorical health, especially in relation to the "higher" forms found in literary works (56-58). As stated above, this activity occurred at the "low" end of the English department spectrum. One aspect of the reform movement that arose in the seventies, Miller argues,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

proposed to shift attention away from a diagnostic pedagogy to one that appealed to the student's "`personal` experiences" (61).

> ... newly established composition courses, changed. Reasoning about these changes usually attributes them to positive educational "reforms" without questioning their equal participation in the institutional constitution of a new course for a different sort of student. In what appears to have been a progressive attempt to allow the romantically conceived active learner to write "better," new criteria for making assignments took over. These criteria said that topics for writing should be of "interest" to students and should be about subjects that the students "knew something" about. (59).

Such reforms were needed, Miller admits, although the alteration brought about the unwelcome residual effects of denying students the chance of "participating in public discourse" (ibid). Miller therefore falls in line with those rhetoricians who view the introduction of the "romantic" or "personal" in discourse as displacing the social uses of language. One way of rectifying this problem, Miller claims, involves a study of the situations that all writers confront. Even student writers should write about themselves as student writers, so to speak. Therefore, in Miller's opinion an appropriate composition program would concentrate on "disclosing connections between specific social and textual superstructures and highlighting how writing situations construct their participant writers before, during, and after they undertake any piece of writing" (198). Miller's objective appears to involve deconstructing the entire experience of all forms of discourse in order to disclose its true social or political purposes. By advancing a "situational" writing project that encompasses a more politically-minded environment, Miller anticipates that the writing subject will be saved from the pitfalls of an old fashioned belief in artistic vision or private inspiration.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Lester Faigley also wants to rehabilitate the subject in the postmodern era. He recommends incorporating more technology (computers specifically) into the classroom, since using technology in a rhetorical setting will reveal and replicate the cultural transformations that already have fractured the self in society in the first place. In a sweeping analysis of Composition Studies, English Studies, and postmodern criticism—which in some ways mirrors Miller's Textual Carnivals—Faigley examines the current crisis brewing in the field, concluding that the questions being addressed in Composition Studies boil down to one key issue: subjectivity. "Many of the fault lines in Composition Studies," he proclaims, "are disagreements over the subjectivities that teachers of writers want students to occupy" (18). Neither a fan of the "personal experience essay" (134), nor an advocate of creating a communal or socially-oriented curriculum (230-2), Faigley believes that the postmodern climate has thoroughly unraveled the unified self, while "holding up community as an ideal" in our "intensely urbanized society" invariably leads to "a way of avoiding politics" (232). The solution lies in embracing the socially splintered self, not hiding from it, and the best way to achieve this postmodern "utopia [is] made possible by networked computers" (167). Faigley adds that "electronically mediated language brings about a dispersal of subjectivity," which inherently reproduces the cultural forces behind the "dispersal of subjectivity" in the postmodern era (229). "The multiplicity of subjectivity," Faigley concludes, "is not necessarily a thing to fear because in classrooms it fosters discursive richness and creativity" (230). Not only is the "author" dead, but so is the *whole* subject.

In College English six years earlier, Faigley already had placed his faith in the prospect of rescuing student writers with technology. In a section of the essay titled "Toward a Synthesis," Faigley ascertains that "current technologies for electronic communications bring the potential for gaining access to large bodies of information." Faigley admits, however, that the potential hazard of political or corporate "control" of this new form of communication indeed exists. But not to worry: "People find ways to adapt technology for their own interests" (538). Besides,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

adjusting to a Big Brother-like domination of current technologies, as it turns out, would be a welcome relief from continuing to practice the discredited writing strategies of the past. Of course, expressivism was part of that past. And as a way of eclipsing expressivism, Faigley mounts the usual attack against it, which invariably includes its connection to Romanticism. The "early expressive view of writing," Faigley contends, "revived certain Romantic notions about composing and were instigators of a 'neo-Romantic' view of process" (529). One of the qualities valued by contemporary "Romantic expressivism" is spontaneity, Faigley argues, which "became important to the process movement primarily though Peter Elbow's Writing Without Teachers" (530). According to Faigley, Elbow clearly owes the idea of the instinctive writer to the Romantics.

> Elbow's point is one of the standards of Romantic theory: that "good" writing does not follow rules but reflects the process of the creative imagination. At times Wordsworth and to a lesser extent Coleridge seem to argue that expressivism precludes all intentionality. (ibid)

This reliance on the innate abilities of student writers strikes Faigley as an archaic and ill-conceived philosophy. Moreover, expressivism "hides the social nature of language" (531). In Faigley's view, expressivism is a compromised writing strategy. It's a burnt-out and a-social form of discourse. Instead, according to Faigley, what is needed to rectify composition studies and bring it up to date is a steady diet of technology. Unless "current technologies for electronic communications" are introduced into the plan, Composition and Rhetoric will remain a lightweight discipline and students will be strapped with a losing set of rhetorical values and standards.

Traditional Complaints

Stamped by a different political outlook than social-epistemic or postmodern critics, traditionalists in the field also are worried that expressivism will deprive students of soberly

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

undertaking discourse analysis and recognizing its social import. Students in an expressivist classroom will fail to grow socially because they are not writing *academically*. Therefore, traditionalists are as concerned as social-epistemicians with the socializing function of discourse, but the crux of their argument now rests on the ability of the academy to provide students with essential social skills. One of those skills is to acquire academic discourse, which in turn leads to advancing the students' cognitive development, a pivotal social process that students will fail to achieve if they are sitting in an expressivist classroom. For many traditionalists, then, the main objection to expressivism has been its lack of intellectual rigor, which accounts for its inability to engage students at a suitably serious academic level. Students should be socialized into existing academic traditions, which by virtue of its very existence will adequately prepare the student to become a better citizen. But, in order for students to participate in the development of American culture and properly examine the urgent questions of our day, they must learn to write in the language of the academy. Without it, students will become practitioners of empty rhetoric. In the opinion of many traditionalists, expressivism does not belong in higher education because it clings to a simplistic view of writing and therefore can neither develop advanced levels of language use nor can it enlarge cognitive activities. It's simply too hackneyed. At the same time, an expressivist pedagogy refuses to address important social questions. An expressivist curriculum never raises the truly crucial issues that must be examined. It's simply too solipsistic. Moreover, as many traditionalists argue, expressivism *wants* to stand outside of society or history, especially outside of the standards imposed by the academy. Expressivism is anti-traditional by nature, and therefore expressivism is opposed to the traditions of the academy. Students who are exposed to expressivism will be cheated out of an enlightening experience—and they won't even know it, since expressivism pretends to be empowering them. As expected, whatever fatuous qualities expressivism possesses can be shown to derive mostly from Romanticism.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

David Bartholomae, for example, values academic discourse as the real testing ground for student writing. Anything less is inappropriate. With "lessons in critical reading" students can learn to "feel and see their position inside a text they did not invent" ("Writing with Teachers," 65). Clearly, the position of "the text" supersedes self-expression or personal experience, or the ability of the students to "invent" for themselves. Weighty, meaningful discourse lies beyond the student, and the students' senses ("feel and see") can be enhanced by studying great writing. Private vision and inspiration still exist for students, as far as Bartholomae is concerned, except now it will be administered *through* the powerful influence of academically sanctioned authors. Students who study and engage in academic discourse will be made to see more poignantly and feel more profoundly, something the students cannot achieve on their own.

For Bartholomae, students should be schooled in mastering the discourses of academic life, "to see through someone else's powerful language" ("Introduction," Ways of Reading 4). As a result, students should be exposed to the "pure, muscular, lean, [and] taut" versions of academic discourse, "the language of truth and reason" ("Writing with Teachers" 62). Academic writing leads toward empowerment, he argues, a discursive coup de maitre. As Bartholomae noted in his well-known essay on academic discourse, "Inventing the University," students must be afforded the opportunity to learn the language of the academy in order to assume its authority. Students will gain a degree of personal and social sophistication, as well as attain political empowerment, if the enlightening forces of the academy are allowed to wash over them, so that "their initial progress will be marked by their abilities to take on the role of privilege, by their abilities to establish authority" (20). Through a stage of rhetorical osmosis, students will absorb a great deal of social potency by being exposed to academic discourse. On the other hand, Bartholomae claims, expressivism will not take students to that intellectual higher ground: It is "the master trope" of a false desire to free the student from "the institutional pressures of cultural influence" which stands "outside of history" ("Writing with Teachers" 62). Expressivism

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

proclaims that it empowers students by freeing them from institutions, like the academy, but in the long run students are bamboozled. They are neither set free, nor do they learn how to write properly. In Bartholomae's opinion, the whole expressivist project is grounded in hypocrisy, and students will be cheated out of a decent *higher* education. In many ways, Bartholomae shares the sentiments offered by Knoblauch and Brannon about the failures of an expressivist pedagogy. Students only will be liberated in their minds but not in fact.

Expressivism for many traditionalists is therefore a trap. Students entangled in liberating ideology, according to Bartholomae, are led nowhere. During an "Exchange" with Peter Elbow in a 1995 edition of College Composition and Communication, Bartholomae accuses expressivists like Elbow of unwisely honoring the solitary writer. "As I am thinking through this argument," he states, "I read Peter's work as part of a much larger project to preserve and reproduce the figure of the author, an independent, self-creative, self-expressive subjectivity" ("Writing with Teachers," 65). Expressivism merely promotes "sentimental realism" (i.e. Romanticism) with its "celebration of point-of-view" (69). Instead, students need to "master the figures and forms . . . [of] 'academic writing'" (71).

Like Bartholomae, Patricia Bizzell and Mike Rose want to help students master academic discourse. Rose considers a "special kind of academic argument" superior to "a series of emotionally charged appeal[s] and exhortations" ("Remedial Writing," 111). Overall, he advocates academic discourse over other forms because it enables students to grow cognitively. "Academic expositional discourse seems to be more cognitively demanding than simple narration or description" (121). For Rose, "reflective" writing merely trains the students "to be simple and safe" (114). Expressivism denies students explicit practice within the academy's discursive traditions, aggravating the potential for failure, especially among students from a certain social class. Rose argues that students should be required to enter into the rigorous requirements of learning the discursive standards of the academy to enter into "a complete, active, struggling

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

engagement with facts and principles of a discipline, an encounter with the discipline's texts and the incorporation of them into one's own work, the framing of one's knowledge within myriad conventions that help define a discipline" ("The Language of Exclusion" 359). Rose's belief in the hard-fought ability to master academic discourse is particularly relevant for economically disadvantaged students.

In Lives on the Boundary, Rose examines the social conditions behind students who come to college lacking the discourse conventions of the academy and are then stigmatized as intellectually inferior students. (Much of the book details Rose's own history as an academically underprivileged student and the personal struggles he underwent in order to succeed in the academy.) The linguistic 'problems' that many students incorporate into their writing—"teachers talk of writers as suffering from specifiable, locatable defects, deficits, and handicaps that can be localized, circumscribed, and remedied" (210)—can best be understood as social class markers rather than signs of intellectual shortcomings. Students who are academically underprepared are likely to arrive from underprivileged economic backgrounds—like Rose himself. Rose's major concern in his study is that these "defects" have been viewed by the academy as signs of intellectual deficiency, whereas what they actually demonstrate are social class divisions. Rose wants students who come to the academy *economically* underprepared to eventually cross that social boundary and enjoy the fruits of the academy. This border crossing can be achieved if students are better trained cognitively. Once this occurs, formerly underprivileged students will be made more upwardly mobile. Higher education can proffer social and economic empowerment. It is the great equalizer, so long as students are trained properly. For these reasons, Rose argues, "the challenge that has always faced American education ... is how to create both the social and the cognitive means to enable a diverse citizenry to develop their ability" (225). Expressivism fails to do that.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Like Rose, Patricia Bizzell views expressivism as a valueless enterprise. Students must be trained in a rigorous curriculum if they are ever expected to hone their cognitive skills and eventually succeed at an advanced academic level.[5] Expressivism doesn't even come close in fulfilling this goal. For Bizzell, expressivism's inferiority can be pegged to its reliance on the Romantic view of the writer. Bizzell argues that expressivism's myth of inspiration is "a part of a more general notion in our culture, a sort of debased Romantic version of creativity wherein verbal artifacts are supposed to be produced as easily and inevitably as a hen lays eggs" ("Composing Processes," 4). Her hen-house analogy reduces both Romanticism and expressivism into barn-yard activities. Clearly, if expressivists embarrassingly fail to generate an adequate pedagogy, then one can undoubtedly blame Romanticism for hatching the idea of inspiration in the first place.

Similarly, Linda Flower has problems with expressivism's Romantic roots. She finds that expressivism falls far short of an effective theory of writing instruction because the Romantic "myth of the inspired writer" does not include processes and strategies for problem-solving and goal-setting. A leading proponent of cognitive rhetorics, Flower argues that expressivism bases its existence upon "Coleridge's account" of writing "Kubla Khan" (42). Contained within Coleridge's statement, Flower insists, are all of the elements of the inspired writer that expressivism foolishly reproduces in a writing curriculum: the creative vision comes without effort; it comes fully articulated; it arrives instantaneously, and it can't be replicated because it's a gift from the muse. By foisting this "myth of inspiration" onto students, writing instructors will cause students to be passive, rather than active in practicing and working towards solving the problems inherent in formulating good writing. Expressivism lets students off the hook. Owing to its Romantic connection, expressivism embraces inspiration at the expense of critical thinking. For traditionalists like Flower, expressivism displaces students within the academy from growing intellectually. It is the flip-side of the social epistemic argument. While traditionalists brand

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

expressivism as disengaging students intellectually, social epistemicians accuse expressivism of abstracting students from society and reality. Although both camps attack expressivism for different reasons, they frequently share a common strategy: connecting it to Romanticism. In the opinion of many rhetoricians, then, expressivism is an anti-intellectual and a-social method of writing instruction because of its association with the Romantic view of the artist.

Do ('Romantic') Expressivists Even Exist?

As expected, this negative view of "romanticism," coupled with the intensity of criticism leveled against "expressivism," places practitioners of expressivist rhetoric in an awkward scholarly position within the field. As a result, many expressivists tend to be defensive about their goals and practices, at times apologizing for the Romantic label, avoiding the word "romantic" altogether, and even eschewing the use of the term "expressivist" entirely in order to elude any hints of advocating "romanticism" in the classroom. As such, few expressivists *celebrate* what they do as "Romantic," or even "Expressivistic."

In a 1996 article in College English, for example, Thomas G. O'Donnell tries to wage "A Defense of Expressivist Rhetorics," as the subtitle declares, by challenging the "popular mischaracterizations" of expressivism as a "simplistic" theory loaded with misguided concepts like "'essence,' 'authentic voice,' or 'unique selfhood'" (432). But in his defense of expressivism O'Donnell, proceeds to defend it by invoking the work of the Austrian-born philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, a strategy clearly designed to augment expressivism's intellectual make-up while severing its Romantic ties. "I see expressivist methods converging more with Wittgenstein's" belief in the communal nature of language, O'Donnell argues, rather than the Romantic "confidence in 'private truths'" (436-7). In fact, O'Donnell avoids the word altogether, steering clear of any sign that his version of expressivism depends on any kind of Romanticism. By incorporating Wittgenstein into his argument, O'Donnell hopes to prove that expressivism depends on a more intellectually robust theory of discourse than any Romanticist can ever offer.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

His "Defense of Expressivist Rhetorics" therefore ignores the very concept at the heart of most critiques of expressivism. Instead of addressing the "Romantic" problem in order to defend expressivism, O'Donnell pretends the negative association does not even exist, even though it does.

In fact, the vigorous assaults waged against expressivism left Stephen M. Fishman and Lucille Parkinson MacCarthy wondering if expressivism was "dead." They, too, see a need for "a defense of expressivism" ("Is Expressivism Dead?" 647), which for them does include acknowledging the Romantic controversy. In their opinion, expressivism has been devalued because critics affiliate it with a stereotypically defined view of Romanticism. "At the center of each of these criticisms," they write, "is the view that, as heirs to romanticism, contemporary expressivists have a naïve view of the writer as independent, as possessing innate abilities to discover truth" (648).

However, Fishman and McCarthy shy from the debate somewhat by evading the *British* Romantic lineage typically used by critics of expressivism. The Romanticism of Blake, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Byron, and Shelley, never finds a place in their defense. Instead, a different kind of Romantic heritage is presented. As a means of revitalizing the legitimacy of expressivism, the authors prefer to "recognize expressivism as rooted historically in eighteenth-century German" romanticism (649). The correlation to German ideology, particularly the works of Herder, will prove that expressivism indeed is an intellectual force to be reckoned with. Perhaps, unlike its weaker intellectual counterpart, British Romanticism, "Herder and other German romantics" (654) will demonstrate the depth of expressivism's origins. Moreover, by linking expressivism to German Romanticism, Fishman and McCarthy expect to restore expressivism by proving that it sets forth "social constructionist goals" in the classroom (Ibid). By vindicating expressivism's value in this way, they confiscate the language of expressivism's most exacting critics, social epistemic rhetoricians. By marshaling "social constructionist"

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

expressions into their argument, Fishman and McCarthy use terms typically associated with James Berlin. Thus, one aspect of rescuing expressivism is to align it more closely with rhetoricians who consider expressivism a-social. In part, then, Fishman and McCarthy believe that the best way to defend expressivism is to appear less like an expressivist: first, by heralding a Germanic philosophy; second, by wearing the rhetorical garb of its most ardent detractors.

Sherrie L. Gradin also appropriates the ideological terms of social epistemics in order to rectify expressivism. In a sense, she attempts to reclassify expressivism by renaming it. Her book, Romancing Rhetorics, is subtitled "Social Expressivist Perspectives on the Teaching of Writing." In her opinion, social-expressivism "focuses on those things that social epistemicism is being praised for: positioning the self within the world and writing for change" (xv). Gradin appears to employ the same argumentative tactic as Fishman and McCarthy: the best defense is to side with the offense. According to Gradin, what has hindered expressivism from being seen as a socially responsible writing philosophy are the biased accounts of its critics who misrepresent Romanticism. "A lopsided understanding of romanticism," she notes, "and thus the tradition from which expressivism grows, blinds us to the possibilities for social-expressivisms" (xvi). The conflation of terms is an excellent idea, and Gradin hopes to bring the two factions together, rather than see them dueling for pedagogical authenticity while traditional rhetoricians dominate the field and ultimately decide what occurs in the classroom. While Gradin's attempt to unite the two camps is admirable, she is nonetheless uncomfortable categorizing her position in purely "expressivist" terms. She seems compelled to arm herself against any possible accusations that her rhetorical position is a-social by incorporating the language of social epistemisists, expressivism's harshest critics.

Furthermore, as a supporter of (social)expressivism, Gradin wants to protect her theory from categorizations of anti-intellectualism as well. Although she correctly asserts that most "scholars in composition studies are inclined to make passing remarks about romanticism

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

without much knowledge of what it entailed as a movement" (xv), she occasionally identifies non-Romantic figures to support her position precisely because they are not traditionally seen as Romanticists. To be fair, Gradin does incorporate some passages from Wordsworth's poetry and Coleridge's essays. Nevertheless, this sleight-of-hand allows her to refer to cultural 'authorities' more highly regarded than those 'tainted' Romantic artists. She includes the work of Matthew Arnold, for instance, as a "romantic" harbinger of "social expressivism" (31-54). In describing Arnold as an early social-expressivist, Gradin wants to prove by association that expressivism is not only socially relevant but intellectually significant as well. Moreover, the inclusion of Arnold in her defense demonstrates that (social)expressivism bears cultural weight. In this way, she sidesteps the "Romantic" connection while simultaneously demonstrating that her brand of expressivism is rooted in the intellectual (and therefore non-Romantic) tradition of Arnoldian cultural formation. As a result, Gradin elucidates a very uneven and equivocal defense of expressivism's debt to the Romantics.

Even Peter Elbow, perhaps *the* most well-known expressivist rhetorician, appears apologetic regarding any indication that his philosophy might be construed as 'Romantic.' In fact, the heavy-handed attacks against expressivism, via Romanticism, cause Elbow to both dissociate himself from the Romantic tradition and even resist the expressivist label altogether. "To celebrate writer-based prose," he noted in 1987, "is to risk the charge of *romanticism*: just warbling one's woodnotes wild" ("Closing My Eyes," 55). Not only is Elbow worried about risking the charge of 'romanticism,' but he noticeably avoids using the word 'expressivism' to explain his work, and instead calls it "writer-based prose." Several years later, while recommending a writing course that allows "students to write about their own experience rather than solely in response to texts," ("The War," 17), Elbow reiterated his "fear" of being criticized for advocating "romantic solipsism . . . . [and] permitting students to disappear into cocoons of solipsistic isolation" (ibid). In Elbow's view, a student-centered writing curriculum raises the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

chance of being criticized for its "romantic" isolationism, which in turn could lead to charges that Elbow is an expressivist. However it's sliced, Elbow does not want to be cut down by critics in the field for either advancing a "romantic" view of the writer or for being a purveyor of expressivist ideology.

In 1995, almost ten years after his initial anxiety of being implicated as a Romanticist, Elbow remained apprehensive about the association, shunning "expressivist" terminology. In the above mentioned "Exchange" with David Bartholomae, Elbow sought to defend one of his most prized undertaking—freewriting—against charges that it automatically forced student writers inward. In Elbow's opinion, freewriting provides "a micro-utopian space" for writers, a space that does not inevitably lead to discourse disembodied from society. On the contrary, he insists, freewriting can actually facilitate an awareness of how the writer is culturally constructed and socially situated.

> . . . freewriting [does not] pretend to reveal one's pure natural essential self or escape the effects of culture and the past. Far from it. People who use freewriting tend to notice immediately that it shows more nakedly than other kinds of writing all the junk that culture and the past have stuffed into our heads. Nothing is better than freewriting at showing us how we are constructed and situated. Another way of saying this is that freewriting is the opposite of an attempt to preserve the idea of a self-generating autonomous author. ("Being a Writer, 89)

In Elbow's view, freewriting does not depend on the so-called Romantic concept of the inspired artist, "the idea of a self-generating autonomous author." Nonetheless, as he applauds freewriting for situating the student socially, Elbow does not want to be categorized as either a Romanticist or an expressivist, so he avoids using either term. In fact, throughout his debate with Bartholomae, Elbow never once refers to the word. In response to the widespread criticism

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

leveled against both Romanticism and expressivism, it is understandable that Elbow avoids using the word "expressivism" to argue that freewriting encourages social awareness. However, Elbow realizes that no matter how far he distances himself from the "expressivist" label, he still might be accused of "Romantic" sensibilities: "I suppose the obvious problem is that I define 'writer' in too 'romantic' a fashion" (82). Elbow recognizes that perhaps he can sidestep the "expressivist" stamp, but he certainly cannot avoid being tagged a "romantic," or from being suspected of engaging in "*romanticism*" pedagogically. By 1995, even for a well respected 'expressivist' like Peter Elbow this had become "an obvious problem."

One More Troubled Relationship

One way of understanding this problem within the field is to consider the uneasy relationship that exists in English departments between literary studies and Composition and Rhetoric. For rhetoricians who resent their second-class status in English departments, any writing strategy that mirrors literary analysis might be cast in a negative light. Moreover, many rhetoricians correlate the rise of expressivism in the writing class with the growth of Romantic criticism in English departments throughout the United States. In other words, expressivists didn't necessarily borrow their ideas directly from Romanticists but instead confiscated them from a Romantic view of creativity outlined by *some* literary scholars, in particular an outlook offered by M.H. Abrams and others who celebrate Romanticism for its aesthetic qualities. Thus, the a-historical analysis of Romantic literature served as a model for an a-historical writing strategy. According to Berlin, for example, subjective theories of writing instruction embraced the ideas of the isolated writer seeking inspiration from the likes of Emerson, and "also by literary criticism, particularly English department interpretations of romanticism as found, for example, in M.H. Abrams" ("Rhetoric, Poetic" 12). It would seem, then, that much of expressivism's 'Romantic' problems rest with its affiliation to literary studies, the very discipline within English departments that rhetoricians believe has historically marginalized Composition

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and Rhetoric and stigmatized their work as engaging in a 'lower' form of scholarship and teaching activities.

In his recent examination of the shaky alliance between the two fields, Robert Scholes explores the historical and cultural circumstances behind the rift that exists between literature and composition. After serving on the Modern Language Association's Commission on Writing and Literature, Scholes concluded that "the culture of English departments was structured by an invidious binary opposition between writing teachers and literary scholars" (The Rise and Fall, 35). As Scholes explored the division further, he learned that the profession was organized and even founded upon the distinction between literature and composition, with composition relegated to the status of a service industry. As such, composition was everything that literature was not, providing a useful contrast to the more uplifting pursuit of literary study.

> What I finally realized was that English departments need composition as the "other" of literature in order to function as they have functioned. The useful, the practical, and even the intelligible were relegated to composition so that literature could stand as the complex embodiment of cultural ideals, based upon texts in which those ideals were so deeply embedded as to require the deep analyses of a trained scholar. Teachers of literature became the priests and theologians of English, while teachers of composition were the nuns, barred from the priesthood, doing the shitwork of the field. (35-36).

Scholes' ecclesiastical and scatological metaphors account for how the "high" and "low" status of literature and composition, respectively, represents "gendered" inequality as well within English departments. Seen in this way, the "femininazation" of rhetoric means that it is presumably less academically equipped than the paternal discipline that administers the "sacrament" of literature. As Scholes points out, this unequal division between the two fields means that "we live in an academic world in which we are rewarded not so much according to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

how well we teach or how much we learn but by the amount we publish and the attention it attracts from others" (48). The "nuns" wind up doing most of the teaching (of writing) while the "priests" end up doing most of the scholarship (in literature).

Indeed, according to the research conducted by Susan Miller, "the sexual division of labor that characterizes all jobs has equally characterized composition" ("The Femininization of Composition" 41). Utilizing the statistical evidence compiled by Sue Ellen Holbrook, Miller notes that "it is likely that about two-thirds of those who teach writing are women" (Textual Carnivals 122). In actuality, Miller states, this breakdown of two distinct divisions within departments begins with the construction of a bifurcated field of 'English' within the academy near the end of the nineteenth century. Prior to that time, most colleges in the United States did not contain English as a source of study. Miller maintains that women now account for the preponderance of individuals in the field because the femininization of rhetoric *followed* its immediate diminution compared to literary studies. Composition studies had few claims to legitimacy since it was given the task of policing *bad* student writing, which was often reduced to a mechanistic endeavor, while literary studies defined itself by honoring *great* national writers, which was frequently elevated to a pseudo-religious exegesis of *The Text*. And since student writing bore no resemblance to literary writing, the work being done by rhetoricians was automatically reduced to a second-class position (19-45).

This second-class status is evident by the way the profession divides the teaching of composition and the teaching of literature along economic lines as well. Most of those women who teach composition are non-tenured, part-time 'professionals,' who are not treated as legitimate members of the department. Yet, the low status of composition instruction exists as a high profile enterprise within English departments since the bulk of sections offered in English programs are composition courses. The Modern Language Association estimates that "roughly seventy percent of the post-secondary English classes or sections taught in this country are

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

composition classes, usually taught by part-timers or graduate students" (Slevin 5). Therefore, the fundamental subordination of composition *cannot* be attributed to its relative economic importance. The hierarchy that exists between literature and writing can best be understood by the assumptions made within English departments between those who teach writing and those who teach literature

James Berlin makes a similar point in determining the reign of poetics over rhetoric as the master paradigm within English departments. Berlin defines rhetoric as the study of discourse within an historical context, which serves as a way of understanding how individuals negotiate within their own economic, social, and political settings. The study of literature, on the other hand, tends to pursue discourse at a level removed from its cultural or historical determinants. According to Berlin, literature became the preferred method of discourse analysis because it was seen as offering a bird's-eye view into deeper, universal truths. Literature occupied "a special realm" of imaginative quality, and it was celebrated for its ability to transcend "everyday reality" ("Rhetoric, Poetic" 27). Rhetoric, on the other hand, which engaged in the everyday deployment of language use, paled in comparison. As a result, rhetoric has not enjoyed the same privileged position that literature holds within English departments.

> The history of English departments in the last one hundred years reveals all that is important and central in the study of discourse falls within the domain of literary texts and all that is unimportant and marginal is found in the realm of rhetoric. (24)

Literature's significance in the academy, then, can be traced to the ways in which literature is studied within English departments as a unique brand of discourse, and its uniqueness is determined by its ability to transmit the special nature of language formation. More often than not, it is language venerated for its capacity to be timelessly valuable. "The argument in this

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

case," Berlin maintains, "is that the poet is superior to the rhetorician/politician—that is, more effective—precisely because he is outside the dominant power structures" (24).

Thus, the creative and imaginative qualities the author demonstrates, which are therefore worthy of examination, are the same qualities that essentially turn literary analysis into an exploration of literature's aesthetic function. Literary studies, through its own reasoning for existing in English departments, tends to engage in a process that is a-historical and a-political, the opposite of what real discourse analysis should incorporate. And this process began, Berlin suggests, during "the Romantic period in English literary history" as an attempt to "introduce the aesthetic into ordinary daily experience" (26). The rise of literature and the fall of rhetoric begins with the Romantic movement, the very same literary period Berlin and others associate with expressivism. Expressivism is therefore aligned with a literary project that inaugurated the downfall of rhetoric. If Berlin and others object to literature's hegemony within English departments, then expressivism becomes implicated right beside it. Not only is expressivism an inadequate writing theory, it also reeks of the "literary" stuff responsible for rhetoric's demise. And for rhetoricians who bristle under literature's yoke, that means expressivism deserves to be condemned for being tied to the master paradigm. If rhetoric is to be freed from its bondage within English departments, expressivism must be overthrown as well due to its literary origins. Expressivism is guilty by association.

The Post-Structural Impact

In some respect, French post-structural criticism sparked rhetoricians into a more captious mode regarding the prominence of literary studies in English departments, while propelling rhetoricians to offer a host of monographs on the 'sites' and structure of discursive practices. Of particular importance is the work of Michel Foucault, whom several rhetoricians embraced as an ally in their cause to resurrect rhetoric and deflate literary studies, particularly two essays, "The Discourse on Language" and "What Is An Author." In them, Foucault seeks to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

explain that much of literary scholarship up to that time had been responsible for masking the social and historical function of language and even (in an unconscious way) contributing to the maintenance of unequal power structures by splintering discourse into ordinary and extra-ordinary categories. According to Foucault, the importance of "the author and his work" has been steadily rising, especially in the field of literature. This "author principle," as he puts it in "The Discourse on Language," stresses the action of the text upon the author's identity, whose "form is that of individuality and the *I*" (221). In part, this emphasis upon the author principle not only has its "limitations," but it also leads to "a system of control in the production of discourse, fixing its limits through the action of an identity taking the form of a permanent reactivation of the rules" (224). Therefore, language is essentially being circulated "within a closed community" (225), so that a demarcated "discipline" like literary criticism often refuses to recognize the social and historical circumstances that surround its organization.

In "What Is An Author" Foucault re-examines the topic more fully, implementing an even harsher line against literary "works" and the impulse on the part of literary critics to treat texts as quasi-religious constructions. Historically, he locates the inauguration of the creative literary author "toward the end of the eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth century" (125)—during the Romantic period! Foucault maintains that the "author's original inspiration" would be recovered by "modern criticism ... reminiscent of Christian exegesis when it wished to prove the value of a text by ascertaining the holiness of its author" (127). By treating literature as sacred relics, literary critics cast themselves into the high priests of high discourse. In this way, they also managed to elevate the literary author and his work right out of social and historical consideration. He adds that worshipping the "originating subject" must come to an end, or at least needs to be re-evaluated. Instead, the author principle must be replaced by the "author function," which will in turn permit the introduction of an historical study of discourse. "Perhaps the time has come," he writes, "to study not only the *expressive* (italics mine) value and formal

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

transformations of discourse, but its mode of existence." In other words, he concludes, "the subject must be stripped of its creative role" and analyzed in the way it functions and is produced within a particular discourse community (135). Thus, in one fell swoop, Foucault attempts to devalue the importance of literary criticism, which he believed had became far too preoccupied with the "expressive" nature of the "individual's 'profundity' or 'creative' power" (127) at the expense of an historical analysis of discourse, while also indicating that the now discredited idea of personal creativity in and of itself appears to have begun during the Romantic era.

No wonder, then, that Karen Burke LeFevre invokes Foucault first to prove that much of literary criticism fails to enact a social approach to discourse and to accuse expressivism, with its own ties to this worn-out system, of celebrating the creativity of the self-contained writer. "The significant trend away from isolating a single episode of composing," she states, "may be seen as having theoretical support in the work of a number of contemporary philosophers, historians, and literary critics [especially] Michel Foucault in his 'Discourse on Language'" (41). In full agreement with LeFevre, Susan Miller believes that "contemporary theorists in other fields have so thoroughly deconstructed" the notion of "inspired, unitary 'authorship'" (Rescuing 3) that it is now finally possible to examine the exteriority of the composing process. In so doing, Miller echoes Foucault's statement in "What is An Author" that "the writing of our day has freed itself from the necessity of 'expression'" and that discourse analysis no longer needs to be "restricted to the confines of interiority" (116). Miller's reliance on Foucault's work is even more wide-spread in her award-winning book Textual Carnivals. Miller's description of composition occupying a "low" station in English relative to literature's "high" position, which was discussed above, incorporates theories from Foucault's The Birth of the Clinic and Discipline and Punish. Miller argues that English departments proceeded along the same lines of any institution that organized itself around hierarchies for political purposes, much as Foucault had demonstrated in his studies on medicine and crime. Miller would claim that the institutional marginalization of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

composition and rhetoric in English took place inside an "enclosed unity," as Foucault called it, even exhibiting a rather "clinical" diffusion of writing into "washed" (literature) and "un-washed" (student writing) elements (53-57). Foucault is such a major figure in Lester Faigley's overview of composition's place in the postmodern era that he lists thirteen of Foucault's works in the "Sources" section of Fragments of Rationality: Postmodernity and the Subject of Composition.

Foucault's important theoretical position in composition and rhetoric is deemed such a fait accompli by David Bartholomae that "after Foucault" discourse can be considered only as involving "sites," "possible scenes," and "places" ("Writing with Teachers" 65). Meanwhile, Bartholomae uses a lengthy quote from "The Discourse on Language" as the epigraph for "Inventing the University," Bartholomae's well-known primer on how the university, like any place, is the site of uneven power relationships. Linda Brodkey also includes an extensive quote from "The Discourse on Language" to begin her re-examination of 'The Literacy Letters,' as she tries to show her audience how to read the "social and political reality" embedded in every student's text (279). In When Students Have Power, Ira Shor summarizes the breadth of Foucault's work as demonstrating "how dominant authority achieves hegemony by circulating through the everyday actions of individuals at local sites of experience," while identifying Foucault as that "brilliant Frenchman" who had "inspired" him (183). Indeed, throughout his description of sharing power with his students during one semester, Shor refers to Foucault a number of times as a way of explaining such issues as domination and normalization, the circulation of social power, and the political climate in rhetoric. Although other rhetoricians never mention Foucault specifically as a source of inspiration, it is hard to imagine their theories and practices taking shape without Foucault's accomplishments. For example, Mary Louise Pratt describes "the contact zone," (a phrase that she coined) as "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of power" (496), which

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

seems to echo Foucault. All in all, Foucault becomes a highly visible presence in composition and rhetoric, partly because of his desire to end the sovereignty of literary criticism in the study of language and mostly because he wants to replace it with a more social and historical analysis of *discourse*, as a force for the social construction of consciousness, which certainly appeals to most rhetoricians.

Post-Structural Borders

Of course, as Foucault was being embraced by several rhetoricians he was helping to drive yet one more wedge between composition studies and literary studies, in large measure due to the way certain elements of French post-structural theory were being absorbed into American universities. As Lester Faigley describes it, in the field of composition and rhetoric "the most discussed shift of attention to practice came in the work of Michael Foucault" (Fragments 26). However, a different form of poststructuralism seemed to be more fashionable in literary studies for some time. Faigley speculated that in the United States "poststructuralism appeared on the scene as deconstruction in elite English departments, stimulated in large part by Paul DeMan's appropriation of the pre-1968 work of Derrida for the reading of literature" (27). Faigley adds that "the 'Yale School' critics—Paul DeMan, Geoffrey Hartman, and J. Hillis Miller—brought deconstruction to the forefront of literary studies in the United States," as opposed to the "different ways" poststructural theories reached England (26). As far as Faigley sees it, since England already had a "strong tradition of Left criticism" within its universities, "postsrucuralism was introduced into an ongoing political opposition within the academy" and it therefore more readily adopted Foucault's version of postsructural thinking. Robert Scholes repeats this argument, asserting that the United States/British distinction can be read to reveal that the "American form of deconstruction" in English departments essentially prolonged the "academic hegemony of New Criticism" since both resist the historical and social analysis of texts (24-28). This seems borne out by a more thorough examination of the history of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

deconstruction in the United States, The Yale Critics: Deconstruction in America. The authors argue that "deconstruction has re-deployed the discursive power of New Criticism" (8), perhaps even carrying the tradition of "hermeneutic meditation one step further" (xxvii). Post-Structural theory in the United States therefore reinforced the idea that great literature was a separate, distinct form of discourse that didn't need to be considered in a social or historical context within *some* English departments. That Yale was one of those departments, however, meant a great deal to the way in which post-structural theory was disseminated throughout the United States.[6]

So, while composition studies in the United States was being influenced by Foucault's "social" theories of discourse, literary studies tended to be more receptive to poststructural theories that mirrored New Criticism. Consequently, as rhetoricians turned their foremost attention towards expressivism in the eighties, many found a writing theory that appeared similar to both New Criticism and a version of poststructuralism that contravened Foucault's theories about the social consequences of discourse. Expressivism, it seemed, was like New Critical theory and the "American form of deconstruction" that had prolonged the "academic hegemony of New Criticism," as Scholes argued, which frequently viewed writing in an a-historical context. For some compositionists, Expressivism had not only borrowed from the Romantic model of writing but had also embraced the New Critical perception that writing was more of an aesthetic enterprise rather than influenced by society or history, as the upcoming pages will further demonstrate.

English in American Departments of English

At the same time that poststructuralism was adding to the rift in English departments, another book arrived on the scene that provided rhetoricians with historical evidence that their field had received the short end of the stick. Richard Ohmann's English in America, published in 1976, appeared four years after the English translation of "The Discourse on Language" and one

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

year before the publication of "What Is An Author." Ohmann's impact in Composition and Rhetoric cannot be denied: Berlin, Faigley, Miller, Scholes and others build upon Ohmann's historical explication of the emergence of English departments at the turn of the century, and how Rhetoric existed as its own discipline *before* the establishment of "English," eventually being absorbed into the new departments and quickly being driven into a second class compartment. Faigley, for example, asserts that Ohmann's analysis of English studies "stands out from its time like one of the sandstone monoliths that tower over Monument Valley" (Fragments 132), while Scholes is so certain of Ohmann's pioneering achievements that he believes it has now "become a familiar part of the story" of English (The Rise and Fall 2). Perhaps, although it is arguably a more familiar story within the field of composition studies than literary studies, judging by the frequency Ohmann is cited in the former and rarely mentioned in the latter. As such, it is important to realize that the timing of Ohmann's book, along with the availability of Foucault's essays on discourse, coincides with an upsurge of criticism against expressivism that culminates in the mid-eighties and early nineties. For many in Composition and Rhetoric, Ohmann's study of English in the United States seemed to be pointing out the obvious when it came to articulating the relative position of rhetoric within English departments. Moreover, in Ohmann's view, rhetoric holds a rather paradoxical place in English considering its overall significance within the department.

> The professional ideology of English teachers emphasizes transmitting high culture and generating new knowledge. Why should this be so, when surely we spend, as a group, a tiny proportion of our time in scholarship and only relatively small proportion teaching on the higher slopes of culture? What we do most is teach—and mostly lower level undergraduate courses. (229).

And the preponderance of those undergraduate courses, Ohmann maintains, are composition courses. Furthermore, outside of the department, the teaching of composition and rhetoric is seen

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

as the benchmark for the success of English programs. "Freshman composition," Ohmann writes, "is certainly the subject for which most of our colleagues in other departments and (as far as they care) the general public hold us primarily accountable" (ibid). Yet, despite its importance, composition and rhetoric does not retain "the parts of our work that accord best with professional dignity" (233). For the first time, then, Ohmann's full-length study had spelled out to rhetoricians why they frequently were being treated as lower ranking members within their own English departments, and the way literary studies had a hand in it from the beginning.

Indeed, much of Ohmann's description of the rise of English includes anecdotal evidence of how literary studies, with its proclamations of cultural enrichment, not only supplanted rhetoric as a major course of study but in due time turned rhetoric into a pursuit that basically abstracts "the student away from society and history" (147) in its attempt to mimic literary studies. Due in large part to literature's dominance in the department, it was quite inevitable that teaching writing would fall into some kind of alignment with the way literary analysis was being conducted. And Ohmann's critique of English in America will ring a proverbial bell for anyone impressed by Foucault's essays on discourse. According to Ohmann, the way in which literary analysis was being conducted in 1976 was not all that different from the way in which it had been conducted in 1896 or 1906; that is, literature was taught as a separate, unique form of discourse, with little regard for historical, political, or social factors.[7]

New Criticism, Ohmann maintains, was especially responsible for this approach. Descended from Matthew Arnold and T.S. Eliot, New Criticism maintained its hegemony in the departments well into the seventies (70-77). Not surprisingly, then, composition teachers likewise taught writing in that way. In addition, by ignoring the social and political importance of writing, teachers might focus less on content and more on structure. As Ohmann argues, Composition and Rhetoric had become a course in guiding students to mechanical correctness. So, in addition to revealing how literary studies had appropriated rhetoric, Ohmann also laid

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

open how its influence had turned rhetoric into a socially regressive endeavor. In short, thanks to Ohmann's study of English in America, rhetoricians now had a well-documented explanation for why their field occupied such a lowly station in the department, and they were supplied with some historical proof that literary studies bore some of the blame for making rhetoric socially meaningless as well. For expressivism, a writing strategy that James Kinneavy already had linked to Romanticism back in 1971, some pretty rough times lay ahead.

In addition, as rhetoricians more fully examined the causes behind rhetoric's weaker position in English and the primacy of New Criticism, they also spotted some high-profile scholars in Romantic Studies who were prone to advance Romanticism's transcendental qualities, while positioning the Romantic artist as a special figure whose "natural supernaturalism" (to borrow a term from M.H. Abrams) needed to be explored. As it turns out, some of the most eminent New Critics were in fact Romantic scholars. Also, the "Yale School" of literary criticism was in its heyday in the seventies, which featured some of the most esteemed Romanticists, like Hartman, DeMan, and Harold Bloom. Moreover, many distinguished deconstructionists, like DeMan, were Romanticists. For a time, deconstruction was the most conspicuous form of literary analysis, a mode of study that Scholes categorizes as "the disciplinary shift from New Criticism" which acted as an "attempt to keep the transcendental aura of literature alive" (The Rise and Fall, 28). If rhetoricians wanted to find literary critics to condemn for advocating the transcendental qualities of literature, and for playing a role in undermining rhetoric's place in the academy, they need look no further than the sub-field of Romantic Studies which housed some of the most well-known scholars in English.

For instance, in her discussion of why expressivism had gained such an unfortunate foothold in Composition and Rhetoric, LeFevre cites three reasons: "the influence of literary studies on composition; the persistence of the romantic myth of the inspired writer; and the widespread effects of capitalism and individualism" (15). Berlin declares that the "subjective

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

theories" propounded by expressivists was induced by "literary criticism, particularly English department interpretations of romanticism as found, for example, in M.H. Abrams" (Rhetoric and Reality, 12). Faigley identifies the "expressive view" of composing within the tradition of British Romanticism since expressivists believe that good writing possesses "integrity, spontaneity and originality—the same qualities M.H. Abrams uses to define 'expressive' poetry in The Mirror and the Lamp ("Competing Theories" 529). In many ways, then, the connection being made by rhetoricians between Romanticism and expressivism is an association grounded in the interpretations made by some Romantic scholars rather than in the actual work of Romantic writers. It therefore becomes necessary to consider the possibility that rhetoricians who scorn the idea of the imaginative Romantic artist view Romanticism through the mediated eyes of a handful of highly visible Romantic scholars, who indeed frequently glorified the artistry of the Romantics for their ability to elevate discourse into a special realm. To compound the situation, many of these Romantic critics were some of the most honored and celebrated scholars in *all* of English studies during the seventies and eighties, which afforded some rhetoricians the opportunity to punch a few holes through the supremacy of literary studies, while simultaneously discrediting expressivism for acting too much like it—since expressivism presumably adheres to the Romantic myth of the self-contained, inspired writer.

Romanticism in America: The Abrams Influence

To be sure, many prominent Romantic scholars indeed fostered the idea of Romanticism being wrapped up with personal inspiration rather than examining the social and historical forces behind the movement. In other words, several of these same scholars frequently practiced an "aesthetic" method of literary analysis; that is, the issue at hand often involved a close reading of the text, while material outside of the text was either ignored or seen as having little to do with "the work." To a considerable extent, this approach replicated the de-politicized model outlined by Matthew Arnold when he compiled Wordsworth's "best" poems. Arnold issued his own 1879

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

edition of Wordsworth's poems and tried, in his introductory statement, to rescue Wordsworth from his unpopularity by calling attention to the poet's insights concerning the natural world. To secure Wordsworth's "due rank" as a great poet, the "right" kind of appreciation must be applied, Arnold argued. In the wrong hands, Wordsworth will be praised for the "wrong things." The wrong things have to do with what Arnold euphemistically described as "his philosophy." And the right things? "Wordsworth's poetry is great," he insisted, "because of the extraordinary power with which Wordsworth feels the joy offered to us in nature...and because of the extraordinary power with which, in case after case, he shows us this joy, and renders it so as to make us share it" (xxi). Wordsworth's greatness therefore derives not from his "philosophy" (his politics?), but from his ability to inspire a reader. Arnold helped initiate a critical analysis of Romanticism that expunged politics from consideration because no "extraordinary power" could be found there, an idea picked up by many leading Romantic scholars in the next century.

As such, by taking into account the preeminence of New Criticism and deconstruction in Romantic Studies until quite recently, this "aesthetic" definition of the quality of literature and a synchronous approach towards the material itself was arguably the most dominant and popular form of literary inquiry, at a period of time that also witnessed the most hostile assaults against expressivism. For quite a time, few figures played such a significant role in shaping Romantic studies as did M.H. Abrams, which is why Berlin and Faigley mention him specifically in their critique of expressivism's debt to "romanticism."

Indeed, Abrams is perhaps the most responsible for masterminding the view of Romanticism as a movement obsessed with imagination or inner vision. He cemented the image of the inspired Romantic writer with his metaphor of "the mirror and the lamp" (which he borrowed from Hazlitt). For Abrams, Romantic artists completely turned around the idea of poetry as an act of imitation (the mirror) to one of inspiration (the lamp). Prior to the Romantic period, he argues, "the perceiving mind was a reflection of the external world," eventually

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

supplanted by and substituted with "a projective and creative mind" (The Mirror and the Lamp 69). By achieving this new interpretation of reality, Romantic artists "reversed the basic orientation of all aesthetic philosophy" (ibid). By and large, the transformation is revolutionary, "a comprehensive revolution in the theory of poetry, and of all the arts" (53). But it is an *aesthetic* revolution, not a material one, a rather single-minded way of describing a period engaged in some very real political and social revolutions. Though remarkably detailed and encompassing nearly four hundred pages, The Mirror and the Lamp never once refers to the French Revolution as a possible influence on any Romantic writer—a telling omission, especially since one of Blake's poems is titled "The French Revolution," and Wordsworth devotes three "Books" to the event in The Prelude, not to mention the impact it had on Shelly and Byron. This omission suggests Abrams's interest in de-historicizing Romantic literature. Instead of incorporating historical connections, large segments of his text are devoted to such topics as "The Psychology of Literary Theory," "Literature as a Revelation of Personality," or "The Varieties of Romantic Theory."

In Abrams's opinion, ignoring history and politics makes perfect sense. After all, the key to discovering the fundamental qualities of Romantic literature lies in unlocking its aesthetic values or codes, not in focusing on the social conditions or political climate of the age. Besides, there is simply no reason to go beyond the Romantic writer anyway, since the artist's creative talent is solely responsible for the work of art.

> In general terms, the central tendency of the expressive theory may be summarized this way: A work of art is essentially the internal made external, resulting from a creative process operating under the impulse of feeling, and embodying the combined product of the poet's perceptions, thoughts, and feelings. The primary source and subject matter of a poem, therefore, are the attributes and actions of the poet's own mind. (22).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Passages such as these, where Abrams combines "expressive theory" with explanations of how the Romantic artist envisioned discourse as a process of total gestation, undoubtedly acted as ammunition for rhetoricians who sought to place contemporary expressivism beside the Romantic tradition of internal creativity. To some degree, then, rhetoricians who blame Romanticism for being a-historical and Romantic artists for being too preoccupied with the inner workings of language are in fact focusing more on what Abrams and some others were writing about it rather than the Romantics themselves. With Romanticism viewed in this way, rhetoricians were therefore correct to accuse an "expressive theory" of discourse promulgating an a-social view of language reduction. However, it is a model mostly formulated by Romantic *critics*, like Abrams, rather than by the Romanticists' themselves. In truth, many Romantic scholars did present the "expressive" nature of Romanticism as a tradition devoid of politics and history. And few within Romantic studies were as interested as Abrams in posing it this way.

Even when Abrams eventually does take into account some cultural and social forces behind Romantic writing, he does so rather casually in Natural Supernaturalism, which happens to include the word "revolution" in its subtitle ("Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature"). But again, what Abrams means by "revolution" is not necessarily the political kind. Overall, he sustains the concept of the Romantic poet as prophetic artist, who practically attains a religious stature. Romantic artists secularize "inherited theological ideas and ways of thinking" into their work, he states (12). Presented in this way, a supernatural incarnation results once the artist has tapped into his internally divine-like powers of creativity. On the other hand, the religious events occurring outside of the poet's imagination beget little attention from Abrams. For instance, the antinomian crisis of the era, which was a deliberate assault on the established Church of England and religious authority in general, is never mentioned. Abrams therefore ignores the statements and the events of the Romantic rebellion against religious authority, like Blake's numerous condemnations of "priestcraft" (with its reverberation of "witchcraft"), or his

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

stinging indictment against the church in the "Marriage of Heaven and Hell." Neither does Abrams refer to how Shelley was expelled from Oxford for publishing The Necessity of Atheism. In effect, all of the period's revolutionary doctrines regarding organized religion are de-politicized in Abrams's hands at a time when religion and politics were so solidly fused together.

Abrams, however, winnows politics from religion because in his view Romantic artists believed that mankind has "no reason to expect radical perfection either in man's moral nature or in his political, economic, and social institutions" (Natural Supernaturalism 63). Theological history inevitably collapses into the poet's mind; religion loses all of its social and political implications. To Abrams, Romantic artists were mostly concerned with sparking revolutionary fires from within in their quest to secularize spiritualism as a way of radically altering their artistic vision. Thus, the focus of Abrams' critical attention flattens history and politics while inflating the private and personal. But this approach on Abrams' part seems so lopsided that a rather unclear portrayal of Romanticism endures. Blake's "Visions of the Daughters of Albion," for instance, upholds two of the dissenters' libertarian campaigns, the emancipation of slaves and the emancipation of women, and it is considered one of Blake's most important poems. Yet, for some reason, Abrams never refers to "Visions" in *either* The Mirror and the Lamp or Natural Supernaturalism. Instead, according to Abrams, Blake's main concern is "divine inspiration," not history or politics (Natural Supernaturalism 120). For Abrams, Romantic discourse begins and ends with artistic inspiration and *expression*.

Over time, Abrams took this idea one step further, arguing that literary criticism must likewise be concerned *only* with the inner workings of the poet's imagination and spare history and politics from the analysis. As he argues, any view that "history, not the author, shapes a literary work" is a specious one ("On Political Readings" 326). Not only were Romantic artists unconcerned with politics or history, but the literary critic must separate literary analysis from any historical or social assumptions. Actually, historicizing literature sucks out all of the pleasure

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

found in experiencing it, "cancelling the imaginative delights that works of literature, in their diversity, have yielded to readers of all eras ... [and] it is also joyless, casting a critical twilight in which all poems are gray" (ibid). In Abrams's mind, if politics is contained in Romantic poetry, it's unwise to look for it anyway. It will spoil things. Not only are Romantic writers fraught with aesthetic qualities, but the critic or reader of Romantic literature likewise should be engrossed with aesthetic values. Ideally, then, Writer and Reader should be neatly wrapped together in a blissful experience; both need to be engaged in a solitary appreciation of artistic creativity. According to this strategy, once the Romantic critic has wisely abstracted history and politics out of the Romantic text, or set it aside for being an unnecessary distraction, there is nothing else left for the reader to do except take a joy ride.

But Abrams' influence extends beyond Romantic studies, where his critical perspective carries many more readers along for a de-politicized version of Romanticism. His ability to purge much of the politics out of Romanticism establishes a standard found in more general literary catalogues, which is probably why he stands as such a glaring target for rhetoricians like Berlin and Faigley who object to an 'aesthetic' interpretation of literature. Thanks to his ranking within the literary community, Abrams often serves on editorial boards that enable him to enlarge his interpretive influence on a wider audience. In 1986 Abrams served as the General Editor for the fifth edition of the Norton Anthology of English Literature , Vol. II, for instance, where he placed much of his a-political stamp on what the volume contained, but more specifically on the configuration of "The Romantic Period" segment, which he personally handled. As the chief editor, Abrams managed to editorially expunge the overtly political works out of the section, just as he had done in his own books. In this way, by practicing a kind of poetic 'privileging,' Abrams subtly shaped Romanticism into an a-historical genre by elevating less politically motivated poems and essays while eliminating the more politically charged pieces from the inventory. As a result, the Anthology contains Shelley's "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty," but not "The Mask of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Anarchy," a poem Shelley wrote in honor of the working class demonstrators massacred at St. Peter's Field ('The Peterloo Massacre'), and described by Richard Holmes as "the greatest poem of political protest ever written in English" (532). Moreover, Abrams includes the prose piece "A Defence of Poetry" (as usual) but neglects the countless other more politically animated essays, like the two advocating Irish independence or the one written following the death of Princess Charlotte, which called attention to England's unsung poor and destitute.

Also, the "Introduction" to the Romantic portion of the Anthology resembles Abrams' spin on the period, as revealed in The Mirror and the Lamp and Natural Supernaturalism, which should come as no surprise since he wrote it. Although some lip-service is paid to the French Revolution, Paine, and Godwin, (hardly mentioned at all in earlier editions), the overall effect introduces readers to a period fraught with "inner feelings," "emotions," and "imagination" (6), wherein "Wordsworth and his visionary fellow poets" (7) were deeply concerned not with politics or history but with addressing "Poetic Spontaneity and Freedom," "The Supernatural," "Nature," "Individualism," and "Apocalyptic Expectations," as the subtitles indicate (7-14). The reader is left with an overall impression of the Romantics seeking to master artistic forms rather than commenting on the events of their day. Although a theoretical shift towards New Historicism was occurring in Romantic Studies in 1986 (as it was in other divisions), Abrams' de-politicizing of the Romantics was bound to govern the understanding or meaning of Romanticism for far more readers than the work of less known, though more historically-minded, critics like Marilyn Butler or David Simpson. As Stephen Parrish noted in a volume of essays celebrating Abrams' special place in both Romantic Studies and Literary Studies, "the incomparable Norton Anthology of English Literature has informed a whole generation of undergraduate students" (7), unlike any other text or group of texts. To a large extent, then, Abrams' stature in Romantic Studies enabled him to spread his a-historical analysis of Romanticism to a wider audience, thereby establishing a certain view of "romantic poetry and

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

thought that many readers associate with Abrams' name" (Parrish 8), which included rhetoricians who were either studying or teaching in English departments across the United States.

The Preeminence of the 'Yale School'

Other prominent Romanticists were just as influential as Abrams in guiding readers towards an a-historical view of the period. And few recent literary critics were as conspicuous within both Romantic Studies and Literary Studies as Paul DeMan, who was also convinced that history and politics should be disregarded when studying literature. DeMan emphatically remarks at the opening of The Rhetoric of Romanticism that he will "take refuge in more theoretical inquires" concerning Romanticism as he "leave[s] the task of its historical definition to others" (viii). DeMan's deconstructive formula had gathered so much scholarly steam within the academy, while at the same time becoming a force outside of higher learning, that his alleged association with Nazism was covered in most major newspapers and national news shows. For a while, DeMan was considered one of the most important literary critics of his day, and he attained almost as much fame (or infamy) in and out of the academy as the Romanticists themselves. To be fair, DeMan's methods did elicit a fair amount of criticism and controversy within English Departments prior to the revelations about his past. At times, his desire to seal off a text (even a single word, for that matter) from any sort of cultural or social context—past or present—borders on the absurd: "whether deed, or word, thought, or text, ever happens in relation, positive or negative, to anything that precedes, follows, or exists elsewhere [exists] only as a random event whose power, like the power of death, is due to the randomness of its occurrence" (122). This statement concludes an essay on Shelley's last (though incomplete) poem "The Triumph of Life," which seems like an exceptional way to end a study of one of the era's most politically conscious artists. Nevertheless, as a Romanticist who demanded that historicizing literature must be ignored in order to establish "the exegetic powers of figural analysis" (viii), the polar extreme of Foucault's poststructuralism, DeMan was a heralded literary

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

scholar, and he received a great deal of publicity as a critic. Perhaps, this notoriety caught the attention of many rhetoricians, who were already convinced from Abrams' imprint that the Romantics basically were interested in aestheticizing rhetoric. DeMan's deconstructive theories probably solidified their initial impressions.

DeMan spent most of his academic life at Yale, which became the site of such influence in literary scholarship that it attained an institutional-like status on its own. "The Yale School" was dominated primarily by critics, like DeMan, who had determined that literature was best understood by closely reading the internal signs of the text. Anything else was extraneous, and beside the point. According to Geoffrey Hartman, literature was finally being "recognized" in 1954 as so inherently special that it had "its own laws, and, incipiently, a distinctive form of knowledge," and now that the "study of literature had advanced" far enough, it was the duty of the critic to uncover its distinctiveness for the average reader (The Unmediated Vision ix). Hartman, the Karl Young Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Yale, is frequently cited as inaugurating the growth of Romantic scholarship in the United States with his publication of The Unmediated Vision. For Hartman, literature represents the pinnacle of human thought, and its top-shelf qualities can be traced by the qualified critic who can carefully 'read' the verbal sign. The literary scholar has replaced the biblical scholar, he suggests. "We have barely started to understand literature as a distinctive mode of knowledge," Hartman writes in his introductory remarks, "and if poetry is to be the object of specialized study" only "the poem taken as a whole" should be examined, while such issues as "economic" or "historical" considerations can be left aside (xii). With this kind of advanced billing, it is not surprising that Hartman plunges into a rather priestly dissection of Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" and The Prelude, which, together or singularly, reveal "mystic feeling," "episodes in a mystical vein," "a mystical substratum," "mystical moments," and "a vision into the mystic vale," proving that "Wordsworth's divine cosmology" is nothing short of "spiritual revelation" (6-35).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Meanwhile, Wordsworth's Poetry, 1787-1814, which appeared ten years later, partly anticipates a deconstructive review of Romanticism (Johnston, "Introduction" 3-7), where Hartman's partiality towards describing Wordsworth's poetry in religious terms is again sprinkled throughout the text. Hartman eventually invokes religious metaphors to describe *all* of Romanticism. "Romantic art," he argues, "has a function analogous to religion" (54). As noted above, Abrams also believed that the Romantics were seeking spiritual renewal, while a good deal of early Romantic criticism used religious expressions to describe a poem's meaning and/or the author's mental state or personal circumstances. This search for spiritual truth tends to demonstrate that the Romantic artist and the poem exemplifies a sort of lone-wolf relationship to the rest of the world.[8] Thus, in The Birth of Romanticism Morse Peckham argues that Romanticism had "achieved a transcendence of European culture" (225), and he calls nearly every Romantic poet a "wanderer," who "deliberately separates" himself from his culture and society (22). Wordsworth's Prelude is "an exercise in metaphysical reductionism," possibly influenced "by Schelling's System of Transcendental Idealism," which seems to be a stretch since Schelling published his work in *Germany* in 1800 and Wordsworth began The Prelude in 1799. Although Wordsworth did not "complete" the poem until 1805, the 1799 version essentially includes the basic themes and structure of the subsequent redaction. But this analogy to German Romanticism typifies much of the New Critical approach to Romanticism, most notably Abrams' repeated references to Schiller, Schelling, and Holderlin in Natural Supernaturalism. Peckham likewise wants to demonstrate that the Romantic break from the material world was rooted in a calculated intellectual tradition. The Romantic artists glorified in their uprootedness, finding spiritualism in a-social experiences. In his analysis of Wordsworth's "Ruined Cottage," for instance, Peckham packs numerous sacred images into just one sentence to demonstrate the sanctity of the "romantic" individual cut off from society.

> [Wordsworth's] device is to convert the value of Grasmere into a hollowed place,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> into a sacred place, a temple consecrated to the Romantic self, the power of the alienated and isolated individual to achieve his own purely secular redemption; into a holy of holies where nature and the mind of man are unified by the mind's creative powers . . . . (67)

Peckham insists that Wordsworth sees alienation and isolation as redeeming qualities. Loneliness can lead to great insights.

Hartman believes that *all* of Romantic poetry operates in this way, not just Wordsworth's. Nearly every Romantic poem therefore displays a biblical scheme of "Eden, fall and redemption" ("'Was It for This?'" 54). Moreover, Hartman extends the special nature of poetry to include the special occupation of the literary critic who deciphers this extra-ordinary form of discourse for the masses. Therefore, a political or historical reading of Romantic poetry cheapens its sublime quality *and* the special work of the literary scholar.

> . . . poets have never lost sight of the exceptional character of their occupation in the greater world. I cannot say the same about recent commentators, who insist that the political content of literature has been neglected or must be our first if not exclusive concern. No pronouncement of this kind will change the fact that our own occupations as literary scholars working within a university context is as exceptional as poetry itself. The privilege that causes our concern will not be cancelled by mimic wars against the "aesthetic" element in art or art theory. (19).

For Hartman, even the literary critic should maintain his own level of aesthetic concentration—and obligation. Although Hartman never became as news-worthy as DeMan, his influence did stretch past Yale's borders, likely shaping the opinions of other Romantic scholars who

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

embraced an a-historical analysis of literature, and saw the benefits of a "close reading" of literature as a way of unpacking its uniqueness.

Over time, the Yale School had few interpretive rivals in all of literary studies, but especially in the sub-field of Romanticism. Writing in Rethinking Historicism, Marjorie Levinson offered some introductory comments regarding the critical hegemony of Yale within Romantic Studies, but expected its reign to end once New Historicism replaced it as a viable alternative.

> Yale's influential seriousness aligned itself early on with a theoretical project rather than a historical one. This, we might say, was the effective interest of its philosophic and formal operation upon the Romantic canon. (Levinson, "Introduction" 19)

Although "the New Historicism" is a "direct assault upon Yale's present-mindedness," according to Levinson, it is doubtful whether that assault has yet supplanted the *notoriety* of DeMan or Harold Bloom (or Abrams) with the less established presence of Marilyn Butler or Levinson herself. Thus, a rather small group of Yale critics may have been responsible for shaping a particular image of the Romantic ethos, which captured the attention of a host of scholars in English who followed their lead. As it turns out, the presence of the most prevalent "School" of Romantic Studies coincided with an upsurge of attacks against expressivism, attacks that ascribed expressivism's faults with the so-called Romantic belief in the aesthetic principles of discourse.

For various reasons, the aesthetic model of interpretation has recently lost some ground. However, the most broadly recognized member from the Yale School is Harold Bloom, a literary scholar who maintains much credibility in the media, and who continues to be an outspoken critic of any form of analysis that seeks to historicize literature. In 1994, when Bloom published The Western Canon, he admitted that he felt "quite alone these days in defending the autonomy

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

of the aesthetic" (10) and bemoaned the recent "flight from the aesthetic among so many in my profession" (17), indicating that "the aesthetic" model indeed had once reigned supreme. Bloom hammers this point home repeatedly throughout the "Introduction," accusing contemporary literary critics on two more occasions (pps. 3, 22) of jettisoning the aesthetic from literary studies. According to Bloom, the field at the moment is swamped with "Feminists, Afro-centrists, Marxists, Foucault-inspired New Historicists, or Deconstructors" (note: *not* deconstructionists) who are all part of "the school of Resentment" that have turned literary studies into a cesspool of political organizations. Just as Abrams was alarmed that a political reading of Romanticism would leech the pleasure out of the reading experience, Bloom likewise feels that contemporary criticism fails to appreciate "the autonomy of imaginative literature and the sovereignty of the solitary soul" (10) that readers and discerning literary critics once found so appealing. Bloom would like to turn the clock back to a time when New Criticism rather than New Historicism was the favored method of literary analysis, to a time before the "'rabblement of lemmings'" began to dilute the "'primacy of the aesthetic'" (Begley 32).

As might be expected, Bloom's own criticism is marked by a decidedly aesthetic orthodoxy that blots out history or politics from consideration. Bloom's best-known literary theory, for example, is mostly an aesthetic reading of how literature differs from one age to the next, with some Freudian overtones. As described in The Anxiety of Influence, Bloom's explanation of poetic variations rests upon a quasi-Oedipal theory of discourse, whereby each successive generation of artists (the sons) attempt to slay their artistic antecedents (the fathers) by dramatically recasting their predecessors literary forms, conventions, principles and/or themes. Aside from being entirely male-centered, most of these cyclical departures recur in a hermetically sealed artistic community, rarely rising and falling according to historical or social developments. History, politics, and society draw blanks compared to the aesthetic exchanges of artists arguing amongst themselves.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Bloom repeatedly weaves this idea into The Visionary Company: A Reading of English Romantic Poetry. Overall, Bloom contends, Romanticism is mostly a reaction against the neo-classical phase of Pope and Dryden, while all of the Romantics seemed in some way looking over their shoulders at the titanic figure of John Milton. More specifically, Bloom peppers the text with such remarks as Wordsworth's "'Tintern Abbey' is the father of Shelley's 'Mont Blanc and Keats's 'Sleep and Poetry'" (132). Bloom rarely misses these opportunities to fuse poet to poet in order to unlock a poem's meaning, thereby defusing any possibility of coming up with a historical or political rationale for a poem's aim or origin. Like his mentor, M.H. Abrams (he studied under Abrams at Cornell), Bloom ignores the historical questions of emancipation associated with Blake's Visions of the Daughter's of Albion, for example, instead referring to liberation as a metaphoric device that anticipates "contemporary theories of psychic repression" (55), while Shelley remains as de-politicized as the Shelley found in The Mirror and the Lamp or Natural Supernaturalism. In addition, nearly every poem Wordsworth wrote can be attributed to his spiritual quest for internal harmony or inspiration, demonstrated by the desire to maintain "the autonomy of the poet's imagination" (144), or establish an "account of aesthetic contemplation" (140) within each poem. Not surprisingly, Bloom's a-historical approach to the period figures in all of his criticism; he even supplies a New Critical edge to the "The Critical Commentary" for The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake, edited by David V. Erdman. Several years before this publication, Erdman interpreted Blake's poems in a distinctively political and historical manner in Blake: Prophet Against Empire. In the "Critical Commentary" Bloom dismisses, out of hand, nearly every one of Erdman's political or historical connections with regard to an understanding of Blake's intentions, reverting instead to a deconstructive system of analysis. For Bloom, literature is best understood if a reader sticks to the text and leaves "the task of its historical definition to others," as DeMan insisted.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Of course, more recently, Bloom has been criticized within the academy for this kind of tactic and for memorializing an aesthetic view of literature at a time when other forms of criticism have accrued greater prominence. In fact, Bloom is considered to be more of a crank than someone worth emulating these days in English departments. In her Presidential Address before the Modern Language Association in 1997, Sandra M. Gilbert pretty much said just that when she acknowledged that "Harold Bloom has lately been no friend to the MLA" (371). Although Bloom now seems like a discredited figure within the field, his stature outside the MLA remains quite exalted, as he keeps a high profile in the popular media trying to "save" literature from the "rabblement of lemmings." And the media, searching for controversy, provides Bloom with a ready-made forum since he represents the oppositional gadfly for multiculturalists in the Culture Wars. Despite Bloom's growing unpopularity within some parts of the academy, he still remains a looming cultural critic who continues to champion and *popularize* the need to judge and appreciate "great" literature on aesthetic grounds. Whenever Bloom comes out with a new publication, the media treats him as if he were a movie star endorsing a new film. Bloom writes a book on Shakespeare (Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human), and he receives front-page attention from The New York Times "Arts" section to complain about the "`hideous ideologues, pseudo Marxists, pseudo feminists, pseudo historicists, and disciples of Foucault.'" In contrast, Bloom proudly notes, he regards himself as a "`pure esthete`" who claims that Shakespeare "`not only meets the highest esthetic and cognitive standards, he sets our esthetic and cognitive standards`" (Gussow E1-3).

Even though Bloom may be waging an up-hill battle within English departments against the New Historicists, Feminists, Marxists, and other "lemmings," his high visibility may indicate to rhetoricians that the cult of the aesthetic has not fully disappeared from literary studies. After all, it is highly unlikely that when a historicist like Marilyn Butler publishes her next book The New York Times will devote itself to featuring it and praising it. Moreover, while there may be

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

a split in Romantic Studies between New Historicists like Marilyn Butler and traditionalists like Bloom, few people outside of Romantic Studies have ever heard of Marilyn Butler or Jerome McGann. Meanwhile, literary critics like Abrams, DeMan, and especially Bloom are well-known outside of the field, suggesting that this very *visible* version of literary criticism is much more likely to capture the attention of rhetoricians than anything being done by New Historicists. Clearly the aesthetic view of literature maintains a high-profile thanks to the popular media.

And, according to the mainstream press and the publishing industry, it is a version worth a great deal of cultural capital. Bloom has appeared on the PBS "Charlie Rose" program, and he has been featured twice in The New York Times Magazine, while his name is frequently mentioned besides other cultural leaders in newspaper and magazine articles. When The New York Times, for instance, ran a profile piece on Helen Vendler, who was about to release her study of Shakespeare's sonnets, Bloom's name came up several times. In the article, Vendler described Bloom as "`the foremost critic of his generation,'" and The Times confirmed that remark by noting that "for two generations [Vendler] and the Yale Professor Harold Bloom have, to some extent, decreed which poets will enter the pantheon" (B7).* Bloom's importance as a cultural critic is so valued that The Western Canon earned him a $600,000 advance from his publisher (Beagley 35). So, in spite of the inner-circle antagonism Bloom encounters in the MLA, he is nonetheless rewarded for his views, and for carrying out the tradition of canon formation frequently associated with Matthew Arnold, T.S. Eliot and Cleanth Brooks (Guillory). No doubt Bloom sees himself as part of a pantheon of critics who sought to create a literary canon that would erect boundaries and qualify "valuable" cultural products, typically selected for their aesthetic qualities. This is exactly what Bloom has in mind in The Western Canon when he selects the twenty-six greatest writers of all time for their "aesthetic strangeness," for displaying "a mode of originality" unparalleled by other writers (3). Bloom decides to include Samuel Johnson among the twenty-six, for being "the greatest of Western literary critics" (2), and for

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

getting the whole Western canon tradition going in the first place. Bloom recognizes that canon formation stretches further back than Arnold, and that Johnson deserves special notice. Indeed, Bloom reserves an entire chapter for Johnson's efforts, entitled "Dr. Samuel Johnson, the Canonical Critic."

But what Bloom fails to mention is that Johnson himself was in the middle of a cultural war, too. In fact, throughout much of the period radicals in England found Johnson's attempt to distinguish between high and low forms of discourse rather disturbing—and that included his very famous dictionary. Johnson played an enormous role in the theories and practices which had defined mind, language and society in relation to each other. Much of Wordsworth's literary output, in fact, can be viewed as an attempt to counter the Johnsonian impact on language, literature, and the unfair categorization of the lower classes within the two. Near the end of the eighteenth century, language and politics were barely distinguishable, as the next chapter will demonstrate. Moreover, by the time Boswell published his famous Life of Samuel Johnson in 1791, many English radicals hoped that France's revolutionary politics would be replicated in their own country. Romantic artists emerged out of this turbulent period in English history, and every major Romantic writer addressed the important political questions of their day. Romantic artists did not deliberately extract history and politics from their work—however, many Romantic scholars did. Thus, the prevailing idea of Romanticism held by many rhetoricians as an a-historical and socially transcendental form of discourse is a view *derived from* some of the most celebrated and conspicuous scholars in Romantic studies. In addition, this view of Romanticism's expressive qualities was reinforced by Foucault's influence within Composition and Rhetoric, along with the divisiveness that was occurring in English Departments between Composition and Rhetoric and Literary Studies.

Therefore, it is a mistake to argue that contemporary expressivism borrows from the a-historical intentions of Romanticism since Romanticism was not bent on denying politics or

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

history in the first place, as I will demonstrate in the coming chapters. As such, it is similarly inaccurate to accuse expressivism of encouraging a solipsistic form of discourse based on the *Romantic* conception of the solitary writer. Quite the opposite is true. Like Romanticism, expressivism grew out of a revolutionary period in history, while turning its attention towards questions of language, society, and authority. What I am arguing is that Romanticism and expressivism have been simplified and reduced by some rhetoricians to appear far more anti-social and intellectually ineffectual than they actually were and are. In the field of Composition and Rhetoric, this simplification has been easily accomplished because neither Romanticism nor expressivism have been satisfactorily placed within an intellectual and historical tradition. By placing Romanticism and expressivism in their historical context, I will show that they are indeed both linked—but not because they share an a-historical or a-social view of discourse, or an aesthetic view of the writing process. Instead, Romanticism and expressivism are connected because both emerged out of the radical political movements of their times.

---

[1] In a later work, Marxism and Criticism, (1977) Williams softens his critique of the genre, describing the "Romantic impulse to human liberation" working itself out at a time of "dominant capitalism" (86), and citing "the Romantic critique of industrial civilization" as part of a "counter-culture" that opposed "the dominant culture" (114).

[2] Berlin considers himself a social-epistemic rhetorician, which seems apparent based on his definition that social-epistemics view rhetoric "as a political act." However, he also includes David Bartholomae among his list of social epistemic rhetoricians, which seems to indicate the difficulties of trying to taxonomize rhetoricians since Bartholomae, who advocates academic discourse, seems more like a current-traditionalist—at least to me. That is why some may object to my placement of Rose and Bizzell in the traditional camp. Overall, they may both appear more like social-epistemics, but when it comes to criticizing expressivism they sound a lot like traditionalists—again, at least to me, because they argue that expressivism fails to engage students at a proper intellectual level.

[3] LeFevre must be referring to William Blake, whose later work indeed exhibits a certain amount of esoteric quirkiness compared to his earlier poetry. But as E.P. Thompson points out in The Making of the English Working Class, as radicals like Blake were being forced underground by a repressive government, Blake's prophecies "became more mysterious and private" (175), a phenomenon that will be examined more fully in the next two chapters.

[4] In "The Culture of Postmodernism," Ihab Hassan distinguishes between the discursive forms of modernism and postmodernism. While modernism qualified "the art object," he argues, postmodernism privileges "the performance." Hassan also lists "romanticism" as an aspect of the modern, compared to the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

postmodern "paraphysics." Perhaps Miller's condemnation of "romanticism" is a feature of her desire to bring Composition and Rhetoric up to postmodern speed?

[5] Bizzell's position in the field has shifted somewhat. Her current opinions are more in line with social-epistemic designs—as outlined by Berlin. In her address before the Conference on College Composition and Communication in Phoenix (March 1997), Bizzell argued that rhetoric rather than composition should be taught in the class, for rhetoric is more likely to "contribute to social change by helping people better to use the persuasive discourses that are powerful in society" (14).

[6] For a thorough examination of the "professionalization" of literary studies see Gerald Graff's Professing Literature: An Institutional History.

[7] Ohmann maintains in Politics of Letters that this a-political stance on the part of literary critics has led to a very distinctive canon formation in American literature, whereby literary characters, plots, and themes were selected for celebrating "individual consciousness, not the social or historical field" (80). Indeed, classical American literature does present a series of individualists who *want* to be outside of society, like Melville's Ishmael, Cooper's Natty Bumpo, Thoreau's Naturalist, Twain's Huck Finn, Fitzgerald's Gatsby, Faulkner's Quentin Compson, Salinger's Holden Caulfield, and Bellow's Herzog.

[8] Marilyn Butler argues that Romanticists in the United States fell in love with the idea that Romantic writers felt alienated from their society because it coincided with their own sense of being "displaced academics, experiencing alienation from American society" ("Repossessing the Past" 81).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

CHAPTER TWO

CLASS(*ifying*) LANGUAGE:

THE WAR OF THE WORD

In the 1798 "Advertisement" to Lyrical Ballads, William Wordsworth claimed that he was undertaking an "experiment" in literary language. That experiment argued in favor of the intellectual capability of the lower and middle classes, a remarkably democratic claim that challenged elitist literary conventions. The experimental nature of the poems, Wordsworth stated, lies primarily "with a view to ascertain how far the language of conversation in the middle and lower classes of society is adapted to the purposes of poetic pleasure" (443). Although this can be viewed strictly as a literary event, it was in fact part of the political events occurring in society at large. To a great degree, then, Wordsworth's *literary* experiment was a response to the *political* events engulfing British society.

Late eighteenth-century conventional theories of language constructed class divisions that determined which members of society merited participation in public life. Conservative thinkers, like Samuel Johnson, had decided that only the leisure class was worthy of setting and exemplifying linguistic and literary conventions because of their political and social rank. On the other hand, Wordsworth represented the literary front for the thought of such democratic radicals like William Cobbett, John Horne Tooke, and Thomas Paine who redefined the nature of language in order to expand the political rights of lower class, or 'vulgar,' speakers. Thus, between 1790 and 1820 radicals in literature and politics challenged the conservative orthodoxy in politics *and* literature. Wordsworth's literary experiment was therefore part of a larger attack upon conservative social traditions, no less than modern expressivism in our age emerged as a challenge to traditional theories of writing and instruction. Indeed, both expressivism and Romanticism can be seen as rhetorical departures from dominant paradigms, accompanying wider assaults upon conservative customs and values.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Especially in his early career, Wordsworth had joined a democratic upsurge in politics, rhetoric, and poetry. Throughout the Romantic era, radicals sought to empower the 'vulgar' masses. In 1818, for example, William Cobbett published A Grammar of the English Language, which sold an extraordinary 5,000 copies in the first weeks that it appeared. Unlike many previous grammars addressed primarily to 'gentlemen,' like Bishop Lowth's A Short Introduction to English Grammar (1762) and Lord Monboddo's Of the Origin and Progress of Language (1774), Cobbett wrote his grammar to teach laborers how to write. Cobbett wanted to counteract a social system that aligned 'proper' learning and language with class, just as Wordsworth had tried to countervail literary standards that pegged poetic decency with leisure class decorum. Earlier conceptions of language learning had excluded commoners from the social participation that writing brings. Cobbett, on the other hand, wanted to teach his audience how to write for their own political defense, to demonstrate that "tyranny has no enemy as formidable as the pen" (9).

In no uncertain terms, Cobbett's democratic approach to grammar met with great success. After six months in print, A Grammar had sold an additional 13,000; by 1822, 500,000 copies were sold (Altick 381). Cobbett's Grammar became as popular as Paine's Rights of Man among the working class. And while Paine deliberately departed from the conventions of English political writing by using a "simple" style (Clark 308-10; Foner 11), Cobbett exhorted his own readers in The Grammar to follow Paine's example, so that the "best words are those, which are familiar to the ears of the greatest number of persons" (71). According to Cobbett, language itself should be seen as an organic, inclusive social process rather than a contrived, exclusive nomenclature. Cobbett understood that conservative men of letters like Samuel Johnson, James Harris, Bishop Lowth, Lord Monboddo, and Hugh Blair had condoned an elitist assessment of language by characterizing the literati as a special class and by formulating a discourse that was

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

appropriate for it, all the while justifying and preserving class division by simultaneously dismissing lower class language as inherently inferior, which Paine and Wordsworth had denied.

In this period, ideas about language were akin to ideas about political power. Linguistic theories helped identify which members of society warranted inclusion in the political process (restricted versus universal suffrage). In the eighteenth century, language had been polarized by theorists who split discourse into a very unequal hierarchy: refined and vulgar. "Vulgar" during this period meant "plain, of the people, vulgus" (Boulton, The Language of Politics 138). The vulgar, who comprised the majority of the population, used language coarsely or inelegantly, according to experts like Johnson and Lowth. In contrast, the leisure or upper class used language properly. These extreme concepts identified the language of the classically educated as worthy of emulation and preservation, while the language of the vulgar was disregarded and dismissed. These linguistic categories of the eighteenth century have obvious connections to a politics of the socially powerful. At the center of this argument stood one basic idea: custom. Conservatives like Burke and Pitt fought against enlarging political participation based on the customs of church and state. Meanwhile, in terms of codifying the language, Johnson would compile it according to custom, as a way of both stabilizing and correcting it. Johnson wanted English to be more aligned with other prestigious languages, like Greek and Latin. And, as the upcoming pages will show, an understanding of Greek and Latin signified literacy. But Johnson was not alone in this approach.

In the middle of the eighteenth century, when the study of the English language was accelerating at a tremendous pace, some of the most prominent and influential theorists canonized the language of a tiny portion of the population based on custom, often extending this line of argument to include modeling English on the 'customary' use of Greek and Latin. For the most part, the language of the majority of the population was seen as not only indecent but too subject to change. Samuel Johnson compiled the first English dictionary (1755) with these ideas

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

in mind. As the compiler of the Dictionary, the architect of literary criticism, and the author of a prose style that was often used as a guide in later texts to illustrate elegant prose, Johnson's influence in the field seems indisputable. But other theorists also had long-lasting affects on the way the language was taxonomized and taught. The authoritative stature of Robert (Bishop) Lowth's A Short Introduction to English Grammar (1762) affected the study of grammar in England *and* the United States until the twentieth-century, as Diane D. Bonnstein (1976) notes. James Harris's Hermes (1751), James Burnett's (Lord Monboddo) Of the Origin and Progress of Language (1774), and Hugh Blair's Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres (1780) were also important works that popularized certain ideas about the English language. These authors, along with other minor theorists, tended to share a belief in the hierarchical nature of language that simultaneously explained and often justified *social* divisions. In the Romantic era, and the period leading up to it, radicals challenged this conservative representation of language in society. Language had become a site for class warfare.

Johnson's Custom Shop

Samuel Johnson, in fact, saw himself as an imperial centurion once he decided to compile an English dictionary. Writing to the Earl of Chesterfield in 1747, Johnson admitted that the task before him seemed daunting, as if he were a conqueror inspecting newly acquired terrain: "When I survey the Plan which I have laid before you, I cannot, my Lord, but confess, that I am frightened at its extent, and, like the soldiers of Caesar, look on Britain as New World, which it is almost madness to invade. But I hope, that though I should not complete the conquest, I shall at least discover the coast, civilize part of the inhabitants, and make it easy for some other adventurer to proceed further, to reduce them wholly to subjection and settle them under laws" (The Plan of the Dictionary of the English Language 33). As a lexicographer, Johnson will settle and subdue the language, but the passage also points toward the political nature of the task at hand: In settling and subduing the language, Johnson will be settling and subduing the bearers of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

English, the speakers of the language. Both the language and the people are in need of discipline; in fact, doing one meant doing the other. Johnson equates speaking in a civil tongue with becoming a civilized member of society. By creating linguistic "laws," Johnson assumes that social stability will be reinforced. Civilization depends on being able to appropriate the purest form of English usage. "The chief intent" of the dictionary, Johnson explains, "is to preserve the purity" of the language (10). "The language may be fixed," he later adds, "by which its purity may be preserved" (32). In order to advance British civilization through the codification of its language, standards must be created according to custom, which will then protect it from unruly variations. "All change is of itself an evil," he assures the Earl. Although some "take pleasure in departing from custom" (10), Johnson would wholeheartedly embrace the status quo. Johnson wants to fix customary usage, to fix it in place beyond reformers and innovators, just as Burke would later defend political customs against radical reformers. Eight years later, when Johnson wrote the "Preface" to the dictionary, he was very clear about who was authorized to establish that custom, and what segment of the population could best represent a "universal" system of the English tongue. Ultimately, those customs were merely the creations of "a minority of a minority of speakers" (Barrell 137).

As Johnson proclaimed in the "Preface," only the language of specific segments of the population and specific authors were worthy of preservation, of placing into a "permanent" record. This process of classification would be based on Johnson's presumptions about what constituted valuable language, typically reflecting a class bias. Then, Johnson would screen it for impurities: "I found our speech copious without order and energetic without rules," he notes, and "adulterations were to be detected without a settled test of purity" (i). Those who use the language perversely, according to Johnson, are not unlike those who are sexually immoral. As a result, Johnson would police the language and determine, through a "test of purity," which elements of the language community deserve preservation. Clearly, Johnson asserts, the language

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

of the leisure class must be regarded as passing that test, for "those who have much leisure to think, will always be enlarging the stock of ideas; and every increase of knowledge, whether real or fancied, will produce new words, or combinations of words" (vi). Although the "laborious and mercantile part of the people" likewise create new words, those words, and therefore by implication that portion of the population, flunk the test.

> Nor are all words that are not found in the vocabulary, to be lamented as omissions. Of the laborious and mercantile part of the people, the diction is in a great measure casual and mutable; many of their terms are formed for some temporary or local convenience, and though current at certain times and places, are in others utterly unknown. This fugitive cant, which is always in a state of increase or decay, cannot be regarded as any art of the durable materials of a language, and therefore must be suffered to perish with other things unworthy of preservation. (v)

For Johnson, only the language of extensively educated gentlemen is worth saving and protecting, while the language of the middle and working class is intrinsically inferior and not worth preserving. Usage reinforces social categories. But the real crux of the matter goes deeper than that: Johnson defines the lower classes as culturally insignificant. In addition, some languages must unavoidably perish since they originate from those who are not officially fit to take part in the history-making process. "Men busy and unlearned," he professes, "have no business in prescribing the official language" (vi). For Johnson, only learned gentlemen are entitled to set linguistic standards, or contribute towards a history of terms. The vulgar lack proper cultural credentials.

Johnson adds another reason for rejecting the discourse of some portions of the population: it would be logistically impossible as a lexicographer to amass the language of working men and women. "That many terms of art and manufacture are omitted, must be frankly acknowledged," Johnson confesses, "but for this defect I may boldly allege that it was

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

unavoidable: I could not visit caverns to learn the miner's language, nor take a voyage to perfect my skill in navigation" (v). All in all, Johnson contends, it would have been too time-consuming. But this is a rather specious argument, since Johnson does take the time to thumb through the "works of Shakespeare" in order to locate "diction from common life" (iv). In fact, Johnson is actually far less interested in the language of the living than he is of the dead.

In the "Preface" Johnson draws a clear distinction between the language of books and the language of the living, of what he considered to be the differences behind genuine and corrupt language. Johnson assumes that this is also the language most commonly used by that class of people who "have much leisure" to read books, especially books whose authors Johnson would canonize twenty-five years later, in Lives of the Poets, as prototypically English by design. "My purpose was to admit no testimony of living authors" (iii), he boasts, regarding his method of classification. Overall, Johnson would compile a decidedly Elizabethan dictionary. Whereas Johnson found it too cumbersome to search for words among living workers, he was willing to "studiously endeavor to collect examples and authorities from the writers before the Restoration, whose works I regard as *the wells of English undefiled*" (iv). In order to construct his dictionary, and cover as many fields of knowledge as possible, Johnson will employ "Bacon for natural knowledge; phrases of policy, war, and navigation from Raleigh; poetry and fiction from Spenser and Sidney, and the diction from common life from Shakespeare" (ibid). Johnson established an "official," "permanent" record of English, on the condition that the so-called defiled, impermanent speech of some be excluded from consideration, thereby instituting leisure class language while stigmatizing the language of the middle and working classes. "The Preface," Olivia Smith maintains in The Politics of Language, "in itself disseminated conservative assumptions about language and its relation to class" (14), while its "long-lasting and extensive distribution" augmented class divisions until the next century with its "enduring and influential life" (15-16).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Once Johnson advertised his intentions in the "Preface," the dictionary itself fulfilled his desire to set forth a hegemonic taxonomy of language, which essentially upheld British social hierarchies. In part, Johnson used the dictionary to codify unequal social arrangements as fixed and permanent through a selection of terms that circumscribed "the official language." Johnson's methods, it seems, run counter to what Foucault contends in The Order of Things regarding the arbitrary nature of classification, or how "chance" slips into habit and law. Based on Johnson's statements in the "Plan" and the "Preface," Johnson is *not* "at the mercy of chance" (ix) or arbitrarily revealing "a positive unconscious of knowledge" (xi), as Foucault argued regarding many seventeenth and eighteenth century taxonomists. More accurately, Johnson's methods endorse what Noelle Bisseret argued in Education, Class, Language and Ideology, that "the dominant class sets up its own language habits as an absolute standard" that ultimately "defines the social identity of the dominant and of the dominated" (63). Johnson's system of classification is consciously modeled on an evaluation of words that help define and *maintain* social boundaries. The subordination of one group of speakers by another was necessary to ensure cultural stability, just as the political subordination of one group by another guaranteed social solidity. Johnson defended this position of regulating any hierarchy to his famous biographer, Boswell, on the grounds of its social instrumentality and usefulness.

> But, Sir, as subordination is very necessary for society, and contentions for superiority very dangerous, mankind, that is to say, all civilized nations, have settled it upon a plain invariable principle. A man is born to hereditary rank; or his being appointed to certain offices, gives him a certain rank. Subordination tends greatly to human happiness... Thus, Sir, there would be a perpetual struggle for precedence, were there no fixed invariable rules for the distinction of rank, which creates no jealousy, as it is allowed to be accidental. (Boswell, I, 447-448)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Johnson defines the axes of domination and subordination along class lines, just as he had produced a split between the language of the socially powerful and the language of non-power. To an extent, Johnson has replaced the old argument of the 'natural,' hereditary right to power and privilege with the need for "fixing" class distinctions on the basis of social utility. Organizing language around the same distinctive features of "rank" would be no accident either.

Words in Johnson's dictionary are defined according to similar principles, whereby the definitions describe the experiences of the nobility. For instance, in order to understand the meaning of the word "right," Johnson uses the following analogy: "persons of noble blood are less envied in their rising, for it seemeth but *right* done to their birth." In trying to show how words represent social values, Johnson also is confirming inequality in Britain through his ideological definition of words. Thus, the primary signification of "freedom," for example, represents "Privileges, franchises, and immunities." The second meaning includes a quote from Shakespeare to reaffirm that "freedom" is the "Power of enjoying franchises," while the third citation incorporates a passage from Swift to demonstrate that "freedom" can sometimes mean an "Exemption from fate." In the "Preface" Johnson stated that "words are but the signs of ideas" (ii), so that the ideas behind such words like "freedom" and "right," in effect, standardize social inequality, while *appearing* to display an irrevocable linguistic absoluteness. As such, "freedom," as the thing in and of itself, exists only for those privileged enough to enjoy special powers granted by the government. Meanwhile, the definitions command credibility from their association to literary figures like Swift and Shakespeare, who employed them "properly" in the past. Both the terms and the social derivations are presented as historical truth. The application of the literary past secures the socially and politically divided present. Johnson's dictionary enables the dominant class to project its dominance as an inevitable state of affairs, as consecrated and permanent as the sacred texts of British literature. "Tongues," Johnson observed in the "Preface," "like governments, have a natural tendency to degeneration; we have long

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

preserved our constitution, let us make some struggle for our language" (vi). By advancing and preserving both a linguistic and a social hierarchy, Johnson played a major role in "fixing" the language along class lines, which naturalized class distinctions and standardized social inequality.

When Johnson turned his attention to forming a literary canon, he continued to promote social distinctions through linguistic distinctions. In his study of Abraham Crowley, for instance, Johnson presumed that the language of the lower classes revealed their inferior minds and testified to their lowly social status.

> Language is the dress of thought; and as the noblest mien, or most graceful actions, would be degraded and obscured by a garb which was appropriated to the gross employments of rustics or mechanics, so the most heroic sentiments will lose their efficacy, and the most splendid ideas drop their magnificence, if they are conveyed by words used commonly upon low and trivial occasions, debased by vulgar mouths, and contaminated by inelegant applications. (380).

At one level, the words employed by rustics and mechanics can never convey "heroic sentiments" because of the "trivial" circumstances of their lives, wherein the language that must be used to describe those conditions is unavoidably trite and vulgar as well, an idea that Wordsworth will attempt to disprove in his Preface to Lyrical Ballads. To a great extent, Johnson characterizes everyday language as irrelevant, and those who employ it as socially inferior. At another level, Johnson indicates that the language of the lower classes reflects their impoverished intellectual state, in that their inability to (a)dress words as elegantly as the poets demonstrates their mental mediocrity. For Johnson, vulgar mouths are the signs of vulgar people. In the period leading up to the Romantic era, language and politics were interconnected, tightly bound by the issue of who was entitled to participate in cultural formation. While conservative statesmen like Burke, Pitt, and Wilberforce denied the vote to the lower classes because they considered such

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

commoners socially irresponsible, conservative thinkers like Johnson refused to validate the language of this same group on the same grounds. Any departure from political and linguistic customs would open up the social arena to the unruly forces of the mob. As Johnson noted in the "Preface," both language and governments were prone to degeneration through the corrupting influences of the "laborious" and uneducated segments of the population. The language must be rescued from the indecent in order for the political empire to prosper. And indecent language, Johnson ascertained, was weaving its way into society through advances in technology.

Johnson is often regarded as one of the first authors who earned a substantial income in the new printing industry, without having to receive donations from wealthy patrons. In this fresh period when commercial publishers were replacing the older forms of output, he recognized that advances in print technologies were responsible for the expansion of word production beyond traditional means of circulation. Produced outside of aristocratic circles, texts no longer belonged solely to elite members of society, to the courtly men of letters. The cultural and political implications of the new circulation concerned him, and would remain a major sticking point for conservatives through the next century, since printing presses brought progressive ideas to the attention of a working class audience that was becoming increasingly more self-educated, as E.P. Thompson points out in The Making of the English Working Class. The radical Unitarian minister Dr. Richard Price, for instance, sold 60,000 copies of his Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty in 1776 (Williams, The Long Revolution 163). Johnson tried to take advantage of the new technology by playing the part of a cultural gadfly. Despite print technology introducing impurities into the system, technological innovations actually could serve to crystallize and reinforce the customary language of the ruling class on an even wider scale. In the new medium, Johnson wanted to prove "that the English language belongs to and is shaped by its great authors and their texts," an idea that remains, according to Alvin Kernan in Printing, Technology, Letters and Samuel Johnson, "so obvious by now that it seems almost pointless to remark that the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

literary artist officially rules language" (197-8). If it were not for Johnson, Kernan argues, the English language in the early stages of the age of print might have been permanently devalued through some early communist-like coup.

> In the eighteenth-century, the first, most radical tendency of print and its logic of multiplicity was to destroy the canon of courtly letters centered on the classics and in a revolutionary, democratic manner to level all books in a continuous surge of new, ever-accumulating print products. But the systematizing logic or espirit de systeme of print imposed in-built restraints on this literary Maoism by offering new kinds of literary order and new sources of literary authority. It is possible to see Johnson actually realizing these possibilities to construct a new print-based literary canon in his criticism, in his biographies of the important English poets, and in his dogmatic social pronouncements about literature. (159)

Thus, as the compiler of the Dictionary, founder of literary criticism, and author of a prose style that was avidly read and imitated, Johnson greatly influenced beliefs that emphasized distinctions between refined and common English.[1]

In fact, Johnson was so determined to support social hierarchies that he found enough time to work directly for the state while engineering his massive literary output. Although Johnson had defined "pension" in his Dictionary as "pay given to a state hierling for treason to his country," that did not stop him from enjoying one himself for twenty years and receiving 200 pounds for it. He wrote "several pungent pamphlets in defense of Lord North's repressive domestic and colonial policies" (Aspinall, Politics and the Press 167). However, Johnson was not the only "state hierling" who theorized about language along class lines. James Harris, who wrote about the differences between civil and crude tongues as it applied to abstract and concrete thinking in his grammar study, was Chancellor of the Exchequer and Secretary to Queen Charlotte (Smith 25).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Grammatical Standards

Published in 1751, Harris's Hermes; or, a Philosophical Inquiry concerning Language and Universal Grammar, described grammar as universal because it evinced the nature of the mind. But there was an obvious social twist to what constituted "universal" grammar. As he saw it, the mind essentially performed two distinct functions, that of reflection and that of sensation. The mind that functioned mostly through sense was inferior to the mind that operated through reflection, an argument Johnson made as well in his "Preface." According to Harris, the reflective mind comprehends its surroundings beyond the present, which was preferable to a mind that sensed and could only perceive and understand the world concretely. It stands to reason, in Harris's estimation, that such a mind would be prone to use concrete language, while the reflective mind would be more likely to use language abstractly.

Abstract language is therefore a manifestation of superior mental faculties. Furthermore, the reflective mind blocks out the material world. The reflective mind transcends materiality and moves on to higher concepts. In contrast, a mind preoccupied with sense perception, with the here and now, is bogged down in the ever-shifting particulars of daily life. Ultimately, language used for the purposes of describing the material world pulls the mind downward: "LANGUAGE, tho' in itself only significant of *general ideas*, is brought down to denote *that infinitude of Particulars*, which are for ever arising, and ceasing to be" (34). Harris therefore shares Johnson's view that concrete language is not permanent and exists as an inferior form of language.

On the other hand, abstract words are more estimable since they reflect more admirable minds. "By a *more refined operation of our Mind* alone," Harris argues, "we *abstract any Attribute* from its necessary subject, and consider it *apart*, devoid of its dependence" (14). If the mind cannot perform the necessary linguistic operations to address the world abstractly, then the mind will be confined to the materiality of things, unable to detect life's hidden, immaterial virtues. Therefore, abstract language was a measurement of the mind's refinement, of the mind's

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

ability to think purely. Harris believed that the best words, the least concrete words, were signs of "*COMPREHENSIVE* and *PERMANENT IDEAS*, THE *GENUINE PERCEPTIONS OF PURE MIND*," (232). Harris not only shared Johnson's conservatism that permanence was a virtue and change was an evil, but also how best to arrive at achieving such purity. Just as Johnson had turned to the "permanent" language of books, instead of the mutable language of the living in order to compile his dictionary, Harris similarly advocated that the most permanent thoughts could be found in books as well. But only books that did not deal with contemporary life, a charge he made against Alexander Pope. Writing about contemporary life warps the ideal function of both mind and speech: "to those who tell us, with an air of seeming wisdom, that '*tis Men,* and *not Books* we must study to become knowing; this I have always remarked from repeated experience, to be the common consolation and the language of Dunces" (339). By favoring books over experience, and abstract language over concrete language, Harris contributed to conservative theories about the nature of language, the structure of the mind, and the worthiness of elite groups.

Bishop Lowth's study of grammar likewise advised its readers to "read ancient authors" (viii) as the best means of learning correct English. Lowth also informed his audience that their grammar could be improved if they imitated the syntactical structure of Latin and used more 'Latinized' expressions. Unfortunately, as Raymond Williams points out, it was a concept that actually distorted and complicated the study of English, although it did serve to clarify who was "educated" and "uneducated" according to whether or not the speaker employed the "new and improved Latinized English" (Williams, The Long Revolution 223). By stipulating that the value of English would be enhanced if its speakers parroted Latin, grammarians, like Lowth, assumed that English society itself could be improved if it became more like the Roman Empire, which had imposed Latin on a good portion of the world and became the official language of Europe's political and religious leaders.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The primacy of Latin in Lowth's A Short Introduction to English Grammar is apparent from the title page, which contains a citation in Latin from Cicero. Throughout the text, Lowth applies Latin terms and definitions to explain the English verb system, participles, and prepositions. He informs his readers that a preposition should not be placed at the end of a sentence because it can't be done in Latin, and, more to the point, because it is not "grand and solemn" enough and resembles "common conversation" (96). The legacy of Lowth's rules was so far-reaching and enduring that grammar books published in the United States in the middle of the twentieth-century continued to admonish students for placing a preposition at the end of a sentence.[2] Lowth's fixation on Latin derived from modeling his guide to "good" grammar on the work of John Wallis, a Professor of geometry at Cambridge University. Wallis, who published his Grammatica Lingua Anglicanae in 1653, wrote his grammar of the *English* language entirely in *Latin*! (Downey xii). Lowth's blind dedication to Latin even curtailed his acceptance of English used by the 'masters' of the language. He was responsible for introducing the awkwardness of the double-negative in an English sentence because it was deplored in Latin. "Two Negatives in English destroy one another, or are equivalent, to an affirmative" (95), he argued. Lowth therefore outlawed the double-negative (still banned in correct usage!) to make English more compatible with Latin, even though English writers like Chaucer and Shakespeare employed them in the past. Correctness for Lowth had a peculiarly Latin beat.

Not surprisingly, a major objective in these texts for learning proper English was advancing to Latin. As Lowth points out, "If students were to adopt in our schools the common principles of English grammar, [instructors] would then know when they should enter into the Latin Grammar" (x). Lowth recognized that learning Latin at that time was a necessary social tool for anyone who wanted to enter polite society. As a result, the audience is frequently warned that ordinary language is bad and that correct English can be learned if they become more knowledgeable "in the classical languages." In the same breath, he suggests to his readers that

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

they "frequent polite society" (vii). Lowth's grammar book was a perfect accompaniment to Johnson's Dictionary, in that both projected a philosophy of language that divided its users into two social categories, the polite and the vulgar.

From the beginning, Lowth's text was proclaimed as the definitive guide to English, and recognized as a companion piece to Johnson's dictionary. By 1795 it had gone through twenty-two editions; because it became "the most widely studied grammar of the last half of the century," other grammars were based on it or were deeply indebted to it (Bonnstein xvii; Smith 4). In general, most theorists accepted the Latin-English fusion, eventually promoting it wherever English was spoken. The few objections to this formula sprung from radicals, such as Paine and Cobbett, who detected that this "new" synthesis was rigidly class-based.

Unfortunately, as Raymond Williams notes, the obsession with Latin during this time created more problems than solutions for English speakers. Certain words were deliberately changed to their "correct" spelling by grammarians, although they were wrong to attribute the root words to Latin. Thus, 'iland' was altered to 'island,' 'offen' to 'often,' and 'forrid' to 'forehead.' Pronunciations were revised as well, lengthening the vowel sounds in such words as 'path' and 'past' (Williams, The Long Revolution 220-221). But this new standard in the eighteenth-century was an artificial creation based on a need to align English with the languages of more "civilized" empires, like Rome and Greece. Perhaps, then, as England was building its own modern empire, with colonies in the Americas, India, Asia, and the Caribbean, the language should mirror the languages of the ancient, Western empires. Moreover, for several centuries Latin was used by Europe's upper class to conduct the official business of church and state. If English sounded and looked more like Latin, and if its standards became part of the lexicon of a minority of a minority of users, then anyone who spelled or spoke words the unofficial way were deemed too uneducated or vulgar to participate in society. Not long after, Burke announced that the "swinish" masses were incapable of valuing civilization.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Vulgar Infractions: Barbarians at the Gate

Conservative literati of that time believed that it was their responsibility to repel the vulgar who polluted language with coarse usage. Rules regarding pronunciation needed to be addressed as well, if the language stood any chance of remaining pure, in their eyes. Once more, the language of polite, urbane speakers would serve as the model. James Buchannan in An Essay Towards Establishing a Standard for an Elegant and Uniform Pronunciation of the English Language (1764), along with Hugh Jones, who published An Accidence to the English Tongue the following year, advocated a regional, class-based system. Both Buchannan and Jones argued that of the five principal dialects of English—the Northern, or Yorkshire; the Southern, or Sussex; the Eastern, or Suffolk; the Western, or Bristol—the fifth, simply called the London dialect, should be the proper version (Barrell 150-3). Therefore, the stipulations involved in defining what was proper, in some cases, grew narrower and narrower. London's polite speakers emerge as the bearers of good speech because London was the seat of political power and it also was emerging as one of the world's leading financial capitals. Perhaps this is why George Campbell complained in his A Philosophy of Rhetoric (1776) that only one in a hundred people could speak the "reputable" language, the rest spoke like barbarians (140).

Following Buchannan's and Jones's work on pronunciation, Thomas Sheridan further compressed the field of qualified, polite speakers. In 1780, Sheridan produced A General Dictionary of the English Language. As he noted in the lengthy subtitle, "the one main object" of his effort was "to establish a plain and permanent standard of pronunciation." However, in selecting the speech habits from the court of Queen Anne, Sheridan's standards were anything but plain (Leith 53-4). Sheridan endorsed a tiny portion of London speakers as exemplary for proper pronunciation, the most elite band *within* England's wealthiest class. Sheridan's selective model perpetuated the choices made earlier by Johnson and Lowth. On the political front, Burke reinforced this schema. In the Reflections on the Revolution in France, he proposed a similar

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

argument regarding the governance of English society. Lower and middle classes must place a "restraint upon their passions" (60) and happily relinquish their political rights in order to be ruled by the inherited wisdom of the aristocracy, who should remain the sole leaders of the nation since other classes are prone to fits of passion in all matters political or cultural. Labeling the language of the laborious and mercantile part of the population as erratic and emotional was therefore a crucial feature of an ideological strategy that "imposed on people the feeling that they really are incompetent to deal with complex and important issues" (Chomsky 22). By elevating the language and thought of their own, the ruling class expected the lower orders to succumb to their wisdom.

In 1784, Robert Nares specifically produced his Elements of Orthoepy for a "polite and educated" audience who might still gain from learning to speak even more properly (qtd. in Barrell 170). At the same time, Nares warned his readers that they needed to guard against the barbarians gathering at the gates. Nares hoped to fix English pronunciation as firmly as others were fixing grammar and lexicon. Like so many leading grammarians at this time, he viewed the situation in military terms. The language, it seemed, was always under a constant state of siege by the enemies of proper usage.

> Language, being perpetually in use, is not easily preserved from corruption. Violent and gross injuries, indeed, such as proceed from attacks of vulgar or provincial barbarism, are readily perceived and repelled; but there are enemies which act against it more secretly, and therefore more irresistibly. (qtd. in Barrell 172).

Perhaps one of the enemies Nares had in mind was the radical pamphleteer and bookseller Thomas Spence, who was imprisoned for selling Paine's Rights of Man almost as soon as he stepped foot in London. Spence, a poor schoolmaster from Newcastle, was responsible for penning a number of pamphlets, handbills, and broadsheets—even chalking political slogans on walls—along with a periodical entitled Pig's Meat, a pun on Burke's famous "swinish multitude"

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

remark. In the Rights of Infants (1797), Spence declares that universal suffrage also must include all women under its banner (Thompson, Working Class 161-63). In 1775, Spence had produced a Grand Repository of the English Language, which presented a wide variety of the phonetic alphabet used in society, including those by "negro slaves" (Barrell 170). Spence also proposed the startlingly modern notion that spoken English rather than written English should take precedent when studying the language, "to make the spoken language, as it ought to be, the archetype; of which the written should be considered only as the type" (qtd. in Smith 100). On the political stage, Spence was one of the most radical dissenters. He advocated a total transformation of British society, insisting that the aristocracy be expropriated of their land and co-operatives be put in their place (Thompson, Working Class 230). All private property would be socialized, thereby eradicating one of England's most sacred traditions. Thus, Spence would do away with one of the social hierarchies of English society as quickly as he would do away with the linguistic one. Unmistakably at that time, those who challenged the customs of language also challenged the customs of the political order.

Indeed, in the period under review, the analogy between language and politics was becoming increasingly apparent to both conservatives and radicals, and the belligerent metaphors employed by many leading conservatives regarding usage testified to the matter's implications beyond proper diction or inelegant phrases. For conservatives, the language must be defended from change and violation with as much ferocity as the state needed to be defended against political change. For radicals, language was a democratic phenomenon as needful of change as society itself. Conservatives, like Johnson and Nares, feared change of any kind, whereas radicals *demanded* change on many levels. Dr. Joseph Priestely, one of the most prominent dissenting ministers, wrote about theology, civil liberties, education, and language with the same purpose in mind—to transform England from an oligarchy to a Republic. His well-known History of the Corruptions of Christianity influenced a host of radicals and dissenters, including

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Paine, Blake, Mary Wollstonecraft, and Shelley. In it, Priestley attacked the Established Church as a typically decadent institution of an advanced society, essentially run by and for the elite. Their interests excluded the mass of mankind, aided by their shrewdly managed social policies that hoodwinked the rest of the population into submission. Blake's "Marriage of Heaven and Hell" draws its strength from it. Of considerable importance to radicals like Blake and Priestley was the way in which conservatives used the authority of *custom* to maintain the status quo, thereby keeping the reigns of power in the hands of a very tiny portion of the population.

Like many other radicals, Priestley believed that conservatives introduced the authority of custom into the study of language, thereby excluding a large portion of the population from cultural and political representation. As he noted in his Rudiments of Grammar, Priestley believed that is was "unsuitable for a *free nation*...to reform and fix a language;" that it was better for the language to establish itself by its "present" users rather than to embrace the rules "of synods" (182). Priestley was strongly opposed to Johnson's belief that the living language of ordinary people was remarkably inferior to the language found in books, or the language used by the literati.

> In modern and living languages, it is absurd to pretend to set up the compositions of any person or persons whatsoever as the standard of writing or their conversation as the invariable rule of speaking. With respect to customs, laws, and everything that is changeable, the body of a people, who, in this respect cannot but be free, will certainly assert their liberty, in making what innovations they judge to be expedient and useful. (184-5)

For Priestley, the very idea of customs and laws, which in and of themselves are as mutable as everything else, is a conservative straw-man, planted to frighten the masses from considering that the free use of language is part of the same natural right for each individual to choose and judge on his own. But this principle was severely contested by conservatives, creating an ideological

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

struggle between reformers and traditionalists. The traditionalists' desire to formalize the language, and distinguish it from "common" spoken English, established criteria not only to measure the mind or soul but all of civilization. For Lowth and Johnson, language was a determining factor in identifying the civilized from the uncivilized. Usage determined political and social value, which ultimately decided who was culturally fit to represent the nation.

Language as Social Signifier

George Campbell was quite certain that rhetorical disparities reflected necessary social divisions. In one of the first books to address English oratory, Campbell's The Philosophy of Rhetoric did for speech what Johnson and Lowth did for writing: split the language into two classes. However, in describing the differences between the vulgar and refined, Campbell abandoned the military metaphors and adopted the language of commercial capitalism to highlight the discrepancies. Written in the same year as Adam Smith's The Wealth of Nations (1776), his guideline to exemplary rhetoric identified the language of the vulgar as a socially valueless, even bogus, commodity. Their diction, he argued, is like "counterfeit money, though common, not valued," which "is particularly the case with those terms and phrases which critics have denominated as vulgarisms ... [and] we always associate with it such notions of meanness" (142). The contemptible state of vulgar language indicates they likewise traffic in barbarous behavior. Conduct can be ranked in conjunction with discourse.

Although he suspended the warlike terminology favored by Lowth and Johnson, Campbell did uphold their denoting common language as being too susceptible to the whims of daily existence, while the language of the upper class was firmly anchored in the conventions of civility. Like Johnson, he considered change to be the enemy. "New words," he declared, "are barbarisms," whereas "reputable custom sets the standard." Ordinary men, on the other hand, will pollute and misuse the language: "it will happen that in the lower walks of life [they] will

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

misapply the language" so that "their use is not reputable" (172). Campbell is so indebted to Johnson on this matter that he quotes him as the governing source behind this self-evident truth.

> The people, always fickle, are just as prompt to drop popular expressions as they are to take them up.... We may justly apply what Johnson says of a great number of the terms of the laborious and mercantile part of the people, "This fugitive cant, which is always in a state of increase or decay, cannot be regarded as any part of the durable materials of a language, and therefore must be suffered to perish with other things unworthy of preservation." (148)

Thus, when the time arose to establish standards in the English language, the standard-bearers frequently reaffirmed Johnson's original class biases. Within a twenty-five year period, then, the language of the lower and middle classes was denigrated by leading figures of the time. In no uncertain terms could the language of ordinary people be considered as reliable material in compiling a dictionary, setting grammatical standards, or defining the art of rhetoric. Instead, the language of the upper class must be the linguistic benchmark for the nation because their superior language stemmed from their exalted social and moral position. Moreover, Campbell argued that the upper class is perceived to possess greater wisdom and knowledge because of their wealth, so therefore their language is likewise recognized for its peerless qualities by the population.

> ... in this particular there be any deference to the practice of the great and rich, it is not ultimately because they are greater and richer than others, but because from their greatness and riches, they are imagined to be wiser and more knowing. The source, therefore, of that preference which distinguisheth good use from bad in language, is a natural propension of the human mind to believe that those are the best judges of the proper signs, and of the proper application of them, who understand best the things which they represent. (142-3)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

According to Campbell, it is only natural that the population should defer to the eminently wealthy in all matters of cultural and social importance. Emulating the leisure class continued to be advised and disseminated throughout the next century. Campbell's Rhetoric was reprinted at least forty-two times, and the book was highly favored for students of oratory until the end of the nineteenth-century (Bitzer v-vii). The study of grammar had a similar track record in codifying elite usage as the standard.

In 1795, Lindly Murray's English Grammar gained the prominent position once held by Lowth, although most of Lowth's rules were copied verbatim into it, and again from him by many grammarians of lesser note. By 1832, Murray's grammar had been reissued forty-five times (Blake, N.F. 282). Millions of copies were sold throughout the nineteenth century, thus establishing the pervasive and persistent confusion of English with classical languages (Downey xviii). This meant that eighteenth-century ideas about social divisions based on conceptions of linguistic practice tended to reinforce one another for generations. In 1859, for example, The Clarendon Commission favored the implementation by the Nine Public Schools in England of one and the same grammar book, and headmasters decided to adopt The Elementary Latin Grammar of B.H. Kennedy, a text modeled on Murray's book. The next item based on this text was "The Public School Latin Primer" of 1866, which became the principle grammar book in public schools for another five decades (Adamson 313). Lowth's preference for studying Latin grammar as the best means available for learning English grammar became a fixture in England for several decades. In the copious and lengthy footnotes of Murray's text, he frequently cites Lowth as a source of inspiration and practice, along with Lord Monboddo, who made comparable assumptions about the nature of language and the nature of society.

Monboddo reiterated Lowth's presumption that the classical languages outperformed "plain English." In Of the Origin and Progress of Language, Lord Monboddo separates language into two very unequal parts, artificial and vulgar. Artificial language, the preferred mode of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

discourse, was created by philosophers and artists to express pure or permanent ideas that transcend time, place, and matter. This higher form of language could not have been designed by "mere people, but must have been the work of artists, and men of superior abilities" (II, 6). These linguistic super-men were not unlike other elite members of society who were afforded the luxury of perfecting and advancing Western Civilization.

> Yet we know that the sciences took their life in a country where there was an order of men set apart for the cultivation of them, having the necessities of life supplied to them by the labour of others, and being relieved of all other cares but that of learning and religion.... This was the case in Egypt and Greece. Now it was by such men, employing their leisure in the cultivation of arts and sciences, that language and every other art and science was formed.

Of course, "such men" might have to rely on slave labor in order to perform their cultural tasks, as was the case with ancient Greece and Rome, two empires Monboddo prizes for their advanced civilizations. In the matter of language development, Monboddo shares Johnson's belief that the leisure class is responsible for creating a special, distinct mode of communication that betters society.

He also agrees with Johnson on another point: Not only are the vulgar incapable of using language properly, but they are also unfit to preserve it, a task best left to the men of leisure "who guard against the abuses and corruptions which popular use will necessarily introduce" (493). Moreover, the leisure class's importance in the civilizing process was so apparent that they were employed to spread the faith beyond their own borders, becoming "the lawgivers of words" (482). Monboddo, like Campbell, also assumes that the population paid homage to its elite class of linguistic experts, and automatically fawned over their wisdom. Mere people were forever grateful to "imitate" and "copy" the language of their superiors, knowing that it was best to adopt what "men of authority" deemed as "better...than what had been in practice" (496). But

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

it didn't end there. The lawgivers could likewise assert their linguistic authority beyond their national borders: "when the new language is thus imported into a country by conquerors, the progress of it [will] be quick" (497). After Monboddo identifies the language of the leisure class as the most profitable form of cultural capital, then it makes sense that it should be imposed on others. As he notes, it's now possible to recognize in some cases that the soldier and the grammarian must proceed lockstep to spread 'civilization,' one by conquering the world, the other by providing it with correct usage as a medium of organization.

For this reason, Monboddo reserves his highest praise for the Greek and Latin languages. The "Greek language is the most perfect language the author knows," and Latin comes a close second since it "is the oldest dialect of Greek" (IV, 109). But Monboddo revered the Greek and Latin tongues more for what they represented than for what they actually accomplished as a source of linguistic development. Their languages must be great because their civilizations were great, in the sense that they were both ruled by aristocracies in their heydays: "The chief cause of Roman grandeur was a government that was ruled by an imperial family" (V, 78). Empires ruled by the elite automatically necessitate a progression in language development, for such societies stimulate "more wants and desires" and "the number of words required is prodigious" in order to encompass all of the "pleasure[s] and refinement[s]" encountered in such grand nations (II, 7). Obviously, only an imperial state can produce a language worthy of being preserved, guarded, and regenerated by a special class of grammarians.

If, by chance, less civilized societies exist that happen to display a sophisticated language, then they must have come in contact with more regal cultures. Monboddo points out that "the advanced language system of the Garani people of Paraguay"—whom the Spanish reported had a surprisingly rich language—were incapable of producing it on their own, or even through the assistance of surrounding societies.

For I think it is impossible that they who have made so little progress in the other arts

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> of life, should have invented so complete a language.... I think it is very probable that they have been connected with some more civilized nation, as they could not have learned it from any nations presently in their neighborhood. (I, 381).

Higher forms of discourse, which *must* be a reflection of the exceptional intelligence of high society, cannot be created by cultures that do not adhere to social hierarchies. The Hurons of North America, who similarly appear to display an "advanced stage" of civilization, must have "gained" their knowledge "from some other nation more advanced in the arts of life" (378). Only men of leisure can produce "artificial" language within any given society. In contrast, "mere people" use language to simply express needs and desires in an almost prehistoric state of existence, a language that is "degraded and debased by its necessary connection with flesh and blood" (47), a phrase Wordsworth appropriates in his Lyrical Ballads' "Preface" to mark the *superiority* of "common" language. Monboddo, like Harris and Johnson, believes that common, everyday language is fettered by the material world and can't soar above its mundane surroundings. It is forever hampered by the necessity to express the superficial needs and sensations of daily existence. In Monboddo's estimation, it is "the language of children, savages, and the vulgar," who are all "imbruted" in the material world (130). By dividing the population into two extremes, conservative ideas about language firmly marked those who were within civilized society and those who were outside of it. Baser forms of language, according to these experts, showed the inability of the speaker to transcend the concerns of the present, becoming overwhelmed by their passions. In what is now a familiar conservative litany, Monboddo concluded that those who spoke the refined language, on the other hand, were presumably rational, moral, civilized, and capable of abstract thinking.

Mindful of the Differences

In Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres (1780), Hugh Blair unequivocally linked usage with the speaker's intellect: "if speech be the vehicle or interpreter of the conceptions of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

our mind, an examination of its structure and progress cannot but unfold many things concerning the nature and progress of our conceptions themselves, and the operations of our faculties" (121). Blair portrayed uncivilized speakers as innately irrational, immature, and prone to emotional outbursts, just as Burke had described them socially, proving that they were incapable of determining their own political fate. In their social "infancy," Blair maintained, their minds will continuously be in a state of "fear and surprise, wonder and astonishment," and their language invariably will reflect this state of confused consciousness.

> Their language will necessarily partake of this character of their minds. They will be prone to exaggeration and hyperbole. They will be given to describe every thing with the strongest colours, and most vehement expressions; infinitely more than men living in advanced and cultivated periods of society, when their imagination is more chastened, their passions are more tamed, and a wider experience had rendered the objects of life more familiar to them. (81-82)

Wordsworth's 1800 "Preface" argued against such an assessment of the poem's "rustic," uncivilized characters, as did Blake in his sketches of the destitute in Songs of Innocence (1789) and Songs of Experience (1794). Propriety, they will claim, should not be used as a yardstick to calibrate a person's mental faculties or social value. In fact, Wordsworth will contend, the artificial language deployed by the leisure class is actually an inferior, superficial form of communication that derails valuable poetic expression.

Blair, on the other hand, concurred with Johnson, Lowth, and Campbell, that language measures a person's worth. Purity of language, Blair reasoned, resulted from a superior state of mind. It was also a by-product of good taste. "The study of composition," he observed, "has acquired additional importance from the taste and manners of the present age" and "true composition is the offspring of good sense and refined taste" (13). Language therefore revealed the capacity of the speaker's mind and social graces. As a social marker, though, language went

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

even deeper than this. It could reveal the soul: "In order to be a truly eloquent or persuasive speaker, nothing is more necessary than to be a virtuous man" (338). Thus, Blair assumes that Cicero's oratorical skills can be attributed to "his high virtue" (339). Anyone who used the language properly was by definition morally fit as well. Of course, the flip side of this coin would show the stamp of a graceless speaker who was dissolute, perhaps even depraved. Offenses against the purity of the language indicated blemishes on the soul. For Blair, language revealed mind and spirit, which meant that those who used it tastefully were mentally and morally sound.

In his rhetoric, Blair derived much of his rules and theories of grammar from Lowth, whose work in the field, he insisted, "is the grammatical performance of highest authorship that has appeared in our time" (91). Blair, like Lowth, believed that the most profitable way to understand the language, and therefore become a great orator, was to study Latin. To an extent, this line of reasoning contradicts many of Blair's statements that great orators are innately gifted in some way, either by virtue of their intellect or by the integrity of their souls, although it seems clear from the text that he assumes his readers are mostly men of leisure who already possess some degree of moral and intellectual timber. Nonetheless, in case any of his readers commit "the many offenses against the purity of the language," they can be redeemed with the "proper study of Latin" (89). Latin is the mother of all languages, in Blair's estimation. Knowing its syntactical structure enhances learning English properly.

> All the rules of Latin Syntax, it is true, cannot be applied to our language....But it is to be always remembered that the chief and fundamental rules of syntax are common to English as well as the Latin tongue; and, indeed, belong equally to all languages. (90)

Blair tries to prove throughout "Lecture IX," the "Structure of Language - English Tongue," that English indeed is modeled after Latin—or should be. He often defines English parts of speech

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

with untranslated passages from Latin to corroborate his statements: "Hence, the infinitive often carries the resemblance of a substantive noun; and both in English and Latin, is sometimes constructed as such. As, 'Scive tuum nihilest.' 'Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.' (81). Blair is preaching to the already-converted, addressing that minority of the minority of the population that is familiar with classical languages. After all, if only a small percentage of the language community is worthy of emulation, and their output alone deserves preservation, then only *that* select group of elegant users would be privy to Blair's book in the first place. Clearly, the lower classes were in a bind. They were condemned for not using language "correctly," as Blair and others defined it, yet they were essentially prevented from assimilating "properly" because the aristocracy had erected linguistic codes they couldn't crack. The upper class had created a cultural barricade that became a self-fulfilling prophecy. As such, the only group of people able to benefit from Lectures on Rhetoric, and similarly constructed texts, were the hyper-educated. "Mere people" would be baffled by the heavy use of Latin (and Greek) phrases, quotes, and examples.

The Politics in Language

In contrast, dissenters like Paine, Tooke, and Cobbett objected to these texts for presenting language as intricate and mysterious, the product of a hostile governing class that deliberately used discourse as a gate-keeping device. Opposition to the synthesis of Latin and Greek therefore sprung from radical quarters who detected that the 'new' study of English was rigidly class based. Cobbett, for example, accused Lowth and company of intentionally conflating Latin with English in order to make English seem more sophisticated and make themselves appear more learned.

> ...those who have written English Grammars, have been taught Latin; and, either unable to divest themselves of their Latin rules, or unwilling to treat with simplicity that, which, if made somewhat of a mystery, would make them appear more *learned*

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> than the mass of the people...so as to make English as complex in its principles as the Latin Language is. (Grammar 135)

Cobbett felt that the aristocracy intentionally concocted abstruse definitions of English as a means to mystify the rest of the population, all the while barring them from participating more fully in society. Other reformers concurred. They believed that the upper echelons of society for the past hundred years or so attempted to purify the language by setting boundaries around what was permissible in polite speech and formal writing in order to maintain the political status quo. At the same time that linguistic limits were being erected, the upper class was erecting boundaries around what was politically permissible.

As a matter of fact, language and politics were wedded so tightly that members of Parliament judged petitions for universal male suffrage by the usage they contained. In a twenty year period (1797-1818), Parliament categorically denied numerous petitions on the grounds that they were written in an inappropriate manner. Members of Parliament often expressed outrage at the indecent, unrefined, and disrespectful language used by the petitioners (Smith 29-34). On May 2, 1793, for instance, a petition arrived from Sheffield urging Parliamentary reform. Henry Duncombe, who introduced it, apologized to the members of the House of Commons for its simple prose style. The House swiftly rejected it. Four days later, the House turned aside some twenty-five other petitions from places in England and Scotland for similar reasons (Cone 161-163). Parliament had created a language barrier to political reform, or at least it was using faulty language as an excuse for dismissing petitions—since it is very possible the petitions for parliamentary reform would have been discharged just as swiftly even if Samuel Johnson himself had written them. Nevertheless, political ideas were being judged by linguistic standards. Ultimately, the disenfranchised would remain that way since they could not use the language in a meritorious fashion, certainly not in the correct way that Lowth and Johnson had envisioned it. Parliament formed a consensus around the belief that the opposition's indecorous discourse

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

proved that the lower orders must continue to be barred from participating any more fully in the political process (Thompson, Working Class 78-85). Thus, when Blair praised the Greeks and Romans for their "polished" and "cultivated" tongues, or dismissed the language of ordinary people for its inelegance, his linguistic theories did not exist in an academic vacuum, separated from important social and political questions.

Blair, of course, was simply resurrecting and reapplying theories about English that were set forth in previous decades. Overall, the strong reliance on classical languages, the privileging of the language of the leisure class over the language of the masses, and the dismissal of the language of 'the lower ranks' as unsavory, had become the blueprint for the official codification and study of English. In part, this ideological framework emerged from a re-conception of the origins of linguistic behavior. By the beginning of the eighteenth-century, the idea of language study had shifted from the taxonomic representation of words and things to the establishment of the relationship between speech and thought. Mind replaced nature as the assumed content of language (Aarsleff, The Study of Language in England, 4-16; Cohen 77-80). But if language development was no longer natural, then it must have been manufactured, or crafted by superior beings, as Monboddo maintained, to suit some social purpose or speed up the advancement of civilization. Perhaps, then, this non-natural assessment of language appeared just in time for the ancient regime to restore some of its lost luster, especially in the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution and the threat of further encroachment by the bourgeoisie following the American and French Revolutions. The aristocracy was also witnessing the rise of a hostile and increasingly unified working class. Moreover, the Enlightenment had already produced enough internationally acclaimed political upstarts, like Jefferson, Franklin, Lafayatte, and Rousseau, whose appeal to universals had tainted the social order. England's cultural barons rebuked the Enlightenment application of universal, natural truths with an emphatic traditionalism, a fussy insistence upon the rules of grammar, and knowledge of the classics. Classical culture and

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

classical languages reaffirmed the integrity of a hierarchical social order. Moreover, these were civilizations steeped in the iron-clad authority of the aristocracy.

For such leading lights as Johnson, Lowth, and Monboddo, the best societies were formed around the brightest class of people, who invariably produced the greatest languages of all time. If England were to follow in their cultural footsteps, then it seemed necessary to assign the leisure class a leading role in formulating a language. Historically, traditionalists argued, the ancient civilizations of Greece and Rome demonstrated that great civilizations depend on the specific structure of a language that had developed its linguistic habits by a particular class of people. And not by accident, they believed, were these imperial states governed by a minority of a minority of the population. Thus, the status (and stature) of great civilizations could be measured by the creation of advanced forms of communication, developed by its great thinkers—who all happened to be members of the nobility. The purest, most eloquent languages are produced in social hierarchies where the language of the elite is permitted to be systematized and preserved. This is the argument pursued by Johnson, Lowth, Harris, Campbell, Monboddo, and Blair, who all tried to show that language involved much more than nature, need, and instinct; that its creation presupposed non-natural, spiritual, and moral faculties. "Civilized" language was therefore not a by-product of human development but the creation of a certain "class" of men. But in the eyes of dissenters, such theories about language enforced notions about a person's character or social worth by 'proving' that language development demonstrated moral and intellectual development.

Radical Departures

In The Diversions of Purley (1798),[3] the radical polemicist Horne Tooke accused Lowth and Harris of burying the study of language "under mountains of learned rubbish" (12). Tooke advanced a materialist view of the mind, suggesting that language should be studied only in the contexts of human interchange. Language does not alter according to the quality of civilization or

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the speaker's mind or soul, but according to its own evolutionary laws within the process of time. For Tooke, so-called uncivilized languages can express ideas and relationships as well as civilized languages can. Even "savage languages," Tooke claimed, "are upon equal footing with the languages (as they are called) of *art*" (399). Language was not a by-product of the operations of the mind, but was rooted in the mind itself.

> ... the business of the mind, as far as it concerns language appears to me to be very simple. It extends no farther than to receive Impressions, that is, to have Sensations or Feelings. What are called its operations, are merely the operations of Language. (9)

Tooke refuted the categories of cultivated and uncultivated operations of the mind that led to ideas about refined and vulgar forms of language. The Diversions also attempted to discredit theories of language which maintained an extreme distinction between experiential and abstract modes of thought. That same year, Wordsworth would make similar remarks in the "Preface" to the first edition of Lyrical Ballads regarding the artificial language of the well-educated and "the language of conversation in the lower and middle classes" (443). In addition, Tooke appropriated the language of the literati in order to turn it on its head, whereby he attacked Johnson and Lowth for "improperly speaking" of a "complex idea," wherein "only terms are general and abstract; ideas never are" (37). Language could not prove, one way or the other, the hierarchical attributes of the mind. Nor could it measure a person's social worth, if the criteria for social value is based on intelligence.

Presented as a Socratic dialogue, The Diversions contrasts sharply with the cumbersome prose and esoteric contents of more traditional works on the subject. Written in a simple, conversational manner, Tooke seeks to demonstrate by example that complicated topics can be discussed with straight-forward, unadorned language. Right from the start, Tooke attacks traditional grammarians for their biased opinions and for creating an unnecessarily convoluted assessment of language. One of the characters, Tooke's brother William, suggests that grammar

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

can be learned from "the excellent Introductions of Dr. Lowth," and "if one wished to go farther, Harris's Hermes." Tooke disagrees: "Truth has been improperly imagined at the bottom of a well: it lies much nearer to the surface" (5). Traditional grammarians have abstracted language from its original purpose, of its temporal and human concerns. Language is not an artificial construct, or the work of an elite group of artists, as Monboddo suggested. Instead, words evolved from the historical and social practices of ordinary people. "However *artificial* they may now appear to us," he tells his audience, "they were not originally the effect of premeditated and deliberate *art*" (352).

Tooke objected to the artificial model of language development because it stood above or beyond nature, allowing the likes of Lowth and Monboddo to inject a metaphysical interpretation into their analysis that placed the growth of language squarely on the shoulders of an elite corps of linguistic philosophers (390-8). As a result, someone like Johnson could then easily shun and ridicule common conversation as a vulgarity or a lower form of discourse. Tooke ribbed Johnson for categorizing the language of the lower and middle classes as "cant," for the word itself seemed to be non-descriptive with "no certain origin nor precise meaning" (526). Johnson's use of the word was but one of many examples of how the literati and the upper class represented language so as to secure their own privileged positions. Tooke complained throughout The Diversions that the upper class celebrated its own abstract language in order to befuddle the masses with obscurity and, more importantly, to exclude them from the political process on the basis of their simple, 'vulgar' usage. In The Diversions, Took attempts to level the playing field with a materialist assessment of language. Perception and feeling were granted greater status in the development of language than had been given before by the likes of Lowth or Blair. In this manner, Tooke postulated that the mind was merely a recording instrument of sense impressions, whereby the mind becomes passive while the real active powers reside in language.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

More importantly, for the first time radicals could turn towards a text of their own that offered a cogent counter-argument to the overbearing presence of conservative studies of language that had snow-balled into a mountain of social management. Radicals like Leigh Hunt and William Hazlitt praised The Diversions for unmasking the false philosophy behind qualifying language according to class and for returning it to its more natural features. Hazlitt published his own study of grammar, which stressed speech over writing, and he thanked Tooke explicitly in A New And Improved Grammar of the English Tongue for his innovative formation of the language. In 1825, when Hazlitt produced The Spirits of the Age, he included a piece on Tooke and lamented over the neglect of The Diversions and the prominence of other grammars. It seemed to Hazlitt that Harris's grammar was a "confusing" mess that piled up "frivolous varieties" of rules and regulations.[4] Unfortunately, however, Murray's grammar "has proceeded to the thirtieth edition," all the more shocking since Murray foolishly "translates the Latin grammar into English." Hazlitt blames "the polite world" for embracing the "rubbish" of Harris and Murray, "while Horne Tooke's genuine anatomy of our native tongue is laid on the shelf" (Complete Works 56-57). In a few more years, however, Tooke's book was no longer collecting dust.

Tooke's ideas on language became a fixture within radical and liberal circles many years after the appearance of The Diversions, and it even threatened the acceptance of conventional notions of language development. In 1860, the Philological Society of London committed itself to the final plan of the Oxford English Dictionary, largely to oppose and overcome Tooke's theory and the resurgent popularity he had gained in the materialist philosophy of the Utilitarians (Aarsleff, The Study of Language 4-5). Indeed, the OED is essentially a re-staged version of Johnson's dictionary, with its history of written, not spoken, language use, and the use of it by mostly polite, London authors (Aarsleff, "The Original Plan of 'The OED'"; Barrell 154). Thus, Tooke's plan to discredit the hegemonic appraisal of language so threatened hierarchy that The

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Diversions helped launch the OED, a supposedly a-political tabulation of English words. Tooke, on the other hand, had no illusions about the political consequences involved in discussing usage or in theorizing about syntax.

From the outset, Tooke's motives for writing The Diversions was unmistakably motivated by politics, envisioned as an attempt to discredit the 'official,' conservative linguists who had projected a highly class-based theory of language in a seemingly neutral, off-hand way. That his work on language was so overtly political came as no surprise to his fellow radicals, who were conscious of Tooke's commitment to political reform. Tooke's Sunday dinners in the 1790's provided a meeting place for some of the era's most well-known radicals—Tom Paine, John Thelwall, William Godwin (who defended Tooke during one of his treason trials), Gilbert Wakefield, Henry Hunt, and Thomas Hardy, the London shoemaker who was the founder and first secretary of The London Corresponding Society. Tooke had been embroiled first-hand in England's major political battles, from being tried by Pitt's government for seditious activities to running for a Parliamentary seat, which he won but quickly lost when the government used a technicality to expel him. He spent seven months in prison, and his political career went through a series of nasty turns, beginning in 1775 when he was arrested for trying to raise money for the widows and orphans of the *American* soldiers who had died at the Battle of Lexington. In Tooke's published advertisement for funds, he accused King George's soldiers of murder. In addition, like many other radicals, he supported the French Revolution during its earliest, most promising republican phase. Thus, in the politically turbulent year of 1798 he did not intend The Diversions to enter the field as an a-political examination of language. The Diversions emerged out of a growing radical tradition that included Paine's The Rights of Man and Godwin's Political Justice, a brand of popular radicalism that E.P. Thompson described as "an intellectual culture" obsessed with political reform and troubled not only by aristocratic power and privileges but also by the abuses arising out of industrialization (Working Class 711-746).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Another important figure within that corps of popular dissenters was William Cobbett, who became associated with Tooke's political circle following his conversion from Tory conservatism to Whig radicalism. In large part, Cobbett's Grammar owes much to Tooke's pioneering efforts (Smith 235-40). Like Tooke's Diversions, Cobbett's Grammar never shies from projecting a political agenda. Even the grammatical definitions are steeped in contemporary politics, unlike the so-called objective, classical examples found in Lowth's or Harris's texts. Cobbett assumes that his readers must learn to write in order for them to become actively involved in British politics. Otherwise, they will remain unfavorably labeled by the ruling establishment who have cast them as a dim, unimaginative class of people. With this concept in mind, Cobbett's other task includes boosting his audience's confidence for the sake of mastering the language, to overcome upper class assessments of their inferior intelligence through an association of their inelegant diction. Also, Cobbett hoped to prove that the simple, concrete language of the lower orders is better than the learned, artificial jargon of the upper class, a view similarly expressed by Wordsworth in his "Preface" to the second edition of Lyrical Ballads.

From the opening pages, Cobbett establishes a radically different approach and tone than that presented by conservative grammarians. While Lowth devoted his title page to Cicero, Cobbett dedicated his book to William Benbow, the Manchester shoemaker who was "shut up in an English dungeon by the order of Lord Sidmouth" in 1817 (iii). Cobbett addresses the book to his fourteen year-old son, James, who must learn the finer points of grammar not because he needs to become an elegant speaker but in order "to assert with effect the rights and liberties of his country" (9). Language is therefore not a matter of style, or of splitting aesthetic hairs between decorum and inelegance, but a political and social instrument. Besides, language is already a concealed political tool in the hands of the aristocracy, who had monopolized linguistic theories with their hierarchy of terms. Cobbett insists that those biased categories essentially oppress his audience by making them feel intellectually inferior, even convincing them to believe

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

that their inferior social position is their own fault. By teaching his readers how to write, Cobbett hoped that they could wiggle free from self-deprecation and better withstand such adverse criticism, perhaps someday even managing to topple their oppressors. "Tyranny has no enemy as formidable as the pen" (9), he proclaimed. As Cobbett informs his son, learning the *English* language properly was not some innocuous parlor game but a matter of utmost urgency, if a truly civilized society ever expected to flourish: "I have a hope of seeing you a man of real learning, employing your time and talents in aiding the cause of truth and justice, in affording protection to defenseless innocence, and in drawing down vengeance on lawless oppression. (10-11). For Cobbett, teaching his audience to write was a political necessity. Moreover, learning English grammar should not be class bound. On the contrary, a person might be less bound by class if they better understood the language, using it as a tool for self-defense and as an instrument of political change.

By learning the language, Cobbett believed, his audience could become part of history rather than be cast aside by the likes of Johnson or Campbell, who had relegated them to the trash heap of history. Cobbett planned to create a more critically conscious class who no longer passively submitted to the ruling establishment's debilitating declarations of their inferiority. In part, it's possible to regard Cobbett's Grammar as a pedagogy *for* the oppressed, to view Cobbett's radicalization of grammar as a commitment "to transform concrete, objective reality" for libertarian goals, as opposed to the sectarianism of Johnson and Lowth who, in their mythicizing, turn language's "reality into a false (and therefore unchangeable) 'reality'" (Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 19). Learning is not an elitist concept, Cobbett tells his son, but a possible solution towards rectifying societal injustices, which exist *because* of the elite's indifference to any cause not their own. Cobbett expects that his readers, like his son, can become more responsible politically by learning how to write. At the same time, Cobbett does not want his readers to be overwhelmed by the language of the ruling class, who deemed that

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"proper" discourse existed beyond their overly material world or above their common, every day lives. In the Grammar, Cobbett seeks to bolster the dignity and confidence of his working class audience by showing how even such 'experts' as Johnson and Lowth make plenty of grammatical mistakes themselves, and, of all things, their training in the 'advanced' classical languages actually causes them to be more wrong than right about the *English* language.

Cobbett knew that his lower class readers might be intimidated by the subject. 'Proper' grammar was not something they employed, or might master, as Lowth and others had claimed for nearly a century. In a way, he was trying to teach grammar to an 'illiterate' segment of the population, in the sense that illiterate in Cobbett's day meant not being able to read or write in the *classical* languages (Donald 45-49). Cobbett therefore had to straddle a thin line between carefully seeing his readers through the difficult process of learning grammar and not appearing to address them in a condescending way, which no doubt accounts for why he uses the ploy of addressing his teenage son. As he confides to his "son," he himself will write with great precision and clarity, since his readers may need to be carefully guided through the process, in an almost paternalistic manner, a tactic Paine employed in The Rights of Man when he explained the political process to his lower class readers. "I have put my work in the form of a letter," Cobbett explains, "in order that I might be continually reminded that I was addressing myself to persons who needed to be spoken to with great clearness" (10). Ultimately, though, Cobbett's mission in the Grammar was showing his readers that any deterrence to learning how to write did not exist in their heads, or arise out of some cultural defect. Instead, Cobbett wanted to bolster their confidence. Part of that strategy involved turning the tables on the experts. Cobbett would teach what was grammatically correct by pulling apart the incorrect sentences of the very experts who intimidated them with proper usage.

Without question, Cobbett knew that Lowth was the leading figure in a long procession of grammarians who advocated parsing entire passages, memorizing rules, *and* using the "false

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

syntax" method—teaching what is right by showing what is wrong with a sentence, typically at the expense of the "uneducated" (Downey, xiv). Cobbett returns the favor in his examination of 'properly' constructed sentences by placing them alongside numerous grammatical lapses incurred by the experts themselves. Cobbett's purpose in exposing the errors of the literati is twofold: first, to prevent his neophytes from becoming discouraged or overwhelmed as they learned to write; second, to prove that the overtly stylish, artful language of the ruling class is actually inconsequential and lacks meaning. In contrast, the concrete, simple language of the lower classes is significant and informative. To raise the stature of vulgar discourse, the literati need to be exposed for writing meaninglessly and erroneously.

For starters, Cobbett accuses Lowth of "very gross errors in the use of articles" (86). Then, in order to show his son James the proper form of the possessive case, he cites a mistake from Blair: "A passage from Dr. Hugh Blair, the author of *Lectures on Rhetoric*, will give you another instance of error in the use of the possessive case" (90). Cobbett later dissects Blair's "Twentieth Lecture on Rhetoric," picking out countless syntactical errors and ripping into Blair's tortured semantics (91-94). Along these same lines, Johnson is cited for using a relative pronoun improperly (106), omitting the nominative case (131), and for writing twisted, unclear language in The Rambler, from which, Cobbett argues, he could draw "five hundred" more instances if time permitted (112). In fact, Johnson's propensity for making mistakes warrants a separate chapter, "Specimens of False Grammar taken from Dr. Johnson and Dr. Watts" (151-171). The cause behind these gross errors, Cobbett maintains, is the slavish devotion to studying the classical languages.

> Let us, my dear James, get well through this Letter; and, then, we may, I think, safely say, that we know something of Grammar: a little more, I hope, than is known by the greater part of those who call themselves Latin and Greek scholars, and who dignify their having studied those languages with the name of *Liberal*

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Education. (115-6).

By poking holes in the celebrated elegant, flawless language of the literati, Cobbett tries to deflate the cultural prestige of the leisure class, particularly Johnson, who had become a darling of the English establishment who saw him "as the source of knowledge and wisdom about the English language" (Leith 51). By the time Cobbett wrote his grammar, Johnson had become a cultural icon.

Indeed, in 1797 Anna Seward commends Johnson for enriching English prose "by Latinizing our language," wherein "he has expanded its powers, and harmonized its sounds" (413). Nathan Drake, who wrote a series of essays in 1809 praising Johnson's contributions to the language, is even more effusive. Within a very short time, Drake reports, Johnson's style "gradually gained ground with the learned, the wise, and the good" (344). The Rambler alone was "very soon appreciated by men of taste and genius," which accounts for why "the school of Johnson increased with such celerity" (346). Drake perpetuates the belief, begun by Johnson himself and recycled by a stream of others, that proper discourse testifies to social worth and mental superiority. Anyone "who possesses a correct taste and a strong discriminating judgment," he points out, will naturally gravitate towards "the study of the style of Johnson" (348). So, by pointing out the mistakes of the literati, and spending an entire chapter nipping at Johnson's cultural coat-tails, Cobbett hoped to show his 'uneducated' readers that they should not be intimidated by the 'learned,' and also to reassure them that their plain language should not be a source of embarrassment. Ultimately, he informs James, "we plain English scholars" possess "a little more judgment" than someone from a "*learned* university, who could not, you will observe, be a *Doctor* until he had preached a sermon in the Latin language" (94). All of that classical learning, Cobbett informs his audience, has in fact clouded their perception; it's the learned who are unwise and irrational, and tastelessly trashing the *English* language with their

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

command of Latin. Cobbett, ridiculing the preference for classical training by the literati as a bar to true learning, in the October 1, 1807 edition of the Political Register, concluded that,

> Learning, truly so-called, consists in the possession of knowledge and in the capacity of communicating that knowledge to others; and, as far as my observation will enable me to speak, what are called the *learned* languages operate as a bar to the acquirement of real learning. I assert that what they call the LEARNED LANGUAGES are improperly so called. (Opinions 285).

The learned not only make mistakes, but they are mistaken to believe that their highly valued classical languages enable them to communicate properly—other than to each other. The learned languages of the learned are a source of weakness, not potency.

In addition to exposing the literati's frequency of errors in the Grammar, Cobbett also draws his readers' attention to the simple strength of concrete language, which brims with social significance. Cobbett establishes this argument by presenting politically blunt passages as examples of effective syntax. He addresses the "Etymology of Verbs" in the following way:

> Verbs are considered as active verbs, passive, or neuter. A verb is called active when it expresses an action, which is produced by the nominative of the sentence: as, "Sidmouth imprisoned Benbow." It is passive, when it expresses an action, which is received or endured by the person or thing which is the nominative of the sentence: as, "Benbow is imprisoned." It is neuter, when it expresses simply the state of being, or of existence, of a person or thing: as, "Benbow lies in irons." (46)

His sampling of grammatical correctness demonstrates that a simple sentence is loaded with political and social relevance, while its value—or its currency, as Campbell called it—must be reassessed *because* of its dependence on current subjects. Its *currency* is actually its strength. Therefore, the language of the "laborious and mercantile part of the people" should be a source of pride rather than permitted "to perish with other things unworthy of preservation."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Furthermore, Cobbett is describing to his readers how the ruling establishment's contemptuous attitude towards them has created a situation that allows the upper class to not only let their language perish but also to let one of their own rot in a prison cell.

To further illustrate his point, the substantive quality of concrete language is held up against the wayward, petrified language of the literati. Cobbett demonstrates to his 'vulgar' readers that the preferred discourse of the learned, the abstract/artful/artificial creations of the leisure class, is long on style but short on substance. On the matter of verb-noun agreement, for instance, Cobbett revisits the imprisoned Benbow to come up with the following example: "Number is a matter equally plain.... When several nouns or pronouns, come together, care must be taken to make the verb agree with them: as, 'Benbow and the two Evanses resist the tyrants.' Not resists" (48). Compared to Monboddo and Lowth, who selected passages from Cicero and Tully to illustrate noun-verb agreement, Cobbett's sentences are dripping with political import. By setting up the comparison, Cobbett also is pointing out to his readers that the artful language of the upper class does indeed function ethereally—which is a curse rather than a blessing. When language exists in this way it is more likely to be abstracted from reality. It serves no immediate purpose—except to keep the 'uneducated' masses in check.

In the November 11, 1817 issue of the Political Register, Cobbett wrote that the leisure class was "devoted to useless learning," and that their minds were "rendered frivolous and superficial by the long habit of attaching importance to *words* instead of things, to *sound* instead of sense." Yet, despite the senseless activities of their learning, the leisure class were "insolent" as a result of their "fancied superiority." Even its pretentious posturing rested on sand, on an entirely inaccurate representation of their own profundity. But more importantly, the officially designated discrepancy between the presumed 'superiority' of the learned, with their mastering of archaic forms of language, and the alleged 'inferiority' of the lower classes, with their burdening forms of concrete language, was not coincidental. "The Aristocracy have a deep

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

interest in the upholding of this *learned* system of cheat and oppression," he proclaimed (Opinions 287). Cobbett was acutely aware of the way in which the aristocracy had turned learning, particularly the classics, into a cultural weapon that kept his readers dependent on the authority of their 'superiors.' In part, the Grammar was written as a defense of the language of the lower classes. But it was also designed to wipe the insolent smirks off the faces of the leisure class by proving that their language was actually the more inferior of the two.

In Cobbett's estimation, if speakers and writers use approved language in a quest for social credentials, then they often will overlook the essential purpose behind language: to relate to other humans in the here and now. Thus, Cobbett attempted to do more than level the linguistic playing field, he wanted to capsize the language of the literati by proving *it* to be valueless. Emphatically presented as a timeless, artful method of discourse. Cobbett countered that the language of the upper class was actually a meaningless form of communication. In fact, he argued, it's not just the language of the leisure class that lacks meaning, the leisure class *themselves* are an unproductive lot: "In describing the active and passive participles, 'working' is an active participle: as in, "A *working* man is more worthy of honour than a titled plunderer who lives in idleness" (51). Cobbett stresses the active role played by his audience, as opposed to the parasitic position of the leisure class, who live more like leeches rather than as cultural benefactors. Cobbett's goal in the Grammar, then, is to reverse the hierarchy of the worthiness and unworthiness visavis the leisure and laboring classes. The language of the lower classes is as valuable as is their very productive role in British society, a theme Cobbett routinely expressed in his weekly publication, the Political Register.

Cobbett Addresses a Nation

Two years prior to the publication of the Grammar, Cobbett republished, under a separate title, the famous eighteenth number of his Political Register, "An Address to Journeymen and Labourers." While raging against the machinery of government corruption and

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

exorbitant taxes, Cobbett reminded his readers that without them there would be nothing of British society worth valuing.

> The Nation is great due to your labor.... With this correct idea of your own worth in your minds, with what indignation must you hear yourselves called the Populace, the Rabble, the Mob, the Swinish Multitude. (The Opinions 208)

Cobbett's purpose, then, was to weave the "Swinish Multitude" back into the social fabric, even boldly declaring that the lower orders were the backbone of British civilization, that "without the assistance of their hands, the country would be a wilderness, hardly worth the notice of an invader" (209). Without the labors of the laborious and mercantile part of the population, Cobbett asserted, England would come undone. As it turned out, it was a message that was received with open arms by Cobbett's working and middle class audiences. Furthermore, it was a message with such wide appeal that Byron and Shelley were influenced by his reporting, and even imitated his style in their most overtly political poems, "England 1819" and The Age of Bronze (Birrell). Cobbett's impact in England was not unlike Paine's enormous influence a generation earlier with The Rights of Man. As a matter of fact, the style and substance of Cobbett's writing was akin to what Paine had achieved thirty years earlier. And the official response to both "The Address" and The Rights of Man, moreover, was similar in many ways as well. Immediately following the publication of "The Address," an onslaught of repressive government actions went into place, mirroring the aftermath of the publication of Paine's famous work. What most alarmed the ruling establishment was the sheer popularity of these publications and how both authors were able to reach out to a wider, non-elite, audience.

For starters, six thousand copies of the "Address" were sold in a single day. After two months, 200,000 more were sold (Altick 381). In a country of fourteen million, these numbers are astonishing, although estimates of sales may not account for the true number of "readers." At this time, it was quite common for pirated editions to be circulated, a single copy loaned multiple

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

times, and readings to occur aloud at coffee shops and pubs, the kind of radical political culture Shelley celebrated in "Song to the Men of England." However, the pamphlet was published for only another six more months because the second passage of the habeas corpus Suspension Bill shortly after "The Address" appeared forced Cobbett to leave the country for America. With or without Cobbett in England, his popular tract had the same affect as Paine's famous pamphlet. In 1817, the government arraigned thirty-five men for high treason, while targeting the "artful and insidious publications" of the Radical press, as one official put it during the trials (qtd. in Wickwar 132). The year was shaping up to be a carbon-copy of the government's repressive actions during the 1790's, when it first suspended habeas corpus, and implemented the "Gagging Acts" of 1795, which dramatically restricted public meetings and what could safely be said at them. Paine, like Cobbett after him, fled the country to France in 1793, before being found guilty of sedition for distributing The Rights of Man. During the government's most intense reactionary phase in 1819, there were no less than seventy-five prosecutions for seditious or blasphemous libel. At the outset, Cobbett's "Address" was mentioned specifically for fomenting radical activities.

> 'I cannot help alluding ... to one of the most malignant and diabolical publications ever issued from the English press .... It is entitled – "An Address to the Journeymen and Labourers."' (qtd in Thompson, Working Class 664)

With the suspension of habeas corpus, Cobbett suspected that the government had the perfect opportunity to shut down his popular publication, without redress. He could easily wind up in prison as well, a place he well knew after serving a two-year sentence in 1810 for criticizing flogging in the Army. While exiled in America, Cobbett wrote his successful Grammar, and he also announced his intentions to write a life of Paine—begun, but never completed (Conway 430). The following year (1820), Cobbett returned to England. At the Liverpool docks, he told a

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

cheering crowd that he had brought back with him the bones of one of England's favorite sons—Tom Paine (Thompson, Working Class 699).

The connection between the two men, however morbid, seemed fitting. Cobbett's work had become as important as Paine's to the lower classes. While Paine sold 50,000 copies of The Rights of Man within a year, Cobbett's Political Register sold as many as forty to fifty thousand copies *weekly* (Altick 325). Sales of his "Address" were even more robust. In fact, no writing had gained such popular influence since The Rights of Man. And that was largely due to their stylistic similarities. Both men wrote in a vigorous, simple—and "vulgar"—manner. Of great concern to the authorities was the fact that Cobbett followed Paine's wide appeal by using clear, concrete language (Webb 46-52). Stylistically, Cobbett "had gifts similar to Paine's," exhibited by the "brilliant simplicity" of his prose (Butler, Romantics 143-144). Describing the situation in 1820, J.E. Taylor noted that a relationship indeed existed between Cobbett's use of simple language and the popularity of his publications.

> The cheapness of these publications ensured them a most extensive circulation; and the strong, clear, condensed, and argumentative style of the writer, was happily adapted to suit the capacity of the most numerous class of his readers.... (qtd. in Thompson, Working Class 620)

Even Cobbett recognized his own unique position. His popular newspaper, he believed, often was used by proprietors to attract customers. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, home-grown radical "clubs" had cropped-up throughout England, Scotland, and Ireland. Coffee-houses in the towns, public houses in towns and villages, gin-shops and ale-houses, were becoming more important places for the dissemination of information than either public meetings or Radical Reformist Societies. Cobbett claimed that ale-house operators deliberately carried The Political Register in order "to attract people to their house" (qtd. in Aspinall, "The Circulation of Newspapers" 38). During this period, Cobbett had turned into "a kind of *fourth estate* in the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

politics of the country," as Hazlitt put it, and he was "unquestionably the most powerful political writer of the present day" (Works). The poet laureate, Robert Southey, whom Byron savagely attacked in Don Juan for his calculated conservatism, warned Lord Liverpool in 1817 that repressive laws would be futile so long as "Cobbett's Registers [were] read aloud in every ale-house" (qtd. in Aspinall, Politics and the Press 29). So determined was the government to stop Cobbett's message that two men in Shropshire were apprehended and nearly flogged to death for distributing the Political Register (45-47).

As the government continued its violent suppression of radical opinions throughout the Romantic era, it also found another way to counter radical influence among the middle and working classes. While some conservatives attacked the new popular style of Paine and Cobbett, others believed that it would be worthwhile to use it to spread reactionary doctrines. Several leading conservative 'reformers' therefore embraced the 'vulgar' style to try and convince the working class that their station in life was inevitable—indeed, part of God's grand design—and to remind working class readers that the aristocracy was looking out for their best interests, that the ruling class was the bedrock of virtue and national pride, and that reading someone like Paine would lead them astray—indeed, straight to hell. The ruling class therefore appropriated the rhetorical weapon of its enemy in order to secure its own authority. Manufacturing consent would assist bullets and bayonets as a means of maintaining the status quo.

Hannah More, for example, complained about Paine's unfortunate influence on the lower classes and suspected that his book inaugurated an unwelcome precedence for workers to educate themselves politically: "Vulgar and indecent penny books were always common, but speculative infidelity, brought down to the pockets and capacities of the poor, forms a new era in our history" (qtd in Altick 74). More, with help from government subsidies, decided to mimic Paine's popular style in a series of essays, Cheap Repository Tracts. They were written specifically for workers who now needed to be reminded of their obligation to the nation by

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

happily accepting their lowly social lot, which was God's work anyway. In Village Politics (1793), More describes a scene between Jack Avil, a dutiful blacksmith, and Tom Hod, a radical mason. Clearly, Jack warns Tom, unless he quits his radical ways he will burn in hell, like all evil dissenters who refuse to abide by the laws of church and state and sinfully seek to equalize society.

> "My cottage is my castle; I sit down in it at night in peace and thankfulness, and no man maketh me afraid. Instead of indulging in discontent, because another is richer than I in this world (for envy is at bottom of your equality works), I read my Bible, go to Church, and look forward to a treasure in heaven." (17)

In More's political parable, one of the major problems with poor, misguided Tom is that he continuously quotes from The Rights of Man. By the end of the story, Tom tosses the book into the fire. Thankfully, he's been saved from Paine's horrific influence.

While More received some monetary aid from the authorities, the government itself engaged in a propaganda campaign to counteract Paine's popularity. Between 1792 and 1799, the Secret Service Fund subsidized 22,000 copies of a pamphlet called "Strictures on Thomas Paine's Works and Character," a work laced with scurrilous accusations of Paine's satanic beliefs and immoral behavior (Webb 40-42). The authorities felt compelled to smear Paine's reputation once his work ignited a popular movement. In fact, few people have had such an impact on British politics as Paine, and perhaps even fewer caused such a linguistic controversy.

A Royal Pain

Paine admitted in Part Two of The Rights of Man that he had undertaken a stylistic experiment in the first part of his notorious pamphlet: "I wished to know the manner in which a work, written in a style of thinking and expression different to what had been customary in England, would be received" (153). In The Rights of Man, he not only attacked the political

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

traditions of separate and unequal classes, but also questioned the custom of writing about serious issues in an "elegant" fashion. Many members of the ruling establishment were more upset with Paine's style than with his politics. Pitt, for example, found William Godwin less alarming than Paine because of Paine's ability to reach out to a wider audience, even though Godwin's Political Justice was filled with revolutionary doctrines. Eventually, Godwin's political anarchism reached the lower class, but mainly through the "Notes" to Shelley's Queen Mab, in Richard Carlile's pirated editions (Butler, Romantics 62; Thompson 98). Paine's relevance to the working class was more direct, and this was more troubling to the authorities than Godwin's book, whose influence was confined to a small and highly literate circle. And what most separated Godwin from Paine was the language. Horace Walpole, who described Mary Wollstonecraft "as that hyena in petticoats," following her publication of The Rights of Woman, told members of Parliament that Paine's style "is so coarse that you would think he means to degrade the language as much as the government" (NYPL). Sir Brooke Boothby found Paine's book "written in a kind of specious jargon, well enough calculated to impose upon the vulgar!" (qtd. in Boulton, The Language of Politics 138). Most officials realized that the appearance of the first part of The Rights of Man on March 16, 1791 signified a change in tone and temperament within the entire reform community. Its 'inelegant' style and phraseology, and its common grammar may have repelled 'educated' readers, but Paine was not writing for them. Paine's book was an inspiration to an entire group of people formerly left out of the social process. It is hard to imagine any other single book creating such a tidal wave of optimism—and terror.

To the authorities, the book seemed to be everywhere. "The book," wrote a correspondent from the Home Office, "is now made as much a Standard book in this country as Robinson Crusoe & the Pilgrim's Progress" (qtd. in Thompson, Working Class 108). During Paine's trial for sedition, *in absentia*, the Attorney General remarked that the Rights of Man was

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"thrust into the hands of subjects of every description, even children's sweetmeats being wrapped in it" (qtd. in Altick, 70). William Wilberforce, the Parliamentary Member from Yorkshire, who created The Society for the Suppression of Vice with other 'private' citizens, was shocked by the book's rampant distribution. One of his agents, Christopher Wyvill, reported that Paine's "mischievous" work was being "sold and given away in profusion," and that even the "soldiers are everywhere" being discovered with copies. More reports of a similar nature convinced Wilberforce that Paine's book was creating a revolutionary atmosphere. After receiving Wyvill's messages, Wilberforce noted in his journal "that there is more cause for alarm than I had apprehended;" he was certain that "the state of the country ... seems very critical" (qtd. in Cone 115). To make matters worse, Paine published Part Two eleven months later in April, 1792. As it turned out, it was even more successful than Part One, but even more disconcerting to the authorities was its economic outline for creating a socialist state, right down to funding a children's welfare program through a tax on the rich. In the summer of 1792, when it seemed possible that England would follow revolutionary France in ousting the nobility, the government began to wonder if its own military forces had become too infected by Paine's doctrines to do their duty. The Secretary at War sent the Deputy Adjutant-General on a tour to determine if the troops could be counted on in case there was an outbreak of civil disturbances. The news was not good. The Deputy reported back to the Secretary that he "found the seditious doctrines of Paine and the factious people who are endeavoring to disturb the peace of the country had extended to a degree very much beyond my conception" (qtd. in Aspinall, The Early English Trade Unions 4). It appeared that even the armed forces were becoming Jacobins, thanks to Paine.

Paine had achieved what he had intended, to appeal to the disenfranchised and engage them in a conversation about their present and future role in British society. The past, with its tradition of privileges, kept the aristocracy in power. Paine was "not so much the creator as the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

voice of popular opinion" (Kent 308). Before long, it was a voice that was stimulating other voices, sending reverberations throughout the nation, especially within the halls of Parliament. After the publication of the second part of The Rights of Man, Wyvill, who later worked with Hannah More in a rabid Anti-Jacobin campaign, deplored the "mischievous effects" of Paine's book to "excite the lowest classes of the People to acts of violence and injustice" (qtd. in Thompson, Working Class 110). But the more the government tried to put a lid on Paine's appeal, the more popular he became. When Paine was prosecuted for seditious libel following the publication of the second part, it intensified enthusiasm for the book. A bookseller in Scotland, having sold a single copy in a week before the trail, sold 750 in two weeks after it (Altick 71). Within a short time, the Rights of Man was adopted by radicals, reformers, and the lower class "as a kind of democratic Magna Charta" (Kent 111). Or, as E.P. Thompson described it, "1792 was the *annus* mirabilis of Tom Paine" (Working Class 111).

Of course, all of this democratic activity was very unsettling to the authorities and the aristocracy. Of great concern to the ruling establishment was that 'unqualified' members of British society were now concerning themselves with issues they had no business discussing. Wilberforce saw a real threat behind the appeal of Paine's work and how it had fostered debates on political matters previously left to the elite. Paine had inspired an outpouring of dissenting publications, periodicals, pamphlets, societies, and working-class "clubs." By 1798, the year Wordsworth published Lyrical Ballads, the government had achieved remarkable success in stamping out a great many of these republican associations and publishing houses, along with arresting and imprisoning dozens of radicals. The vulgar were silenced—at least for the time being. Wilberforce informed Parliament that the most striking disruption to the social order occurred because the ill-informed had entered the political arena: "In general, those persons who were forever improperly busying themselves in politics were among the least useful and least worthy members of the community" (Aspinall, Politics and the Press 10). The vulgar were no

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

more entitled to be involved in the political process than they were deserving to take part in cultural formation, as Johnson and others had described it. Paine questioned both of these assumptions; first, by envisioning a more equitable political state and, second, by writing in a style "different to what had been customary." Paine attacked custom on every level, customs that had sharply split English society into worthy and unworthy classes, especially as they were laid out by Burke in his reactionary response to the revolution in France.

Burke Agitates the Agitators

Paine wrote the Rights of Man in response to Burke's Reflections on the Revolution in France, and it is impossible to view the two works separately. Burke's strident defense of a hierarchical social system in the aftermath of the French Revolution outraged dissenters, although it provided the movement with a common enemy. Most radicals rallied around the French cause, identifying it with the dawning of republicanism throughout Europe. "If France prospered," Wordsworth believed, then "superfluous pains/Would fall together with its parent tree" (Prelude X. 258-262). For radicals, France represented an end to oppressive, aristocratic regimes. "The French Revolution has always appeared to me, and still does appear," wrote Robert Hall in An Apology for the Freedom of the Press (1793), "the most splendid event recorded in the annals of history" (qtd. in Lincoln 172). Dissenters greeted the French Revolution with political frenzy. Burke, on the other hand, greeted the French Revolution with dismay.

However, Burke did more than simply condemn revolutionary France in the Reflections. He also upheld the customs of *British* oligarchy by rejecting Parliamentary reform of any kind, and he urged the nation to continue relying on the aristocracy for its leadership.

> Nothing is more certain, than that our manners, our civilization, and all the good things which are connected with manners, and with civilization, have, in the European world of ours, depended for ages upon two principles; and were indeed the result of both combined; I mean the spirit of a gentleman, and the spirit of religion. The

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> nobility and the clergy ... kept learning in existence even in the midst of arms and confusion. (79)

The custom of aristocracy enables civilizations to exist and prosper, the same argument Monboddo made regarding the establishment of the highest form of language. Furthermore, this system was necessary, Burke argued, because the lower orders were completely incapable of knowing what was in the best interests of the state, or even knowing what was in their own best interests, for that matter, mainly because their interests are wedded only to the present, as Johnson, Lowth, and Blair noted about their language. The political acumen of the vulgar is equally transitory. "Their attachment to their country itself," Burke explained, "is only so far as it agrees with some of their fleeting projects; it begins and ends with that scheme of polity which falls in with their momentary opinion" (88). Thus, the Reflections was an appeal to the status quo. So convinced was Burke with respect to the importance of the status quo that he even assigns *it* customary value.

> To be honoured and even privileged by the laws, opinions, and inveterate usages of our country, growing out of the prejudice of the ages, has nothing to provoke horror and indignation in any man. Even to be too tenacious of those privileges is not absolutely a crime. The strong struggle in every individual to preserve possession of what he has found to belong to him and to distinguish him, is one of the securities against injustice and despotism implanted in our nature. (139)

Change, as Johnson observed in the "Preface," is a bad thing. Society rests on the privileges it *customarily* grants to the aristocracy in order to curb evil. But such brazen declarations of the aristocracy's greatness angered radicals.

As it turned out, Burke's book ironically triggered the growth of the reform movement. His compulsion to endorse tradition provided radicals with an argument to rally around a mutual enemy. For starters, the Reflections created a pamphlet war. Between 1789 and 1793 as many as

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

225 titles addressed the Paine-Burke debate, the great majority of which opposed Burke, including Mary Wollstonecraft's essay. Most writers agreed with Paine, that Burke's condescending attitude towards the lower orders proved that the upper class was an insensitive breed bent on guarding its powerful position at all costs. (Pendleton). The French Revolution and the debate that followed forced people to choose. People who thought at all about public affairs were either for or against Burke; that is, against or for the radicals and the Revolution. While radicals viewed the events in France with joy, Burke suspected the revolution signaled a Jacobin conspiracy to overturn the established social order in Europe and England, perhaps even globally.

> It looks to me as if I were in a great crisis, not of the affairs of France alone, but of all Europe, perhaps of more than Europe. All circumstances taken together, the French revolution is the most astonishing that has hitherto happened in the world. (10)

Burke agreed with Robert Hall that the revolution indeed represented an outstanding moment in history—but for very different reasons. According to Burke, a viable civilization can only stand on the shoulders of the upper class.

The problem with revolutionary France, Burke believed, was that its government was no longer in the hands of the qualified aristocracy but held captive by a bunch of "common" men with "common distempers." The French "legislators seem to have taken their opinions of all professions, ranks and offices, from the declamations and buffooneries of satirists," who, by design, "are unqualified for the work of reformation: because their minds are ... unfurnished with patterns of the fair and good" (171). Burke feared the same unruly characters might try to topple the British government. After all, in 1794, when many reform organizations had mushroomed with new members, like the London Corresponding Society, the government rightfully expected that the nation was ripe for its own revolution. That year, with Burke's full support in Parliament, it suspended habaeus corpus, suspecting that England was now threatened

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

by the same "unqualified" commoners who overthrew the French monarchy. Pitt introduced the bill before Parliament with a sort of resolved panic.

> Who was there that knew what Jacobins and Jacobin principles were, but must see, in the pretenses of reform in parliament held out by these societies, the arrogant claims of the same class of men as those who lorded it in France . . . the dark designs of a few, making use of the people to govern all; a plan founded in the arrogance of wretches, the outcasts of society, tending to enrich themselves, by depriving of property, and of life, all those who were distinguished either for personal worth or for opulence? (qtd. in Cone 197)

Pitt shared Burke's estimation that a society "of the people" would turn into a selfish horde of levelers, canceling out the wealthy of the nation. Both Pitt and Burke feared that a government organized by common citizens would rule unwisely, just as Johnson had feared that a dictionary based on the laborious or mercantile part of the population would contaminate the language.

A Paine-ful State of Affairs

Until then, no other book had captured such a loyal following among the 'common' people as did The Rights of Man. Eventually, being a "Painite" was synonymous with being a "radical," a "reformer," and a "Jacobin." In many working-class communities, being a Painite was a badge of honor, and no amount of government suppression could blot out a devotion to reading Paine's works. Groups of Painites often met in secret to avoid detection, under the strangest of circumstances, as one Merthyr villager recalled.

> [A] few who thought highly of his Rights of Man and Age of Reason would assemble in secret places on the mountains, and taking the works from concealed places under a large boulder or so, read them with great unction. (qtd. in Thompson, Working Class 498.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

By far, Paine's greatest influence occurred within working-class, radical societies. The Rights of Man seemed to be responsible, almost single-handedly, for swelling the ranks of these organizations, from London to small communities, as was the case with the Sheffield Society for Constitutional Information and The London Corresponding Society (LCS). Sheffield advertised cheap editions of the Rights of Man as a hook to attract new members. In the advertisement, the organization grumbled against the government's "mock representation of the people," and then made its final appeal to prospective members by boasting that "We have now in the press a re-publication of Paine's Rights of Man, for 1,600 copies, by 1,400 subscribers, at the low price of sixpence each copy" (qtd. in Cone 117). The LCS witnessed the greatest gains in its ranks, and once again Paine's popularity led the way. When the LCS first met in 1791 it had only eight names on its book. Within months of the publication of The Rights of Man, some 30,000 members were enlisted. Before he was forced to leave the country, Paine himself frequented the meetings (Kent 147). Shortly after the publication of Part Two, Paine's "name became a household word" (Thompson, Working Class 111). Along with Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress and the Bible, The Rights of Man was required reading for the lower classes.

In fact, much of Paine's appeal can be attributed to the accessibility of his prose. His references, allusions, and metaphors in The Rights of Man invite his lower class readers into the text. Don Quixote also was another popular book among many of his readers, so when Paine attempted to scuttle Burke's reaffirmation of the hereditary rights of the aristocracy, he noted that "the Quixote age of chivalry nonsense is gone" (50). In referring to the fall of the Bastille, Paine associated it with a reference to Bunyan.

> The Bastille was to be either the prize or the prison of the assailants. The downfall of it included the idea of the downfall of Despotism; and this compounded image was become as figuratively united as Bunyan's Doubting Castle and Giant Despair. (52).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

At another point, Paine again refutes Burke's claim that the aristocracy has hereditary rights of privilege and power that dates back for generations. (One of Paine's stylistic tactics was to hammer a point home until the final nail was in the coffin.) To counter this argument, and make a claim for man's "natural" rights, Paine refers to the Bible.

> The error of those who reason by precedents drawn from antiquity, respecting the rights of man, is, that they do not go far enough into antiquity. They do not go the whole way. They stop in some of the intermediate stages of an hundred or a thousand years, and produce what was then done, as a rule for the present day. This is no authority at all....The fact is, that portions of antiquity, by proving everything, establish nothing. It is authority against authority all the way, till we come to the divine origin of the rights of man at the creation.... it may be worth observing, that the genealogy of Christ is traced to Adam. Why then not trace the rights of man to the creation of man? I will answer the question. Because there have been upstart governments, thrusting themselves between, and presumptuously working to *un-make* man. (65-66)

In order to explode the claims of aristocratic "rights," Paine introduces evidence from a familiar source. Furthermore, it happens to be a citation seemingly beyond reproach. For the majority of Paine's audience, nothing can compare to the Bible as a source of authority. Also, Paine gradually guides his readers through the course of his argument: first, he explains the conservative argument; then, he exposes the frailty of that argument, seen in the light of man's natural rights; finally, he shows how governments suppress those rights because of that mistaken belief in hereditary principles. Paine wants to be sure that his readers *get it*, which also accounts for the simple prose style imbedded in that piecemeal process: "This is no authority at all," for example, cannot be any more explicitly drawn.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Paine also selects metaphors rooted in popular experience. "The duty of man is not a wilderness of turnpike gates, through which he is to pass by tickets from one to the other," he writes, knowing that his audience is quite familiar with both the day to day reality of this image *and* its implications in the other "duties" the lower class must pay in order to keep the aristocratic regime in tow. Paine weaves other familiar metaphors throughout the text, most conspicuously theatrical references. But Paine's theatrical images are of the popular kind, rather than the passages from ancient Greek and Roman plays Burke includes, which are never translated into English. For instance, Burke's quote from Terence—"Haec commemoratio est quasi exprobratio" (28)—indicates that he is addressing that 'learned' audience Lowth prized so highly for their knowledge of classical languages. Paine, on the other hand, tells his readers that he'll translate all of Burke's "learned jargon" into plain English (117). Paine's deployment of theatrical images is therefore twofold: to reveal that the learned language of the upper class is only so much showmanship, and to create a bond between himself and his readers.

Thus, when he accuses Burke of distorting the facts, Paine charges that Burke has crafted his defense of hierarchy with a "well calculated" stream of words for "theatrical representation, where facts are manufactured for the sake of show" (49); that Burke is constantly "making the whole machinery bend to produce a stage effect" (59), and that Burke is merely presenting "the puppet-show of state and aristocracy" (59). With these theatrical allusions, Paine expects to show his audience that the language of the upper class is artificially conceived. He wants to unmask its superficiality, and reveal to his readers that Burke's abstract language is quite insubstantial. According to Paine, Burke's style may be "gay with flowers," but the substance of his words, like the artful language celebrated by Monboddo or Lowth, is "ineffectual"(45). Paine's abundant use of theatrical images is therefore an attempt to show the clash between truth and fiction, reality and art, the concrete and the abstract. With these theater images, Paine hopes to prove to his audience that the 'elegant' language of the upper class is actually used like a stage

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

device to distract and confuse them, to keep them from going backstage and getting their hands on the strings and levers that run the state's power play.

Paine provides another popular image when he again criticizes Burke—as he repeatedly does—for writing in a lofty style that ultimately transcends common sense, or clouds the reality of an unjust social order: "He has therefore mounted in the air like a balloon, to draw the eyes of the multitude from the ground they stand upon" (75). Paine warns his readers not to be overly impressed by the high-mindedness of the elite, and to recognize that the aristocracy's social position distances them from clearly seeing the problems exacted by an unjust social order. Also, the balloon reference was a well-known piece of information, a way for Paine to further explain a complicated political subject through a popular allusion. The balloon metaphor has now lost some of its relevancy, but at that time it was a topical story in England. The passage was based on a highly publicized channel flight of Blanchard and Jeffries in an air balloon in 1785 (Boulton 142). On one level, Paine calls attention to the societal distance that separates the upper class from the rest of the population. On another level, such popular images create the sense that Paine, the writer and the fellow citizen, is firmly grounded right beside his readers. No flights of fancy will direct his prose, or his thoughts, beyond his readers' perception. Paine wants to create a bond between himself and his readers.

In part, Paine relies on common experiences from everyday life to appeal to his readers emotionally, wishing to "make a reader feel, fancy, and understand justly at the same time" (Works, II. 70). Unlike conservative linguists like Blair or Campbell, who were suspicious of emotional language because of its association to the ill-tempered lower classes, Paine savored it. Paine believed that writing from his heart was more natural and therefore less artfully abstract. "What I write," he said in a letter to a friend, "is pure nature, and my pen and my soul have ever gone together" (qtd. in Conway, I. 88). For Paine, there seemed to be something more genuine about writing from the "soul" since it was not based on artificial constructs, or overly affected. It

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

also helped to keep his style clear and simple, unlike the extravagant language of the conservative literati. Paine hoped to "rid our ideas of all superfluous words, and consider them in their natural bareness and simplicity" (Writings, II. 238). It was part of his strategy to break down the barrier between the 'educated' writer and the 'unenlightened' reader. He believed he could connect more profoundly with his readers by appealing to their emotions, which, in the long run, he felt was more natural. The so-called mutable language of the lower classes was actually its strength. Paine was celebrating the language of the mercantile and laborious segment of the population by writing in that style. Thus, Paine's project in The Rights of Man questioned both political *and* linguistic conventions. Paine had flushed out the connection between language and politics by pointing out the way language was used by the aristocracy as a political weapon. But there was a cost. Paine had also opened the flood gates to accusations that anyone who appropriated the language of the "vulgar" must by definition be a political reformer, too. Such was the notoriety of both his politics and his language.

On occasion, his unconventional style was more of a problem than his politics. As a result, Paine's emotional appeal, the popular metaphors, and the simple style caused some concern even among his admirers. The Monthly Review, which was generally sympathetic to Paine's politics, couldn't tolerate his language. It found Paine's prose "uncouth and inelegant," "coarse," and "often debased by vulgar phraseology" (qtd. in Boulton 138). It was not the customary way important political matters had been dealt with in the past. With the arrival of The Rights of Man, which rode on the heels of a conservative bandwagon that had categorized the language of the upper class as culturally superior, usage became a politically inflammatory issue. Changing the course of the political system was not unlike attempting to change the definitions of what constituted proper discourse. Linguistic customs and political customs were interchangeable. If you toyed with the traditions of language, then you were just as likely to tinker with the conventions of the political state.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In fact, in the last half of the eighteenth-century, it was clear that to argue against custom as the law of the language was to risk being thought an innovator in politics as well, of being branded a radical, or a Jacobin, or worse—a Painite. No wonder, then, that when Wordsworth wrote the "Advertisement" to the first edition of Lyrical Ballads, he warned his readers that he might "descend too low" for their tastes, or include "expressions [that] are too familiar" (443) because he was writing in the simple language of common men and women. As might be expected, he was immediately reprimanded by the more conservative publications for subverting tradition and flouting the conventions of proper diction. In the October, 1798 issue of the Critical Review, Southey denounced him for his "ill-conceived language experiment" (qtd. in Johnston, The Hidden Wordsworth 608), while the Monthly Review wondered why anyone utilizing the simple language of the poor would write about the poor, unless they were a closet radical (Jacobus 237-8). Following the publication of the second edition of Lyrical Ballads (1802), he had gained enough notoriety that the highly influential Francis Jeffrey of the Edinburgh Review equated his work with that of "Mr. Thomas Paine to bring disaffection and infidelity within the comprehension of the common people" (qtd. in Butler, Romantics 62). Wordsworth was being accused of leveling proper social distinctions, largely because of his use of the 'vulgar' language of ordinary people. But Wordsworth, like Paine, was trying to add to the status of the 'vulgar' by writing in common language. It was exactly the kind of linguistic change or experiment that Johnson suspected would pollute the language and debase proper British culture.

---

[1] Blake also objected to Johnson's insistence that the "unlearned" were incapable of understanding the Bible. In his "Annotations to Thorton's The Lord's Prayer, Newly Translated, Blake inserted the following non-attributed passage from Johnson: "'The *BIBLE* is the *most difficult* book in the world to comprehend, nor can it be understood at all by *the unlearned*, except through the aid of *CRITICAL* and *EXPLANATORY notes...*'" Blake followed this quote by noting that "Christ & his Apostles were Illiterate Men" (Works 667).

[2] For example, in George O. Curme's two volume A Grammar of the English Language (1931), he warns readers that placing a preposition at the end of a sentence is "primitive," while Paul Roberts notes in Modern Grammar (1967) that ending a sentence with a preposition is now acceptable, although "greater formality and elegance" is accrued to a writer who continues to avoid it.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

[3] The Diversions was first published in 1786. The second edition of 1798, however, is the most frequently studied, as well as the edition that become the most prominent—"either extravagantly praised or damned," according to Olivia Smith in The Politics of Language: 1791-1819 (117).

[4] The continued hegemony of conservative theories on language remains to this day right here in the United States. The New York Public Library lists over fifty copies of Murray's grammar at its main branch on 5th Avenue, while only three copies of Tooke's work is available, and one of them is housed in its special collections division.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

CHAPTER THREE

ROMANTICIZING COMMON LANGUAGE AND COMMON THEMES

When Francis Jeffrey compared Wordsworth's poetry to Paine's politics, he was undoubtedly referring to the now famous "Preface" of the second edition of the Lyrical Ballads. Although the first edition had refuted conventional theories of language, the second edition was considerably more descriptive and far more radical. In it, Wordsworth described the language of "ordinary men" as "more permanent" and "philosophical" than the "arbitrary" language of the learned (434). Everything that Harris, Lowth, Monboddo, Blair, and Campbell had expressed regarding the inferior status of vulgar language was contested when Wordsworth declared that the simple, unadorned language of the lower orders was far more suitable for poetic pleasure than the artfully contrived diction of the leisure class. By and large, Wordsworth was inverting the conservative model that had catalogued proper and vulgar language. In addition, Wordsworth co-opted the terminology of the conservative literati for the purpose of illustrating the superiority of vulgar speech. And what must have been the most damaging statement of all for conservatives, and what surely placed Wordsworth squarely in the camp of non-conformity, was that he twice referred to Johnson as a "contemptible" figure who didn't understand the first thing about poetry. For Wordsworth to denigrate Johnson and to praise the vulgar was indeed to run the risk of being labeled a Painite. At the very least, Wordsworth's prefatory comments indicated that he sided with the devil's party, those who resisted custom and tradition.

As a matter of fact, most of the major Romantic writers presented their work in a similar vein. If the "Spirit of the Age" ever needed to be compressed into a suitable maxim, it could be termed a movement that snubbed aristocratic traditions. Romantic artists frequently criticized the aristocratic organization of church and state. Blake's Marriage of Heaven and Hell, for instance, rails against the authority of a corrupt church in favor of individualism. Its "angel" represents all of the clerical rule-makers who would enslave its followers, while Jesus, the devil warns, "was

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

all virtue, and acted from impulse, not from rules" (121). "London," from Songs of Experience, bears a great deal of resemblance to Painite radicalism and the deist and rationalist critique of orthodox religion. Meanwhile, much of Romantic poetry is openly critical of monarchical governments. In "Fire, Famine and Slaughter" (1798), for instance, Coleridge rebukes Pitt's support of Royalist uprisings in France. Byron's Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, which made him famous overnight, as he correctly noted, incorporated numerous passages on the struggle for Greek, Italian, and Spanish independence. "The Age of Bronze" includes criticism about the enclosure laws, while Byron hoped his masterpiece, Don Juan, would be "known by and bye, for what it is intended—a *satire* on *abuses* of the present states of society and not an eulogy of vice," as he explained it to his publisher, John Murray (Letters and Journals 105). In Queen Mab, "Mont Blanc," Prometheus Unbound, and Adonais, Shelley rebuts many of the essential tenets of religious belief, condemning the association between an oppressive church and state hierarchy. The day after learning of the Peterloo Massacre, he wrote "The Mask of Anarchy." In fact, most of Shelley's work was so overtly political, that it could not be published during his lifetime.

Therefore, to argue that "Romantic" writers retreated from politics or society is a misconception. Moreover, for some well-known critics in Romantic Studies, like Abrams or Bloom, to largely ignore the historical and political environment that shaped Romantic writing inflates the role of the individual "Artist" at the expense of a deeper understanding of cultural factors. In addition, for contemporary rhetoricians to view Romantic writers as solipsistic artists who tried to remain safely sequestered from the corrupting influences of society or politics is an inaccurate evaluation of their goals and principles. Quite the opposite is true. In arguing that the Romantics were fully engaged with the issues confronting their changing society, I propose that Romanticism was a *product* of history, not a special literary movement that attempted to escape from it. Even when Wordsworth had forsaken his republican credentials—a decision that thoroughly repulsed Byron and Shelley—he remained wedded to the politics of his day. And just

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

because Wordsworth grew more conservative as he grew older should not dilute the fact that politics was never far from his mind, no more than Cobbett should be cast as an a-political writer because he began as an apologist for aristocratic Toryism, but ended up being the champion of working class causes. Wordsworth told an American visitor in 1833, that despite being known to the world only as a poet, he "had given twelve hours thought to the condition and prospects of society, for one to poetry" (qtd. in William Wordsworth and the Age 2). In the beginning of his career, many of those hours were spent pursuing radical causes, marked by a rejection of political hierarchies, aristocratic privileges, and social customs that characterized the lower orders as culturally deficient.

The Experiment

One of the primary motives behind the creation of Lyrical Ballads was to upend most of the conservative distinction between the thought and language of the lower and upper classes. Because of the nature of Wordsworth's "experiment," he explains in the second edition's "Preface" (1800), he had been "advised" after the appearance of the 1798 version to "prefix a systematic defence of the theory upon which the poems were written" (432). It wasn't as if folk ballads were anything new to the British public, but the political climate of the period transformed the significance of the form. For Wordsworth to write in a style that reflected "the real language of men" (431), and to "choose incidents and situations from common life" (433) was construed as a radical departure from linguistic theories outlined by Johnson and others. Considered strictly in terms of subjects, and even sentiments, most of the poems in the 1798 and 1802 editions would not seem anomalous or farfetched to contemporary readers. As Hazlitt noted in My First Acquaintance with Poets, Lyrical Ballads was explicitly described as an experiment in language alone. The contents of the poems were altogether conventional, but timing is everything, as Marilyn Butler points out in Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries. By 1798, simply depicting the "vulgar" as worthy topics for serious poetic expression was counter-

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

hegemonic. If Wordsworth had written the poems and the "Preface" ten years earlier, they would have attracted marginal attention (61). In 1798, however, when England was at war with France and seemed on the brink of revolution itself, to argue against custom and for innovation bordered on treason, especially if that innovation included writing in a "common" style.

Scholarly interpretations of the aesthetic innovations found in Lyrical Ballads, or critical appraisals of Wordsworth and Coleridge trumpeting the dawn of imaginative creativity, tend to overlook the political implications of the text. If the poems created any shock at all, it was largely the result of their political import. By the 1770's, the ballad form had already reached its peak, but by the 1790's it had become tainted for its "popular" appeal. Along with cheap chapbooks, the ballad was a source of "news" in the eighteenth-century and both began to draw a division between popular and elite culture (McKeon 25-57). That seemed harmless prior to the French Revolution and the enormous popularity of Paine. But for Wordsworth and Coleridge to reintroduce the ballad form, for the sake of celebrating the language and experiences of rustics, was to confound conservative assumptions about the nature of the social order. In addition, the ballad was becoming one of the major forms of radical protest. Ballads written by artisans, factory workers, cobblers, and countless other working class scribes profiled government corruption, ecclesiastical misdeeds, and the horrors of the factory system (Thompson, Working Class 440-534). An entire ballad collection, printed in Edinburgh in 1793, poked fun at Burke's characterization of the lower orders. It was pointedly called Twopence worth of Hogs Bristles, for the Use of the Rabble (Webb 39). The ballad tradition was the accepted mode of literary expression for the "swinish multitude," a deliberate counter-genre to the conservative literati's favored neo-classical ornamentation and standards. Wordsworth attacks Pope, Cowper, Gray, Prior, and Johnson in the 1802 "Appendix" precisely because they were the accepted masters of the Augustan tradition that placed a premium on rigid poetic rules and regulations, which fit the social hierarchy imposed on all of society, as Burke and Pitt demonstrated time and time again.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

England needed to be policed, politically *and* culturally, if the aristocracy expected to maintain its privileges and power. If Wordsworth meant to defend his linguistic experiment in 1800, he may in fact have painted himself even more starkly as an artist who despised neo-classical culture and hoped to score themes for the common man.

For conservatives, "common" themes stemmed from crude experiences, and common language corrupted culture. Lowth and Johnson proceeded on the basis of what was allowable in the language, or on regulating variety, by following rigid methods of classification. Ordinary, everyday language was regarded with disdain, and its users were unworthy of cultural representation. Since the Restoration, attempts were made to purify the language and to set boundaries around what was permissible in polite speech and formal writing. In contrast, Wordsworth moved away from the abstract to the concrete. The subjects of his poetry, although not anything new, were going to be real people. Ordinary life would be the topics worthy of poetic representation, and the language of common people, which was rather new, would be held in high esteem. One linguistic historian terms the publication of Lyrical Ballads "as a symbolic end-date" to the conservative literati's firm hold on its purification rites and rituals (Blake, A History 13). In the "Preface" and poems Wordsworth shattered stereotypes surrounding the lives and the language of the vulgar. Moreover, by redefining the relation of "primitive" language to thought, Wordsworth also redefined the connection between language and social class. To him, vernacular or coarse language did not determine uncivilized versus civilized behavior.

Moving in a Radical Circle and Paying the Price

This radical approach to language provoked a great deal of ridicule in conservative publications following the 1798 edition, which accounts for Wordsworth's need to write a defense of his poems for the second edition. The Monthly Mirror in 1798 condemned the poems for their awkward "simplicity," and found the entire production far too disposed to "sentiments of feelings and sensibility" that wrongfully consigned "the language of nature" to a level of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

importance unimagined in polite society (qtd. in Mayo 502-503). In both the 1798 "Advertisement" and the 1800 "Preface," Wordsworth guided the reader's attention to "the tale of Goody Blake and Harry Gill." The poem, as it turned out, became one of the most successful, as a number of magazines, like the Analytical Review, reprinted it. By 1801, it already had attained a certain degree of notoriety so that the conservative European Magazine parodied the poem in its September issue as "Barnham Downs, or Goody Grizzle & Her Ass, a Lyrical Ballad, in the present Fashionable Stile" (518-520). Dr. Charles Burney likewise spotlighted "Goody Blake" for its sinister undermining of the status quo. If the poor, as the poem insinuated, were capable of independent thinking and *not* enamored with the status quo, then "what imaginary wants and real anarchy would it not create?" he asked (qtd. in Jacobus 237). Writing in the May, 1799 Monthly Review, Burney also singled-out the "Yew-tree-Seat" for reeking of Rousseau's philosophy, that theoretical godfather of all things 'natural' and republican. He then complained that the entire oeuvre amounted to "an implied criticism of the social system" (qtd. in Johnston, The Hidden Wordsworth 676). But if Wordsworth's poetry seemed only to *imply* a critique of the social system to his critics, he was quite clear about his position on the subject when he sent complimentary copies of the second edition to a number of notable persons prior to its official publication.

At Coleridge's request, Wordsworth shipped a copy of Lyrical Ballads to Charles James Fox, the Whig leader, as well as to other "persons of eminence" as part of a strategy to generate interest in the upcoming volume. Wordsworth included a letter in the parcel, written at Grasmere on January 14, 1801, that imparts his political convictions at that time. In the letter, Wordsworth compliments Fox for "looking upon all classes of people ... as individuals," a sentiment Wordsworth found attractive since it was one he believed he possessed himself. The poems contained in the volume, Wordsworth argued, would testify to that shared belief. (It is not known whether Wordsworth included the "Preface" when he mailed the complimentary copies.)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Although Wordsworth apologized for the poems unflattering exhibition of his failed "intellectual powers," he assumed that the "topics" and "style" would appeal to a man like Fox, that rare public figure, Wordsworth noted, who was dominated by a "sensibility of heart." As the rest of the letter indicates, Wordsworth's own heart was heavily burdened not so much by the recent failure of the French Revolution to fulfill its republican goals, but by the increasing damage caused by the Industrial Revolution on the poor.

> It appears to me that the most calamitous effect, which has followed the measures which have lately been pursued in this country, is a rapid decay of the domestic affections among the lower orders of society. This effect the present Rulers of this country are not conscious of, or they disregard it. For many years past, the tendency of society amongst almost all the nations of Europe has been to produce it. But recently by the spreading of manufactures through every part of the country, by the heavy taxes upon postage, by workhouses, Houses of Industry, and the invention of Soup-shops &c. &c. superadded to the increasing dis-proportion between the price of labour and that of the necessaries of life, the bonds of domestic feeling among the poor, as far as the influence of these things has extended have been weakened, and in innumerable instances entirely destroyed. (The Letters, 313)

In Wordsworth's opinion, all of Europe habitually mistreated its indigent population, but now with the onrush of industrialization, he feared that the situation would worsen. What's more, Wordsworth, like Blake, was keenly aware that the emergence of industrial capitalism was beginning to destroy an entire way of life. For the common Englishman, the factory system was eroding economic independence, transforming the obligations of mutuality, or the "interests of the 'Trade,'" as E.P. Thompson describes it, while ruining "the traditional family economy" (Working Class 203). Wordsworth was deeply troubled by these insidious changes. What was

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

most unsettling to Wordsworth, as he explained it to Fox, was the way in which the factory system was destabilizing the family.

> ...parents are separated from their children, and children from their parents; the wife no longer prepares with her own hands a meal for her husband, the produce of his labour; there is little doing in his house in which his affections can be interested, and but little left in which he can love. (314)

Thirteen years later, when many critics allege Wordsworth deserted his youthful republican principles, he again mourned the loss of tight-knit family life caused by industrialization. With the advent of the factory system, he writes in Book VIII of The Excursion, the family became completely fractured, severing the link between parent and child, since even children leave home to work in the great satanic mills, a sentiment Dickens echoed in Hard Times. In addition, Wordsworth shares Blake's critique that industrialization stifles human creativity at the simplest level.

> The habitations empty! or perchance
> The mother left alone,--no helping hand
> To rock the cradle of her peevish babe;
> No daughters round her, busy at the wheel,
> Or in dispatch of each day's little growth
> Of household occupation; no nice arts
> Of needle-work; no bustle at the fire,
> Where once the dinner was prepared with pride;
> Nothing to speed the day, or cheer the mind;
> Nothing to praise, to teach or to command!
> The father, if perchance he still retain
> his old employments, goes to field or wood

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

No longer led or followed by the sons;

Idlers perchance they were,--but in *his* sight;

Breathing fresh air and treading the green earth:

Till their short holiday of childhood ceased,

Ne'er to return! That birthright now is lost.

Whether writing to Fox in 1801, or writing a poem in 1814, Wordsworth seemed forever interested in the well-being of the nation's poor or 'common' inhabitants.

Perhaps his politics had changed by 1814, but his concerns regarding the vulgar remained the same. At first, he seemed to want to protect the lower classes from the steady stream of negative descriptions leveled against them by the pro-aristocratic literati. Later, he seemed to mourn the end of their independence with the onrush of industrialization, what Marx described as the demise of "domestic industry" with its "independent handicrafts ... and a dwelling-house for the worker and his family" (Capital, 1: 591). In truth, Wordsworth's most radical comments regarding the unfair circumstances surrounding the lower orders came during his youth. Considering his early remarks and his association with many leading radicals, Wordsworth can be regarded as a champion of the poor who viewed "the vulgar" and their "superficial life" as worthy of being "solemnized" (The Prelude 8: 651-655). Unfortunately, nearly everything about the old political traditions and the new factory system pointed toward a lessening of their cultural value and a worsening of their social stability. To an extent, what concerned many leading radicals was not only the continuation of an inequitable political system, but the way in which the new economic order was adding to the woes of the poor. "The destructive influence of commerce," Mary Wollstonecraft observed, was glaringly apparent by the "division of labour" that was turning "whole knots of men into machines." Ultimately, "large work-shops" would "impede" both social progress and personal well-being (The French Revolution 233-4). For daring to question the organization of society—and for simply being an

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

outspoken woman—she was branded by Horace Walpole as "that hyena in petticoats" (NYPL), a small sampling of the name-calling carried out by conservatives who tried to cast radicals as being horribly out of control.[1] No one, however, was more publicly denounced than John Thelwall, the most notorious Jacobin in England—and a close friend to Coleridge and Wordsworth.

Several cartoonists, most notably Gillray, depicted Thelwall as flourishing a butcher's knife, or raising the torch of arson in his hand. Thelwall, along with Blake, Wordsworth, Godwin, Paine, Tooke, Wollstonecraft, and others, spent time at Joseph Johnson's publishing house. Although it is not decisively known how well these figures knew one another, Johnson's establishment did act as a site for an exchange of radical opinions that often led to working relationships and friendships. Blake, for example, illustrated the second and third editions of Wollstonecraft's Original Stories from Real Life, and Wordsworth probably met Thelwall at Johnson's shop for the first time (NYPL). Like Wollstonecraft and Wordsworth, Thelwall complained about the ill-affects of the factory system on the family structure in The Rights of Nature (1797). Thelwall, who was one of several radicals viciously lampooned in Gillray's famous print of 'The New Morality'—a pull-out in the July, 1798 issue of the Anti-Jacobin Review (NYPL)—spent enough time with Wordsworth and Coleridge in Grasmere in the late nineties that the government assumed the two poets were as consumed with radical politics as their outspoken friend. As perhaps they were. After all, the Gillray illustration of the new Jacobin morality featured a "cornucopia of ignorance" wrapped in such radical publications as Joseph Johnson's Analytical Review, a publication Wollstonecraft helped edit and that Coleridge had submitted articles to. Spewing from the bowels of the cornucopia are "The Wrongs of Woman," "Tookes Speeches," and a variety of other offensive documents. Two "Jackasses" are blindly gathering the papers as they spill out, one is Southey and the other is Coleridge. Standing on the head of a Leviathan, Thelwall feeds the chaotic menagerie an edition of his "Lectures." Already

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

in 1798, Thelwall was being metaphorically associated with Coleridge and other "toads and frogs" who wrote in "Blank-Verse," so that by the time he visited the Wordsworths at Grasmere for the last time in 1803, the government decided to investigate matters more thoroughly. In time, a spy had raised enough suspicions among Wordsworth's neighbors that they came to believe he and Dorothy were French Jacobins plotting to overthrow the government. The Wordsworths had to abandon their lodging because of the furor caused by their association with Thelwall (Thompson, The Romantics, 156-217; Kent 134-6). It was during this period that Wordsworth described himself in The Prelude as a "patriot" to the French cause; that his "heart was all/Given to the people" (9: 123-4), even declaring in the unpublished letter to the Bishop of Llandaff that the execution of Louis XVI was acceptable in the early stages of a revolution if it brought about "a fairer order of things" (Prose Works 34). Fearing prosecution, Wordsworth never published the letter. Nevertheless, Wordsworth was steeped in the reform movement, and the government considered him guilty of republicanism by association.

Assessing the Words' Worth

Clearly, as a young man, Wordsworth shared many of the beliefs commonly expressed by radicals like Thelwall, Paine, and Tooke, as he repeatedly declares throughout The Prelude.[2] However, according to most literary critics, at some point in his life Wordsworth abandoned his most radical positions and eventually converted to conventional Toryism. But when this occurred, for what reasons, and how strongly, remains a source of lingering critical debate, especially since several critics feel that his poetry took a turn for the worse in his later years, suggesting that his youthful radicalism was a springboard for his most inspired and impassioned writing. In his recent biography of the poet, Kenneth Johnston suggests that as Wordsworth aged he tried to gloss over his "juvenile" mistakes in order to become more socially acceptable, perhaps suppressing any lingering radicalism so as not to be turned aside from acquiring such an authorized title as Poet Laureate, which was granted to him in 1843, succeeding Southey. Thus,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the general consensus among literary critics and historians is that Wordsworth grew increasingly conservative with age, although the critical reception to Wordsworth's politics is also marked by two distinct factions who either find conservatism or republicanism running throughout *all* of his poetry and statements, regardless of his age.

James Chandler, for example, believes that even his early poetry exhibits a Burkean penchant for traditionalism, wherein Lyrical Ballads and the 1805 Prelude prove that Wordsworth "is conservative from the start" (Wordsworth's Second Nature xviii). In English Literature in History, Roger Sales concludes that Wordsworth's obsession with rustic figures and *Nature*, especially in his youth, essentially endorsed the status quo and was never meant to be subversive (19-69). Marjorie Levinson, whose approach to the poetry seems a lot like many contemporary rhetoricians critical of the so-called Romantic preoccupation with vision and inspiration, finds that Wordsworth's great period poems all "locate the center of the Romantic ideology" into one single misconception, "whose chief illusion is the triumph of the inner life over the outer world" (Wordworth's Great Period Poems 82). Echoing the opinions of her mentor, Jerome McGann, Levinson believes that the unjust political process was something Wordsworth wanted to transcend rather than amend.

Olivia Smith, on the other hand, believes Wordsworth was given little choice but to draw back from his radicalism because of the "frightened temper" of the period created by the heavy-handed tactics of the counter-revolution (208). Radicals everywhere were being hounded, prosecuted, jailed, and driven into isolation. In fact, the impetus behind The Prelude came from Coleridge, who wanted Wordsworth to address the disappointment radicals were experiencing following the failed hopes of the French Revolution and the government's crushing anti-revolutionary measures. E.P. Thompson, in fact, argues that some form of dissenting politics was never far from Wordsworth's mind, at every stage of his output. In Thompson's opinion, Wordsworth keenly sensed that radicals had become morosely discontented in their ruined

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

attempts to transform society, a condition aptly depicted in The Excursion, whose Solitary represents Thelwall, who in reality had become bitterly disgruntled and retreated to an isolated farm in South Wales (Working Class 106). Moreover, Wordsworth, like many leading radicals, was forced into seclusion himself by the government's oppressive counter-revolutionary measures, where he spent most of his life trying to work out from under the "received culture" of abstract Jacobinism that left a generation of dissenters disenchanted. Thus, for Thompson, it's possible to view Wordsworth's later work as a break with the "conventions" of the more ardently "abstract periods of the *philosophes*" exemplified by Godwin (The Romantics 36-7). In Thompson's estimation, Wordsworth became more concerned with the *concrete* circumstances surrounding the lower classes, certain that their internal value should not be overshadowed by the violent turn of events in France, or the British government's abusive reactionary activities that marked them as social pariahs. Wordsworth therefore placed his personal faith in the affirming qualities of mankind's *natural* goodness as a way of overcoming the public humiliation and disillusionment encountered by so many other radicals. So, despite the unfortunate political crisis of the times, Wordsworth stood by his principles—privately. The conclusion of the second book of The Prelude bears this out, demonstrating his trust that "fair seasons yet will come."

> . . . if in these times of fear,
> This melancholy waste of hopes o'erthrown,
> If, 'mid indifference and apathy
> And wicked exultation, when good men
> On every side fall off we know not how
> To selfishness, disguised in gentle names
> Of peace and quiet and domestic love—
> Yet mingled, not unwillingly, with sneers
> On visionary minds—if, in this time

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Of dereliction and dismay, I yet

Despair not of our nature, but retain

A more than Roman confidence, a faith

That fails not, in all sorrow my support (448-460)

Hence, in order to maintain his belief in the perfectibility of mankind, regardless of the fearful times and the radical lapse into political despair, Wordsworth transmuted the political cries of "egalite" into the interior life; the equality of worth of the common or vulgar man resided in the moral and spiritual qualities that naturally resided in every person's soul.

But, as Kenneth Johnston points out in his recent study of Wordsworth's life and poetry, there is a tendency among critics to interpret Wordsworth's statements about his political beliefs and interest in the lower classes as a "generalization" about the attitudes of his generation, "rather than his very particular expression of his own experience" (The Hidden Wordsworth 7). In part, the objective behind Johnston's profile is to uncover the historical and political Wordsworth (until 1807, when he turned 37) buried under the recent critical "deconstruction" of Wordsworth that dismisses much of his work as posturing, while also rescuing him from a "sanitized reading" of his poetry. Indeed, an urge exists among some critics to deconstruct Wordsworth so dramatically that his remarks are seen as flagrantly insincere, like some evasion mapped out by an "efacement"—that postmodern inclination to "assume" that "words and the author" rarely manage to "'mean what they say'"(Spivak lxxviii). Instead, by taking Wordsworth at his word, it becomes less problematic to accept his declaration to Fox that the poems contained in Lyrical Ballads "were written with a view to show that men who do not wear fine clothes can feel [as] deeply" as men of the leisure class (The Letters 315). And, as he resolutely declared in the 1800 "Preface," his "systematic defense" of the poems was meant to verify that men who do not speak a refined tongue are as socially valuable as men who abide by the conservative dictum that (elegant) language is the (fine) dress of thought. For Wordsworth, the classes are not

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

separate and unequal, except when being mapped out artificially by a contrived system of classification. In point of fact, Wordsworth believed that society was *naturally* unified; the unnatural distinctions drawn by a vain upper class are what render it discordant.

A Second Rendition: Raiding the Custom Shop

In the "Preface" to the second edition of Lyrical Ballads, Wordsworth insists that social disparities do not exist on account of natural, individual differences. Instead, distinctions are socially manufactured to benefit one class of citizens at the expense of another. Typically, the leisure class fabricates social categories that produce a false testimony to personal worth, especially as it is related to the issues of thought and language. In making this argument, Wordsworth turns the debate on its head, as did Tooke, Cobbett, and Paine, that the concrete, simple language of the vulgar was actually superior to the abstract, artful language of the leisure class. Wordsworth concludes that the language of the leisure class indeed has become so purified and refined that it holds little interest for anyone determined to reproduce the language of real men. It is defective precisely because of its artificiality, an idea that contradicts everything that Johnson set forth in his Plan and "Preface," as well as the linguistic theories militantly guarded by Lowth, Campbell, and Monboddo. In fact, it is the language of the lower classes, Wordsworth maintains, that is superior to the language of the leisure class. In claiming this, Wordsworth invokes the vocabulary of the conservative literati to turn linguistic categories on their head. In Wordsworth's reconstructed scheme, leisure class language is mutable and worthless, while lower class language is stable and valuable. By adopting words favored by the conservative literati, Wordsworth was attempting to recast the social and political imbalances that were being created within standardized accounts of linguistic categories that favored one class of men over the other. His explanation for subscribing to this belief is revealing and worth quoting at length.

> Low and rustic life was generally chosen, because in that condition, the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> under restraint and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings co-exist in a state of greater simplicity, and, consequently, may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings; and from the necessary character of rural occupations, are more easily comprehended; and are more durable, and lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature. The language, too, of these men is adopted (purified indeed from what appear to be its real defects, from all lasting and rational causes of dislike or disgust) because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived, and because from their rank in society and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the influence of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions. Accordingly, such a language, arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical language, than that which is frequently substituted for it by Poets, who think that they are conferring honour upon themselves and their art, in proportion as they separate themselves from the sympathies of men, and indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression, in order to furnish food for fickle tastes, and fickle appetites, of their own creation. (433-4).

In this passage, Wordsworth rebuts many of the charges made by Johnson and others against the alleged impermanent and inconsequential language of the vulgar.

Wordsworth tries to subvert the standardized categories of refined and vulgar speech by reconfiguring conservative rhetoric that cast a shadow over the language of common men. Johnson and others had pejoratively described the language of the laboring portion of the population as inherently transient, a "fugitive cant" unworthy of emulating or classifying. Worse

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

yet, unlike the literate, classically educated world that the leisure class lived in, the lower classes exist in ephemeral pockets of experience that change from day to day because their varied occupations are a source of instability compared to the literati's stabilizing social circles. Conservatives insisted that these lived experiences then reflect back upon language development, often testifying to how mental states can be classed by class. As a result, the more 'profound' language of the leisure class mirrors the concerns of a caste of men intellectually capable to deal with significant social questions, as opposed to the insufficient language used by the vulgar who only deal with the wayward issues of daily existence that causes their intellect to wallow in the mundane routines of ordinary life. Wordsworth turns all of this completely around. It is the language of "low and rustic" life that is "more permanent" precisely because *their* rank in society affords them the opportunity to live in "a narrow circle," an argument Johnson, Monboddo, and others used to defend the superior language of that special class of men who produced quality discourse. Wordsworth confiscates that terminology to lend support to the vulgar. In addition, it is the language of the vulgar that is "durable" and "purified" since the vulgar are exposed to "the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived," a statement typically made by the literati to describe the language of the leisure class who are exposed to high culture. In point of fact, the vulgar engage in "repeated" experiences that signify their language is "more philosophical" than the language of the leisure class, again refuting Johnson's claim that the vulgar live in unstable circumstances. Wordsworth, like Paine and Cobbett, values the language of the vulgar more highly than the leisure class because the vulgar speak in "simple and unelaborated expressions." What is viewed by the literati as the basis for negating vulgar speech is actually its strength in Wordsworth's estimation. Moreover, poets who cater to the leisure class will ultimately fall into "arbitrary and capricious habits of expressions" in order to please their "fickle tastes, and fickle appetites." The leisure class is far more susceptible to change because of their capricious habits. Thus, nearly everything that Johnson set forth in the "Preface" regarding

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the linguistic differences between "men busy and unlearned" and "those who have much leisure to think," Wordsworth contradicts in *his* "Preface."

Taking Aim at a Cultural Goliath

By 1800, Johnson's work had attained enormous cultural clout, so that his insistence on 'high' standards was generally accepted as the norm, as noted in the previous chapter. For Wordsworth to question Johnson was nothing short of rebelling against conservative hegemony, earmarking him as a cultural "Painite." Further along in the "Preface," Wordsworth ridicules Johnson's position as a literary critic as well, cautioning his readers about "a mode of false criticism" that denigrates a style of "Poetry in which the language closely resembles that of life and nature." Wordsworth objects to the proliferation of "Parodies" that poke fun at this style and he includes "Dr. Johnson's Stanza" as "a fair specimen."

'I put my hat upon my head,
And walked into the Strand.
And there I met another man
Whose hat was in his hand.'

Wordsworth compares these lines to the popularly "admired" stanza from "Babes in the Woods." He notes that both stanzas display "familiar" ideas and language, but what distinguishes one from the other is that "the *matter* expressed in Dr. Johnson's stanza is contemptible." Wordsworth argues that Johnson's lampoon lacks "sense," is not at all "interesting," and is incapable of leading "to anything interesting." Wordsworth warns his readers that Johnson's poetic theories are an incredible waste of time. To be certain that his readers are clear about Johnson's interminable lack of taste, he again reverts to the language of the literati to show that Johnson merely *appears* to be civilized, when in fact he is a few anthropological ticks shy of swinging from a vine.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> ... the images neither originate in that sane state of feeling which arises out of thought, nor can excite thought or feeling in the Reader. This is the only sensible manner of dealing with such verses: Why trouble yourself about the species till you have previously decided upon the genus? Why take pains to prove that an ape is not a Newton, when it is self-evident that he is not a man? (452).

Wordsworth's painstaking, and rather vituperative, account of Johnson's skills as a literary critic—and poet—places Wordsworth at the center of a cultural debate that of course had grave political overtones. To argue against Johnson's ideas about language and to mock his critical talents, Wordsworth aligned himself with political dissenters like Paine, Tooke, Thelwall, and Cobbett who sought to refute the superior social qualities of the ruling class. Arguing against Johnson's cultural conventions was akin to fighting against society's hierarchical traditions. Wordsworth made this choice in his early career (and repeated it in the 1814 "Preface" to The Excursion) because Johnson's denial of the cultural importance of the "low and rustic" members of society was also a denial of their political rights.

In the "Appendix" to the 1802 edition, Johnson is once again dug up as a bedrock of bad judgment. Wordsworth now more elaborately combines the ideas of the literati's false sense of language and literature, and he cites Johnson to make his point. While Johnson decided to compose his dictionary from books, or, as he admitted, "from the writers before the Restoration," Wordsworth believes that for a poet to rely too heavily on the language found in "books" is a grave mistake. Over the course of time, "the progress of refinement" practiced by writers has manifested itself into a "corrupt" form of usage, "thrusting out of sight the plain humanities of nature by a motley masquerade of tricks, quaintnesses, hieroglyphics, and enigmas" (456). In part, Wordsworth never denies that a "special class" of literary men have created a special class of discourse, as Monboddo repeatedly expressed. But contrary to the majority of conservative opinions that ranked the artful language of the leisure class above the simple discourse of the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

vulgar, Wordsworth insists that they have actually adulterated language through their over-the-top showmanship, rendering language "extravagant and absurd." Eventually, Wordsworth argues, both poets and their literary readers became a "fraternity" that could no longer recognize the natural, living languages of "real" men in society (457). Unfortunately, he adds, this literary brotherhood deemed their extra-ordinary language as the best language, therefore relegating "common" language into an inferior position. Gradually, this narrow interpretation of discourse "perverted" the learned into believing that *their* special language constituted "a natural language," when in truth the very opposite is the case (456). The language of the literati is unnatural, corrupt, and excessively contrived. And no one represents this perversion of ideas better than "Dr. Johnson," who, "by way of immediate example" has completely distorted—and plagiarized!—a simple passage from the Bible to write a poem that displays nothing but a "hubbub of words" (457-8).

Wordsworth also resists Johnson's drive towards an elitist canonization of literature. Throughout his life, Johnson settled upon class-based criteria for evaluating literary achievement. Wordsworth was certainly familiar with Johnson's work, and when Boswell's famous sketch of the era's most well-known man of letters was published in 1791, it became an immensely successful and widely read text (Rogers xv). As a result, it solidified Johnson's reputation as the nation's leading cultural figure. Johnson now stood as *the* most well recognized avatar for judging cultural excellence. It is likely Wordsworth was aware of the enormous cultural importance Johnson had attained through Boswell's book, and he may have read it himself. Certainly by 1814 he had. In "Essay, supplementary to the Preface" of The Excursion, Wordsworth refers to Bowswell's Life several times. Perhaps by 1798 Wordsworth already had a first-hand knowledge of the statements recorded by Boswell that further identified Johnson with a class-based arrangement of high and low culture.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

When Boswell asked Johnson to compare the merits of Fielding's novels to Richardson's, for instance, Johnson responded that Fielding's work entailed a regrettable moral lowness on account of the socially low characters laid bare in his books, a conviction expressed by Hannah More ten years earlier (Paulson and Lockwood 443). "It is of very low life," he told his biographer, and Fielding appeared more like an "ostler" than an accomplished writer (Boswell, II: 49). Depicting *low* life(s) was not the proper route to take for a serious artist, even if such lowly characters do exist in the real world. Johnson was repeating to Boswell what he'd written on the subject earlier, where he declared that high art must expunge the low from its design. "It is justly considered as the greatest excellency of art, to imitate nature," he wrote in Rambler, no. 4 (1750), "but it is necessary to distinguish those parts of nature, which are most proper for imitation: greater care is still required in representing life, which is so often discoloured by passion, or deformed by wickedness" (The Works III: 22-3). And in Johnson's opinion the most passionate members of society, who were likewise prone to wicked behavior, were from the lower classes, like many of Fielding's characters. For Johnson, art had a specifically didactic function, and the main goal of good literature was to instruct a reader on how to become a better person. Guiding a reader to the moral high ground won't occur if the reader encounters low social figures, who, Johnson assumes, behave immorally by virtue of their inferior social status. For this reason, he ranks Richardson above Fielding.

With the same amount of fervor, Johnson condemns Milton's "Lycidas" for its "easy, vulgar, and therefore disgusting" diction and subject matter. Both the content and the language negate the poem's redeeming cultural value. The poem is therefore intolerably "indecent" (Lives). Its indecency stems from it being within reach of the many—Johnson's definition of "vulgar." Not only should the low be excluded from art but the language of common men must be left out of the picture as well, a doctrine he resolutely expressed in the "Preface" to the Dictionary. Even Milton, who in the late eighteenth century often was ranked after Shakespeare

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

as England's greatest literary artist, could stray from this principle. Based on this extremely rigid classification of what constituted literary excellence, Wordsworth rightfully concluded that canon formation was not codified according to strict 'literary' value. Canon formation existed within a political calculus. Plus, it demonstrated the injustice of forming a canon that amounts to a *social* hierarchy of terms, for it establishes principles based on social (ine)qualities rather than on so-called neutral literary categories. Those who would form a literary canon are likely to turn even a Milton into canon *fodder* because he sometimes disregarded elitist guidelines that insisted on excluding the language of ordinary men.[3] Since Wordsworth was celebrating "low" life and incorporating vulgar diction into his poetry, he knew that he too would come under the same kind of negative criticism from those who embraced a Johnsonian method of high-brow canon formation, thereby placing himself alongside Milton as a linguistic transgressor. It was actually an association many poets would welcome, and therefore Wordsworth suspected he belonged in some rather heady literary company if he flouted poetic traditions like Milton.

> There will also be found in these volumes little of what is usually called poetic diction; I have taken as much pains to avoid it as others ordinarily take to produce it; this I have done for the reason already alleged, to bring my language near to the language of men....
>
> If in a poem there should be found a series of lines, or even a single line, in which the language, though naturally arranged, and according to the strict laws of metre, does not differ from that of prose, there is a numerous class of critics, who, when they stumble upon these prosaisms, as they call them, imagine that they have made a notable discovery, and exult over the Poet as over a man ignorant of his own profession. Now these men would establish a canon of criticism which the Reader will conclude he must utterly reject, if he wishes to be pleased with these volumes. And it would be a most easy task to prove to him , that not only the language of a large portion of every good poem, even of the most elevated character, must necessarily, except with reference to the metre,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> in no respect differ from that of good prose, but likewise that some of the most interesting parts of the best poems will be found to be strictly the language of prose, when prose is well written. The truth of this assertion might be demonstrated by innumerable passages from almost all the poetical writings, even of Milton himself. (437-38).

If Wordsworth planned to represent low and rustic life, then, he had to repudiate the Johnsonian tradition that dismissed vulgar discourse and canonized genteel literature. In 1798, an artist had to choose between "Custom and habit, novelty and change" (The Prelude IX: 333) for the same reasons that public figures like Paine and Cobbett had to choose between Burkean custom or radical change. And, just as Paine had renounced the aristocratic governing "tradition" that denied the vulgar from political representation and participation, Wordsworth rejects canon formation on the basis that it denies vulgar subjects and vulgar language. Instead, Lyrical Ballads celebrates all things vulgar. Much of the "Preface," then, entreats its readers to accept his novel experiment and shed Johnson's rigid customs and habits.

Overturning Leisure Class Monuments

Wordsworth's explanation of his intentions in the "Preface" therefore upended most of the major beliefs of the conservative literati, including an elite prescription for cataloging literature. The very idea of creating a canon, or passing judgment on usage, was a bogus enterprise in the first place in his estimation. Throughout the "Preface" he stresses that cultural traditions that seem to be solidly cast actually rest on shaky ground. Literary and linguistic categories do not exist because of some profound, indisputable truth, nor are the terms that define "great" art to be viewed as forever transfixed. Wordsworth contradicts this appraisal of language and literature by calling the reader's attention to the mutable properties of human categories, which ultimately disclose a far more socially imposed, and therefore socially divisive, system than first meets the eye. What is by custom considered fine art is nothing more than an "arbitrary

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and capricious" set of standards; what is by custom considered elegant language is actually a demonstration of "false refinement or arbitrary innovation," and what is by custom considered to be excellent poetic diction is merely "arbitrary and subject to infinite caprices" (434-5; 447). Wordsworth tries to shatter the conservative's most potent cultural weapon, that the high and low are separated by rock-solid tradition. Everything that Johnson, Lowth, Campbell, and Monboddo said about the mutability of the vulgar and the stability of the leisure class, Wordsworth applied to elite usage and canons.

On some occasions, Wordsworth reverts to the conservative's exact terms, but reverses the order for his own purposes. Monboddo, for instance, argued that vulgar speakers who do not have the advantage of artificial language, and therefore are unable to express anything other than their physical wants, use a language that is "degraded and debased by its necessary connection with flesh and blood" (I: 47). Wordsworth, on the other hand, viewed the connection to the material world as an important advantage for the vulgar over the inconsequentiality of the leisure class's reliance on abstraction or "manners" (435). Like Paine before him, Wordsworth finds the artificial language of the leisure class, the preferred mode of literary convention, steeped in an intangible display of pyrotechnics.

> The Reader will find that personifications of abstract ideas rarely occur in these volumes; and, I hope, are utterly rejected as an ordinary device to elevate the style, and raise it above prose. I have proposed to myself to imitate, and, as far as is possible, to adopt the very language of men; and assuredly such personifications do not make any natural or regular part of that language. They are, indeed, a figure of speech occasionally prompted by passion, and I have made use of them as such; but I have endeavored utterly to reject them as a mechanical device of style, or as a family of language which Writers in metre seem to lay claim to by prescription. I have wished to keep my Reader in the company of flesh and blood.... (437)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Without hesitation, Wordsworth deems the language of flesh and blood more preferable to a language captivated by prescribed techniques. Wordsworth has completely reconfigured Monboddo's term by applying it to the superior nature of vulgar speech.

Moreover, Wordsworth indirectly undercuts the conservative literati's belief in the importance of an elect circle of men able to produce a superior brand of discourse. In truth, he argues, language has been corrupted by this situation. Drawn from a restricted family of users, language unfolds in an automatic manner. The innovations produced by the leisure class, so proudly touted in Johnson's "Preface," are mechanical rather than natural. When a language community severs its ties to the concrete world of flesh and blood, it becomes ineffectual, a twist on the very circumstance that Monboddo considered essential in creating a highly evolved civilization through language development. Wordsworth instead argues that the language originating out of common experiences is the most potent language of all, while a language that originates out of a minority of a minority of users is the weakest. In short, part of Wordsworth's strategy in undermining the literati's demeaning account of vulgar speech is to co-opt their terminology and reverse the descriptive categories.

With this approach, Wordsworth was pointing out to his readers that vulgar speech was expansive and that common experiences offered greater literary possibilities, a striking contrast to the rigidly mechanized language and prescriptive literary conventions emerging out of a circumvented leisure class. In reevaluating what is truly the best route available to a poet, Wordsworth alerts the reader to the more genuine "subjects from common life" and the "real language of men" that is superior to the abstract ideas and artificial language used by "a few individuals"(429). But during those very politically charged times, literary opinions were aligned closely to political identities, where "even to write in a style meant for mankind became a divisive and inflammatory gesture," as Marilyn Butler notes (Romantics, Rebel 68). In the 1798 "Advertisement," Wordsworth expected that readers would be more "accustomed to the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers," rather than being familiar with poems written in "the language of conversation" from the "middle and lower classes" (443). The timing of the poems' first appearance was crucial in setting the stage for Wordsworth's need to write a more extensive introduction to the 1800 edition than the one he had previously provided. When it came to the topic of "proper" poetic diction, politics was never far from being part of the equation. As it turned out, the more extensive prefatory remarks concerning the worth of vulgar language was controversial enough to make it famous (Johnston, The Hidden Wordsworth 723). That is because Wordsworth did not back down from engaging in a fiery defense of vulgar language or topics, including adding a politically expressive poem, "The Old Cumberland Beggar," which did not appear in the 1798 series.

By 1800, Wordsworth needed a more elaborate explanation for writing poetry in a style that had indeed become controversial and for poems that looked at the lives of common people. The political climate was influencing literary sensibilities. When the poems first appeared in September of 1798, a cultural war in poetical politics was being waged in the press between such publications as Joseph Johnson's Analytical Review and the reactionary Anti-Jacobin, subsequently named the Anti-Jacobin Review. At this time, Wordsworth clearly saw himself aligned with the radical elements of English society. Wordsworth planned to have the second edition of Lyrical Ballads published by Joseph Johnson, who not only put out the Analytical Review but was the most well-known distributor of radical texts, such as Paine's Rights of Man. But just as Wordsworth was planning to use Johnson's services, Johnson was arrested for issuing Gilbert Wakefield's Reply to Some Parts of the Bishop of Llandaff's Address to the People of Great Britain (1798). It spelled the end of Johnson's career.

Meanwhile, as the first edition of Lyrical Ballads was going to press in the summer of 1798, an issue of the Anti-Jacobin had lumped the Lake Poets together with Paine, Thelwall, and Godwin. As far as the editors were concerned, they were all involved in a lawless cabal to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

overthrow what was decent and moral in English society. One aspect of the sudden decay in cultural conventions included the seemingly innocuous choice of writing poetry in blank verse, substantiating Milton's argument that poetical style indicated whether an age would be "carried away by custom" or could in some way recover its "ancient liberty" by writing epics in blank verse (Paradise Lost, 4). The conservative press, which mostly embraced the cultural demarcations of Dr. Johnson and company, indeed had been carried away by custom, a custom that was being challenged by 'vulgar' usage and themes, especially as they appeared in the "folk" ballad form. Writing in the "Preface," Wordsworth believed that the conservative literati was enforcing a disingenuous notion of ordinary life and common diction. Based on "the simple authority of a few individuals, or even of certain classes of men" (451), a poet therefore would be inclined to adopt the artificial language of extra-ordinary men in uncommon situations, if he hoped to please cultural watchdogs like Johnson and the monthly publications that supported this philosophy. Wordsworth proclaimed that his poems, by contrast, will be taken from "the life of our ordinary conversation" (449). But there was nothing ordinary about its impact. In due time, Lyrical Ballads would be considered by some to be a revolutionary text. Writing in A History of the English Language, N.F. Blake believes that Lyrical Ballads represented a radical departure from the customary concern with "'correct' usage" that began around 1660.

> We might date this period as continuing until the end of the eighteenth-century, and perhaps 1798, which saw the publication of the [sic] Lyrical Ballads, which could be regarded as a symbolic end-date. This collection of poetry attacked the idea of a prescriptive language for poetry and raised the concept that it should deal with "the real language of men." (13).

In terms of breaking from a tradition that devalued the language and the lives of the vulgar, the poems seem to pick up artistically where Paine had left off politically. In addition, the prefatory remarks to the poems seem to foreshadow much of what Cobbett attempted to do in his Grammar

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

regarding the superior discourse of the vulgar versus the inferior language of the leisure class. In effect, the Lyrical Ballads was a populist appeal for vulgar poetry, and Wordsworth is remarkably blunt about it in his prefatory statements.

Themes for the Common Man

As it turned out, the poems themselves would not disappoint any reader who shared his sentiments. Both the style and the subject matter were vulgar—in the democratic sense of the term.[4] One of the first poems in the volume is the "The Female Vagrant," told in the woman's own words. Many of the poems contained in the volume, in fact, give "voice" to a host of underclass characters who had remained largely speechless or even invisible in most prior poetic models. That Wordsworth was allowing the vulgar to speak at all was a remarkable turning point in the history of the genre. Thus, a literary turning point was coinciding with the political turning points of the 1790's. That the vulgar spoke in an articulate, moving way was virtually unprecedented. Wordsworth represented vulgar speech without condescension or hyperbole. The tale of the vagrant female is an "artless story told," as the narrator/Wordsworth describes it, laid out in straightforward words. Thematically, "The Female Vagrant," like so many of the poems, essentially depicts an unjust world divided by class. In the story, the woman recounts how the greed of the wealthy and the horrors of war—subtly indicating how the former is linked to the latter—inflict greater suffering upon an already downtrodden class of men and women, a theme that also recurs in much of Blake's work. As the narrative unfolds, the woman's downward spiral begins following the appearance of a wealthy landowner in her village. He builds a "mansion" and turns the independent cottage dwellers, like her father, into tenants, an allusion to the Enclosure Laws. Eventually, they become his "prey" once he charges exorbitant fees. Her father refuses payment, so the family must find new dwellings. What little they had is now lost, and the father dies a broken man. More sorrow soon follows, like the death of the woman's husband, and she wanders the countryside for three years. After she recounts her mournful tale, she begins to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

cry and turns away from the speaker, never to be heard from again. The poem ends without a cheerful resolution, but instead breaks off abruptly with "that perpetual weight which on her spirit lay" echoing in the reader's ear. Two months prior to the publication date of the first edition, the Anti-Jacobin ridiculed this kind of "Jacobin Poetry" for its political treatment of the poor. In its November, 1797 publication, it said about such poetry that,

> A human being, in the lowest state of penury and distress, is a treasure to a [poet] of this cast--He contemplates, he examines, he turns him in every possible light, with a view of extracting from the variety of his wretchedness, new topics of invective against the pride of property. He indeed (if he is a true Jacobin) refrains from 'relieving' the object of his compassionate contemplation; as well as knowing that every diminution from the general mass of human misery, must proportionally diminish the force of his argument. (qtd. in Roe, Wordsworth and Coleridge 138)

Literary characters taken from "low" life were considered radical alternatives to cultural convention. To write poems about the poor was to run the risk of being labeled a Jacobin, especially if the poems provided no redeeming conclusion. The Anti-Jacobin was very clear about this form of poetry, which at one and the same time appeared to flout both literary and social customs. According to the way in which the Anti-Jacobin defined a "true Jacobin" poet, Wordsworth wrote like one, for he indeed tried to shed some "light" on the plights of the poor, without sentimentalizing their situation with fairy-tale endings. The conservative press was ever on the look-out for signs of counter-culture subversion, for material that failed to paint the upper class as social benefactors or cultural leaders. On the other hand, Lyrical Ballads is replete with upper class figures, like the female vagrant's landlord, who *cause* destitution by displaying a "pride of property" that seems to be a feature of their class. In this small social world, Wordsworth is telescoping the dissenters' larger political arguments through personal tales of suffering that put a more human face on abstract social theories.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

This, in fact, is where Wordsworth parts company with many radicals of his day. Although he shared the Godwinian notion of moral reform, Wordsworth believed, like Shelley and Whitman after him, that poets rather than philosophers or politicians would become the world's social legislators; that is because poets could *move* men *emotionally* into action. Appeals to the intellect will never have the same results. Men will never be *reasoned* into behaving properly, or stirred by their intellects to regard all classes as equal. People are more likely to bond at the emotional level.

> What there is best in individual man,
> Of wise in passion and sublime in power,
> What there is strong and pure in household love,
> Benevolent in small societies,
> And great in large ones also, when called forth
> By great occasions—these were things of which
> I something knew; yet even these themselves,
> Felt deeply, were not thoroughly understood
> By reason. (Prelude, X: 666-675)

On the whole, humans are naturally good, but reason alone will not adequately grasp this truth. Poetry is more socially effective than political philosophy, according to Wordsworth, because of the "moral attachment" associated with the poet's ability to create empathy, as he stated in the "Preface" (434). If readers can be made to "feel" the sufferings of the poor through powerful poetic images, then they may be moved to treat the poor more justly and even decide to amend the situation. It must be pointed out, though, that Wordsworth's moral imperative is very different from Johnson's belief in the didactic function of literature. Johnson hoped that literature would make men gentlemen. Wordsworth expected that literature would cause people to treat the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"other" more gently. Wordsworth wanted society changed much as other leading radicals, though he simply differed with many on the means to that end.

Nevertheless, despite Wordsworth emphasizing the heart over the head when it came to improving society, he still shared the reformers' critique about the inequality of British society. In the compressed universe of the female vagrant, for instance, Wordsworth zeroes in on an argument presented by radicals like Paine: the wealthy "prey" upon the poor. What's more, the wealthy, by virtue of their wealth, are not morally superior, as the conservative literati had framed the debate. It may be that members of the leisure class are actually inferior compared to the poor. Greed corrupts the soul, interfering with moral behavior; fine dress and elegant diction mask cold hearts, as Harry Gill mysteriously learns in "Goody Blake and Harry Gill." But it's more than the heart that is clogged with indifference. Clearly anyone who would mistreat the "pious" and "honest" family found in "The Female Vagrant" must be irrational as well. The wealthy in Wordsworth's world don't possess fine intellects. Their intelligence goes towards acquiring more wealth. The testimony provided by the conservative literati regarding the moral and mental superiority of the ruling class is false. And it is not simply a matter of personal flaws. Their private sins cause widespread public ills. While the "Female Vagrant" is a tale of how the rich feed off of the poor, it is also the story of how war originates out of hierarchies.

In this matter, Wordsworth is aligned with many leading radicals, especially Paine, who contended throughout The Rights of Man that aristocratic governments to go to war in order to either amass more wealth or to hold onto the wealth they already possess. The poor inevitably suffer the most, Paine asserts. Wordsworth likewise wanted to exhibit the lopsided injustices suffered by the poor during times of war, a theme on full display in "The Pedlar and the Ruined Cottage" (a poem incorporated into Book I of The Excursion), and a subject much on Wordsworth's mind when he wrote "The Female Vagrant." In a letter to Francis Wrangham (20 November 1795) Wordsworth remarked about the purpose of the poem: "Its object is partly to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

expose the vices of the penal law and the calamities of war as they affect individuals" (Letters). Later, he stated more emphatically that those individuals tended to be from the lower ranks. After considerable revision, Wordsworth incorporated many aspects of "The Female Vagrant" into a longer poem Guilt and Sorrow, first published in 1842. Even then, when Wordsworth presumably abandoned his leftist beliefs, he mentioned the affects of war on the poor. In the "Advertisement, Prefixed to the First Edition" of Guilt and Sorrow, he commented about the "calamities" of war "to which, more than other classes of men, the poor are subject" (qtd. in Hayden 506). Coming upon the "heels of war," as the vagrant retells her story in the original poem, is a "dog-like" existence that adds "disease and famine" to an already miserable existence, initially set in motion by a wealthy landowner. The connection between the two events casts an ugly shadow over the entire story. In a sense, Wordsworth provides a poetic backdrop for the political argument that the private wants of the rich turn into social habits that wreck the lives of less economically powerful individuals. It is a common theme running throughout the text.

This disparity between rich and poor is particularly apparent in "Goody Blake and Harry Gill," the poem Wordsworth highlighted in both the 1798 "Advertisement" and the "Preface" to the second edition, as well as the piece he wanted Fox to notice for being representative of the volume's commentary on British society. In the "Advertisement" Wordsworth claims that the story is based on a "well authenticated fact," although it reads more like an early version of magical realism. In it, Harry Gill is a member of the leisure class who has no "lack" of possessions, including enough "fine" waistcoats to "smother nine." Goody Blake, on the other hand, goes to bed each night hungry and shivering from the cold. Her only solace is to sneak into the yard of Harry Gill and gather some branches from his hedge grove to fuel her meager fire. One day Gill, another one of Wordsworth's wealthy landowners, violently confronts the very "old and poor" Goody Blake while she is gathering wood from his property. He chases her away, and the old woman, "thinly clad," shuffles back to her "poor dwelling." But after he turns a cold

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

shoulder on her, Harry becomes perpetually cold himself: "He never will be warm again." Apparently, Harry's cold-hearted attitude towards this poor woman has ripped through his body and made him as physically cold as Goody Blake. Harry mystically gets his just deserts.

Once more, outward elegance does not automatically constitute internal attributes. In the "Preface" to the second edition, Wordsworth explains that the poem may strike the reader as "the rudest of this collection" (450). But he does not mean rude in the same sense of what might be customarily associated with the word. Instead, Wordsworth divests the word of its traditional meaning to suggest that a rude tale is loaded with artifice. Wordsworth suspects that the poem's fantastic denouement will seem artificially designed, the very unnatural constructs he longs to avoid. After all, if the story seemed too unreal a reader might be less inclined to be stirred by the destitute condition of Goody or horrified by what happens to Harry. This poem, like many of the others, has a social purpose. It relies on the reader to either look more favorably upon the Goody Blakes of the world and/or refrain from lapsing into an insensitive condition like Harry Gill. Wordsworth pointed out to Fox that the poems, especially "Goody Blake," "in some small degree enlarge our feelings of reverence for our species...by showing that our best qualities are possessed by men whom we are too apt to consider, not with reference to the points in which they resemble us, but to those in which they manifestly differ from us" (Letters). The poem pays homage to the indigent "other" and expects each reader to turn a more humanistic eye towards the dispossessed. Each individual has a duty to treat his opposite as equals. Individuals must not look upon the poor with derision. But a duty to the poor goes beyond individuals. Society owes the lower orders greater respect as well. As such, other poems in the volume enlarge the scope of responsibility.

In "The Old Cumberland Beggar" Wordsworth wants the *government* to view the poor with a greater degree of reverence. It's not enough, at least in this poem, for individuals to treat others as equals. Politicians also must change their attitude towards the lower orders if the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

squalid conditions of the poor are to be rectified. As in so many of the other poems stocked in the volume, Wordsworth sets out to prove that even the poorest of the poor warrant consideration as valuable members of English society. Moreover, Wordsworth appears to be dealing with a social distinction which separated paupers from beggars and vagrants. Apparently, paupers, though wretched, were not despised by respectable folk, whereas paupers and beggars offended the upper classes and were not part of the "worthy poor" (Braudel 506-7). Wordsworth wanted to depict the poorest of the poor as worthwhile members of society. So, while the old man looks "worn out and worthless," sunk "so low" as to seem socially irrelevant, he remains connected to the more primary elements of human society. Being materially impoverished does not mean that the beggar's life is devoid of substance.

> . . . the poorest poor
> Long for some moments in a weary life
> When they can know and feel that they have been,
> Themselves, the fathers and the dealers-out
> Of some small blessings; have been kind to such
> As needed kindness ...

This call for generous identification with the poor is a self-evident truth in Wordsworth's mind because "we have all of us one human heart." All men are created equal, and all men possess the same capacity for human kindness. Wordsworth reaffirms the idea that humans can assert their attachments at a more essential level, the essential equality of all human souls.

Even Wordsworth's idea of himself as a poet is rooted in this democratic attachment of people. Wordsworth, the poet, is no different than Wordsworth the man, who is no different than other men. "What is a Poet?" he asks in the "Preface," and "what language is to be expected from him?" His answer, which seems to foreshadow Walt Whitman's "Preface" to Leaves of Grass, is that, "He is a man speaking to men" (441). Wordsworth believed that he was part of the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

brotherhood of man, not a-part from it, as many contemporary rhetoricians claim with respect to Romantic discourse. Wordsworth neither saw himself as a transcendental artist who needed to escape from the ravages of human history in order to write more purely, nor did he turn his back on the problems confronting his society with the hope that the muse might inspire grand, timeless themes. Perhaps Wordsworth may have believed too strongly in his poetic powers to transform society. As naïve as it seems, Wordsworth believed that he, the Poet of Sensibility, could play an imaginative role in improving society if certain self-evident truths were properly rendered, thereby touching a heart-felt chord in his readers, a task Whitman expected to fulfill as America's democratic poet fifty years later. Never, for a moment, does Wordsworth see his position as a writer standing outside of the social arena. The goal of Lyrical Ballads, clearly marked out in the "Preface," was nothing short of the secular redemption of society. Change for Wordsworth was possible once trivial distinctions were broken down and replaced with a greater appreciation of the virtues shared by all. One aspect of that project included an assault on the aristocracy's creation of contrived distinctions, "part of a covert program of cultural warfare against established moral and political powers as well as literary ones" (Johnston, The Hidden Wordsworth 737). Any society could therefore liberate itself from its divisive ritual of class/ification once it embraced the idea that "one human heart" bound even a beggar to its union.

Furthermore, Wordsworth's faith in this credo allows him to express two ideas at once: first, that the "old mendicant" is fundamentally no different than the most refined gentleman; second, that the ruling class might be stirred emotionally to recognize the spirituality in all members of society and act accordingly, despite the *appearance* of differences. The ruling establishment, particularly, must be made aware of this *natural* fact because they are too prone to abuse and devalue the lower orders for being culturally different.

> But deem not this Man useless—Statesmen! Ye

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Who are so restless in your wisdom, ye
Who have a broom still ready in your hands
To rid the world of nuisances; ye proud,
Heart-swoln, while in your pride ye contemplate
Your talents, power, or wisdom, deem him not
A burden of the earth! 'Tis Nature's law
That none, the meanest of created things,
Of forms created the most vile and brute,
The dullest or most noxious, should exist
Divorced from good—a spirit and pulse of good,
A life and soul, to every mode of being
Inseparably linked....

Simple forms, imposed artificially at superficial levels, are no match against "Nature's law," which demands that universal qualities must be taken into account when assessing social worth. But Wordsworth's attempt to topple unnatural social distinctions in Lyrical Ballads actually represented a scaled-down version of a much larger plan to deal with this subject. While Wordsworth was writing Lyrical Ballads, he was simultaneously grappling with his magnum opus, The Recluse.

A Prelude to an Unfinished Project

The history behind The Recluse is complicated, especially since it also involves the equally tangled chronology of Wordsworth's efforts to complete equally ambitious portions of that work. Envisioned metaphorically as a cathedral, with ample chambers and recesses erected within the larger structure, Wordsworth intended the work to consist of three parts, with an additional prefatory poem. The first part of The Recluse is represented by only one book, Home at Grasmere, first published in 1888. The Excursion, the second part, was the only portion of The

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Recluse to be completed and the only one to be published in Wordsworth's lifetime (1814). Part three was never written at all. The Prelude, published posthumously in 1850, was conceived as the preamble, or the "portico," to The Recluse. In large measure, the driving force behind the *idea* of creating The Recluse was Coleridge's. He insisted that a great modern philosophical poem needed to be addressed to idealistic intellectuals who had become cynical and disaffected by the course of the French Revolution, including the strains caused within radical circles by the government's successful reactionary tactics. Coleridge was responding specifically to Thelwall's pamphlet of 1796, The Rights of Nature, in which Thelwall lamented about the failures of his own political and intellectual causes (Roe, The Politics of Nature 4-6). Thelwall's pamphlet, and his despondent retirement from politics, probably were uppermost in Coleridge's mind when he wrote to Wordsworth in September, 1799 about a far-reaching plan to address the issue. "My dear friend," he began:

> I wish you would write a poem in blank verse, addressed to those, who, in consequence of the complete failure of the French Revolution have thrown up all hopes of amelioration of mankind, and are sinking into an almost epicurean selfishness, disguising the same under the soft titles of domestic attachment and contempt for visionary philosophes. It would do great good. (Letters, i. 527).

Thus, the purpose of The Recluse, which Wordsworth always kept before him, was marked by its urgency to address contemporary social and political issues. The Recluse, in effect, originated from a desire to encourage radicals that there was still reason to hope that the best laid plans for reforming society could still be realized. It was an incredibly challenging enterprise, both in its scope and design, reaching way beyond the aims of Lyrical Ballads.

Nonetheless, Wordsworth's approach to this formidable task did not deviate from his treatment of social issues or cultural categories in Lyrical Ballads. While the overall range of the project was enormous, he remained unwavering in his belief that "ordinary language" was the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

most suitable mode of discourse for an artist to follow, as he noted in the supplementary essay attached to the "Preface" of The Excursion (478). In addition, he insisted that his mission included "breaking the bonds of custom, in overcoming the prejudices of false refinement" (477). Once again, just as he had done in the 1800 "Preface," custom is held up as a misguided construct, with its reliance on artificial cultivation. After more than a decade, Wordsworth continued to jab at the standard-bearers of cultural tradition, like Lowth and Monboddo. He had even more to say regarding Johnson's efforts to regulate cultural affairs.

By 1814, Wordsworth focused almost exclusively on Boswell's Life of Johnson and Johnson's countless comments about what encompassed valuable literature. No doubt Wordsworth was well aware of the unique position Johnson held posthumously as England's major critic, along with being a guiding voice in helping to shape the opinions of other critics. Perhaps Wordsworth felt even more compelled than he was in 1800 to whittle away at Johnson's reputation. He certainly tried, for Wordsworth devotes more space in the "Essay, Supplementary" to attacking Johnson's credibility as a critic and literary scholar than he did in the "Preface" to Lyrical Ballads. For instance, what "appears from Boswell's Life" is that Johnson is "in the habit of thinking and speaking contemptuously" about Milton's literary output largely because of Milton's political positions. Wordsworth argues that Johnson committed a "gross mistake" by equating Milton's "political and religious opinions" with his literary achievements, testifying to the way in which the arbiters of cultural "taste" are driven by their political biases. Johnson is therefore a "careless" critic who sets literary standards in order to garner a political agenda (200). According to Wordsworth, Johnson suffers from a severe case of unchecked pretentiousness whose inflated sense of his own worth as a critic actually deflates his ability to recognize the magnitude of even Paradise Lost: "How amusing to shape to one's self such a critique as a Wit of Charles's days, or a Lord of the Miscellanies or trading Journalist of King Williams's time, would have brought forth, if he had set his faculties industriously to work upon

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

this Poem, everywhere impregnated with original excellence" (201). Wordsworth seeks to paint Johnson as someone who is so busy bowing before aristocratic circles, or trying to become the Court's Critic-at-large, that he is incapable of seeing past his upturned nose. Wordsworth is equally astonished with Johnson's Lives of the Poets, which includes "writers utterly worthless and useless" (209). He wonders how anyone could take Johnson's judgment seriously since Johnson is foolish enough to begin a catalogue of British poetry with Cowley rather than Chaucer: "We open the volume of Prefatory Lives, and to our astonishment the *first* name we find is that of Cowley!--What is become of the morning star of English Poetry? [Chaucer]" (208).

More than a decade after finding Johnson a "contemptible" poet and critic, Wordsworth continued to peck away at his reputation: Johnson needed to be knocked down a few pegs once he became the most outspoken voice for aristocratic culture. As late as 1814, then, Wordsworth was still hoping to counteract Johnson's enormous cultural. Perhaps by 1814 Wordsworth was softening on his earlier radicalism, but he certainly did not retreat from taking a strong position in the social battles of his time, a position that clearly placed him in opposition to the conservative literati and the champions of tradition. In large part, the plan behind The Recluse emerged out of a desire to be *the* definitive statement within that struggle, with the promise that it would not only address radical causes but might even stifle the leisure class from measuring, monitoring, and manipulating British culture. And, once more, much of the poetry itself lived up to the billing. Some aspects of The Recluse featured the same social issues raised in Lyrical Ballads.

For example, "The Ruined Cottage," which was incorporated into Book I of The Excursion, bears some resemblance to "The Female Vagrant" and "The Old Cumberland Beggar." All three strike a sad note of social protest, with the "Ruined Cottage" making a strong case against the unjust treatment of the vulgar and the unfair assessment of their speech. The "Ruined Cottage" begins with the speaker/poet encountering an old pedlar who he has known

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

since childhood. In time, the pedlar recounts the sad story of Margaret, a woman, like the female vagrant, whose life was ravaged by war. Although the pedlar breathes the "piercing air of poverty," he is portrayed as being among that unheralded class of people whom Gray eulogized in "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard." By all conventional standards, the pedlar *appears* "poor and plain," but he possesses a great deal of wisdom and knows "essential and eternal" truths. In truth, he is a philosopher king who remains undiscovered because of his social rank. He is also accustomed to "speak a plainer language" than might normally be ascribed to such an intelligent person. Unfortunately, men like the pedlar, too busy and unlearned, pass through life unnoticed because the leisure class—"the unthinking Masters of the earth"—pay no attention to people like him. Because of his lowly station, his words will never be part of that permanent record cherished by the nobility; it must therefore perish with other things unworthy of preservation. But while cultural policemen like Johnson find nothing valuable in someone like the pedlar, the speaker/poet/Wordsworth reveres the man for his simple grace. He is a diamond in the rough.

> Oh! Many are the Poets that are sown
> By nature, men endued with highest gifts,
> The vision and the faculty divine,
> Yet wanting the accomplishment of verse
> And never being led by accident
> Or circumstance to take unto the height
> By estimate comparative, at least,
> The measure of themselves, live out their time
> Husbanding that which they possess within
> And go to the grave unthought of. Strongest minds
> Are often those of which the noisy world

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Hears least, else, surely, this Man had not left,

And sundry others, too, whom I have known,

His graces unrevealed and unproclaimed.

Though born in low estate, and earning bread

By a low calling, yet this very Man

Was as the prime and choice of sterling minds:

I honored him, respected, nay, revered.

Wordsworth emphasizes how "accident or circumstance" plays an all too significant role in the way society judges individuals. It is an arbitrary field of measurement that fails to appropriately assess those "sundry others" who possess unnoticed talents or attributes. Because of the accident of their births, and the opportunities never afforded to them, the "low" are never given their due. If the masters of social policy could set aside their biases by ignoring obvious physical differences, then more profound similarities between the classes would emerge.

Moreover, Wordsworth is countering the conservative literati's argument that the plain language of the pedlar indicates his level of intellectual development or the depth of his moral bearing. Therefore, a reckoning must take place, and it is the poet's/Wordsworth's task to unearth this exemplary life and bring it to light: "And something that may serve to set in view/The doings, observations, which his life/Had dealt with, I will here record in verse." Such a proclamation may seem commonplace now, but up until then literature *typically* dealt with the extra-ordinary—gods and the supernatural, princes and the court, knights and the quest. For Wordsworth to record the seemingly unheroic life of such a lowly figure, and celebrate his plain language, was a radical departure from the norm, again disproving modern rhetoricians who claim that Romantic rhetoric deliberately disengaged itself from political issues. Wordsworth, in fact, had plunged an ordinary man into the stream of history. Although "The Ruined Cottage" represents a fraction of what Wordsworth had in mind when he began his monumental

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

undertaking, it "provides clear evidence of what the idea of The Recluse meant to Wordsworth in composition" (Johnston, Wordsworth and the Recluse 19).

Of course, Wordsworth's entire plan remained unfinished, causing some critics to insist that Wordsworth's failure to complete The Recluse partly proves his own disenchantment with social reform. In addition, the most famous "book" from that project, The Prelude, which eventually sealed Wordsworth's reputation as a major English poet, was not published during his lifetime, eventually becoming better known as an autobiographical project rather than as a piece of social commentary. Critics also contend that The Prelude demonstrates Wordsworth's shift from a mimetic to an expressive theory of language that emphasizes the personal over the social. But Wordsworth's decision not to publish The Prelude during his lifetime—and especially in 1807—had a great deal to do with his increasing fears of its reception at a time of heightened political persecution and slander, especially the foreboding trial and imprisonment of Gilbert Wakefield and his publisher, Joseph Johnson, in 1799. Johnson's career in publishing came to a crashing halt, and Wakefield, who emerged from prison physically broken, died a short time after his release in 1801, indicating that radicals often had to pay for their political views with their very lives. Added to this was the chilly reception of the second edition of Lyrical Ballads by the established press that branded Wordsworth as a Jacobin poet. (Smith 204-8). By the time he had completed The Prelude, Wordsworth was already politically tainted. If Wordsworth had published it during the war with Napoleon, or in the postwar years, when a second wave of official intolerance for reform took place, he would have awakened, like Byron, to find himself famous—but for all of the wrong reasons. Unlike Byron, Wordsworth would have been more infamous than famous if he went ahead with its publication, further validating the suspicions of some of his readers that he was a revolutionary (Johnston, The Hidden Wordsworth 834-7).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Thus, because Wordsworth withheld his own work precisely because it was such a politically risky document, The Prelude did not mark his regression into a solipsistic mode of discourse, fueled by a desire to turn away from politics or history. Although it is true that The Prelude focuses on the growth of the poet's mind, it does so by examining the position of the poet *within* society. Wordsworth is therefore uninterested in a politics of poetry that seeks to transcend the real world, or to be among "The playfellows of fancy" who consider it their "right/To wield" their craft beyond the flesh and blood of existence (X. 710-16). Instead, the poet should be preoccupied with the material world: "Not in Utopia—subterraneous fields,/Or some secreted island, heaven knows where—/But in the very world which is the world/Of all of us, the place in which, in the end,/We find our happiness, or not at all" (X. 723-727 As a result, The Prelude contains a series of vignettes on the major social issues of the day, including Wordsworth's explanation of choosing to champion the vulgar in his work.

Picking up on Coleridge's wish that he write a philosophic poem, Wordsworth begins The Prelude by declaring that he hopes to fashion an epic that focuses on the every day rather than the fantastic: "My last and favorite aspiration—then/I yearn towards some philosophic song/Of truth that cherishes our daily life,/With meditations passionate from deep/Recesses in man's heart, immortal verse" (I. 229-32). What matters most to Wordsworth is recording the common experiences of common men and women, who, it turns out, think and feel as deeply as any heroic archetype found in literature. Wordsworth wants his audience to re-examine ordinary life by embracing the extraordinary in the ordinary. Put more simply, The Prelude is an affirmation of the worth of the common man and common language.

> I love a public road; few sights there are
> That please me more--
> . . . .
> Surrounded too the wanderers of the earth—

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Grandeur as much, and loveliness far more.
Awed have I been by strolling bedlamites;
From many other uncouth vagrants, passed
In fear, have walked with quicker step—but why
Take note of this? When I began to inquire,
To watch and question those I met, and held
Familiar talk with them, the lonely roads
Were schools to me in which I daily read
With most delight the passions of mankind,
There saw into the depth of human souls—
Souls that appear to have no depth at all
To vulgar eyes.... (XII. 145-168)

In part, Wordsworth advances this idea by reversing many of the customary assumptions of the polite culture who frequently decided what was socially and culturally viable. Replicating his approach in Lyrical Ballads, Wordsworth inverts cultural buzz-words as part of a strategy to discredit conservative cultural categories. This vision into the universal heart takes the reader outside the customary framework of what constitutes vulgar and polite society. Wordsworth draws on the tradition of classifying the classes in order to renounce the very system of classification itself. The word "vulgar" is positioned in the above passage as a way of turning the cultural table around, thereby condemning the senselessness and vulgarity of polite society. In turn, the lives of *the* vulgar are portrayed as noble: "There I heard,/From mouths of lowly men and of obscure,/A tale of honour—sounds in unison/With loftiest promises of good and fair" (181-4). Wordsworth also rearranges conservative assumptions about the differences between the classes when he writes:

There are who think that strong affections, love

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Known by whatever name, is falsely deemed
A gift (to use a term which they would use)
Of vulgar Nature—that its growth requires
Retirement, leisure, language purified
By manners thoughtful and elaborate—
That whoso feels such passion in excess
Must live within the very light and air
Of elegances that are made by man. (185-193)

Here, as elsewhere, Wordsworth rejects claims by Johnson and other cultural guardians regarding the virtues of the leisure class and the vices of common people. Much of The Prelude, then, can be read as ancillary to The Rights of Man. Both Paine and Wordsworth refute customary suppositions that aligned the lower classes with weak discourse, irresolute minds, and loose morals.

Further, in The Prelude Wordsworth takes issue with the conservative emphasis on book learning. At times, Wordsworth even considers book learning a deterrence to a *natural* understanding of the equality of worth of the common man. Being classically educated should not automatically connote social or cultural entitlement. Of course, Wordsworth is by no means completely adverse to books. Reading "good books, though few" (XII. 243), he admits, is essential in acquiring knowledge about mankind, but an excessive dependency upon book learning causes someone like Johnson to favor the dead over the living, "fed/By the dead letter, not the spirit of things" (VIII. 431-2). Wordsworth prefers to view man not as an abstraction but as a living thing: "I looked for universal things, perused/The common countenance of earth and heaven" (III. 110-11). Wordsworth found poetic inspiration not from reading books but instead from studying human nature, and once he committed himself to reading the living rather than the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

dead, he discovered a democratic theme—the common man—and a democratic discourse—plain language.

> That also I must then have exercised
> Upon the vulgar forms of present things
> And actual world of our familiar days,
> A higher power—have caught from them a tone,
> An image, and a character, by books
> Not hitherto reflected. Call we this
> . . . .
> That in life's everyday appearances
> I seemed about this period to have sight
> Of a new world—a world, too, that was fit
> To be transmitted and made visible
> To other eyes, as having for its base
> That whence our dignity originates,
> That which both gives it being, and maintains
> A balance, an ennobling interchange
> Of action from within and from without
> The excellence, pure spirit, and best power (XII. 360-78)

The problem with books, in Wordsworth's opinion, is that those "who have the art/To manage books" (V. 373-4) frequently manage to depict the vulgar as corrupt, impure, and powerless. Inevitably, what is naturally common to all men in society is divided into unequal parts. To make matters worse, books are written by a certain class of men for a certain class of readers. The restricted range of book production and consumption, according to Wordsworth, tended to compress the book trade for the gratification of the elite at the expense of a broader

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

view of mankind. On the whole, books benefit the leisure class, and the leisure class all too often perpetuated social divisions in the production of texts because it served their own best interests. Common themes are therefore either deliberately ignored or benignly neglected. As Wordsworth wandered down those public roads, he realized that common men and vulgar themes were unmentionables in traditional discourse because the leisure class traditionally controlled the outcome.

> Yes, in those wanderings deeply did I feel
> How we mislead each other, above all
> How books mislead us—looking for their fame
> To judgements of the wealthy few, who see
> By artificial lights—how they debase
> The many for the pleasure of those few,
> Effeminately level down the truth
> To certain general notions for the sake
> Of being understood at once, or else
> Through want of better knowledge in the men
> Who frame them, flattering thus our self-conceit
> With pictures that ambitiously set forth
> The differences, the outside marks by which
> Society has parted man from man,
> Neglectful of the universal heart. (XII. 205-219)

Long before post-modern theorists began critiquing the way in which personal perceptions are drafted by social forces, Wordsworth recognized that the "truth" is often manufactured by "those few" who can "frame" the argument with biased "pictures." He understood that "our puny boundaries are things/Which we perceive, and not which we have made" (II. 223-4). Our

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

perceptions, then, are social constructs, and those constructions are frequently set in motion by a minority of a minority of the population. Clearly, Wordsworth did not view himself—or anyone—standing outside of society, nor did he assume that as an artist he could transcend social determinants, as many modern rhetoricians argue. If anything, Wordsworth realized certain social forces were more influential than others in shaping individual consciousness. After reading Johnson's "Preface" or Lowth's Grammar, it is easy to see how the leisure class "parted man from man" and why Wordsworth is distrustful of an enterprise dominated by "the wealthy few."

Wordsworth is equally suspicious about the importance of formal education for the very same reasons. As a student at Cambridge, he witnessed an alarming amount of "Folly and False-seeming" (III. 410) that sapped the natural inquisitiveness out of a student like himself. Cambridge seemed to be a "gaudy" (459) showcase where students competed for titles and privileges, and, like the figure slouched over his books in "The Tables Turned," the students lost sight of the concrete world. In his description of his time spent there, Wordsworth presents a rather gloomy picture, a place where he felt stifled and was rarely inspired. On the whole, Cambridge was the institutional equivalent of what Wordsworth found so unappealing about the conservative model of language in society—style was more highly honored than substance. And, just as Paine ridiculed Burke for being a carnival showman, Wordsworth repeatedly refers to Cambridge with theatrical images; as in, "the first glitter of the show was passed" (III. 94), or, "that inferior exhibition, played/By wooden images, a theatre" (607-8), and, a "spectacle" (623) so preoccupied with propriety and tradition that it chokes the natural learning process:

> And Decency and Custom starving Truth,
> And blind Authority beating with his staff
> The child that might have led him; Emptiness
> Followed as of good omen, and meek Worth
> Left to itself unheard of and unknown. (639-43)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Even a pedagogy rooted in custom, Wordsworth warns, marks a reckless approach to a student's needs, especially if those traditions are empty showpieces.

Wordsworth seems generally distrustful of formal education because it mirrors the leisure class's obsession with formal correctness rather than experiential authenticity. Given the choice between formalist education and actual experience, Wordsworth probably would have opted for the latter, since what could be universally embraced was demonstrated in common, everyday experiences. Even while he attended prestigious Cambridge, Wordsworth "looked for universal things" (110), but instead mostly discovered "The surfaces of artificial life/And manners finely spun" (590-1). Cambridge was everything that Johnson or Monboddo would consider culturally viable. But for Wordsworth, a "reverence for the glorious dead" appeared "visibly entombed" (344-6) inside a suffocating deference to traditionalism. As might be expected, Wordsworth's ideal school reflects his overall social vision: a school should be a republic engaged in simple, common pursuits—it "Should be a healthy sound simplicity,/A seemly plainness—name it as you will,/Republican, or pious" (405-7).

In its initial stages, The French Revolution seemed to offer the possibility that republicanism would spread throughout Europe, for "if France prospered good men would not long" wait to embrace liberty in all of its forms (X. 223). Much of Wordsworth's early faith in the French Revolution is expressed during a conversation with Beaupuy, the Chief of Staff in the Republican army during the civil war in the Vendee. Wordsworth encounters Beaupuy while traveling in France immediately following the fall of the Bastille, a period in history that Wordsworth believed inaugurated a golden age of democratic reform: "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive" (X.692). And what he and Beaupuy found so appealing about the French Revolution was that it looked like its radical politics might sweep aside centuries of European customs that benefited the aristocracy against the masses. Central to Wordsworth were the affairs of state that affected the lower orders.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> . . . I with him believed
> Devoutly that a spirit was abroad
> Which could not be withstood, that poverty
> At least like this, would in little time
> Be found no more, that we should see the earth
> Unthwarted in her wish to recompense
> The industrious, and the lowly child of toil,
> All institutes forever blotted out
> That legalized exclusion, empty pomp
> Abolished, sensual state and cruel power,
> Whether by edict of the one or few—
> And finally, as sum and crown of all,
> Should see the people having a strong hand
> In making their own laws, whence better days
> To all mankind.... (X. 520-34)

Comparable to his earlier position in Lyrical Ballads, Wordsworth here in The Prelude "crowns" the industrious poor with social legitimacy. On the other hand, state authority is maligned for its perverse harshness, all the while masquerading under a cloak of rules and legality. Wordsworth concurred with Paine that the aristocracy's argument for being the most socially viable class was based on the ill-conceived importance of custom and tradition. Preventing the masses from self-determination and excluding them from participating in the organization of society could be traced back to an unnatural system of classification that separated one class of men from another, in "which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways/Of custom, law, and statute" (X. 694-5) prohibited a more equitable society. Whether customs and laws existed at the literary level, or whether laws and statutes existed at the political level, Wordsworth attached more importance to the natural

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

rights of the common man. By vindicating the language of the lower orders and advancing their social significance, Wordsworth continued to place himself at the center of the era's cultural wars, which were imbedded in the era's political wars as well. In this way, he faced the grisly details of history and society rather than evading them, as many contemporary rhetoricians argue.

Wordsworth's *historical* Romanticism is evidenced by many of the era's major developments appearing in The Prelude. The government's harsh reactionary tactics, for example, "perfidiously" "undermine/Justice, and make an end of liberty" (X. 655-6). Wordsworth denounces Pitt and others "who ruled the state" for behaving like "vermin" as "they leagued/Their strength" (647-9) in order to curtail radical causes. Wordsworth also condemned the legitimacy of the slave trade—"those traffickers in negro blood" (206)—which was eventually prohibited in 1807. In addition, Wordsworth doubts the social utility of the age's other epochal event, the industrial revolution, and questions political economists who bank on industrial capitalism's ability to make all boats rise on a wave of prosperity. For Wordsworth, the "utter hollowness" of such "modern statists" generates a "false philosophy" that further idolizes the rich in society and demeans the poor (XII.76-9). "The wealth of nations," Wordsworth claims, referring to the most influential of eighteenth-century "statists," Adam Smith, should not be measured according to where that wealth is "lodged, and how increased" (780-1), any more than cultural or social excellence should be predicated on the wealthiest class. By focusing exclusively on the social value of monetary wealth, Wordsworth fears that "those who live/By bodily labour, labour far exceeding/Their due proportion" will succumb "under all the weight/Of that injustice" which divides one economic class from the other. In Wordsworth's estimation, political economists like Adam Smith are packaging well-being into yet one more "abstraction" (85) that divides people into classifications that ignore "real worth" (99). Wordsworth consistently resisted any attempt to separate people into categories, whether they appeared in the form of customary linguistic models or nascent economic matrixes. Even though The Prelude

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

focuses on the growth of an individual mind, Wordsworth regularly looked outward towards the social and political forces that shape private consciousness and often influenced the *image* of one class of men from another.

Even Wordsworth's alleged obsession with *nature* can be examined as a feature of his times. For both Wordsworth and Paine, nature is the opposite of unnaturally imposed aristocratic customs. At the turn of the nineteenth-century, nature, politics, and personal freedom were inseparable. Nature and political revolution were two ideals that sustained each other. After all, the belief in *natural rights* propelled the American and French Revolutions (Roe, The Politics of Nature). Following France's Reign of Terror, the left's disenchantment with politics, and the Napoleonic wars, Wordsworth claims in Books XI and XII that his confidence in himself and humankind was restored when he reconnected the natural world to what is naturally and universally held in common by all men in society. Wordsworth "The Nature Poet" is essentially the poet continuously concerned with the nature of man in society. By looking at nature or what is natural to all men in society, Wordsworth is forcing the reader to focus on the flesh and blood of human existence rather than viewing mankind as a distant abstraction. His poems and statements act as devices of recognition and inclusion, in sharp contrast to Johnson's or Monboddo's exclusionary arguments. Wordsworth promotes a respect for the voices and the rights of others, reminding his readers that *the other* has both rights and complexity.

Romantic Visions

But Wordsworth's vision of a more just society was shared by other major Romantics. In addition, a critique of aristocratic customs was a common feature of Romantic work, especially William Blake who believed that the oppressive authority of church and state hindered personal freedom. Therefore, for contemporary rhetoricians to claim that Romanticism is a an a-historical or a-political literary movement that deliberately avoided politics or social issues, or that Wordsworth longed to attain poetic purity by escaping from politics—the 'typical' Romantic

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

response to social ills—is a misconception. It should be apparent that the Romantics were engaged with the issues confronting their changing society. Romanticism was thus a *product* of and agent in history, not a special literary genre that attempted to escape from it.

In Byron's Age of Bronze, for instance, he attacks wealthy landowners who benefited the most from the enclosure laws, the very same class of men who simultaneously gobbled up territories overseas . E.P. Thompson points out that Parliamentary laws heavily favored the rich who were rewarded with the most acreage when land once held in common was distributed according to "common rights." Parliament maintained that the lands were dispersed fairly among numerous members of a community, but the facts indicate otherwise. In Barton-on-Humber, ten landowners acquired eighty one percent of the 6,000 acres enclosed, while 116 people procured the remaining nineteen percent (Working Class 213-220). Byron points out in the Age of Bronze that once "the landed interests" had obtained common land, combined with their already disproportionate holdings, they had a virtual land monopoly that enabled them to charge exorbitant rents—"Blood, sweat, and tear-wrung millions - why? for rent!" (Complete Poetical Works 176). And while the upper class was squeezing the lower orders at home, they were practicing similar policies abroad. In their overseas conquests—"from Indus to the pole"—the aristocracy was simply duplicating its domestic acts of confiscation. Although aristocratic greed, Byron adds, is an offense that dates back to ancient civilizations, "Whose game was empires, and whose stakes are thrones" (170), capital accumulation added a new twist to empire building. England was developing into a *modern* empire, meaning that conquest now could be brokered by the growing power of capital formation: "The banker, broker, baron, brethren speed/To aid these bankrupt tyrants in their need" (177). Of course, the *new* empire that is built by "banks and dividends" (177) is remarkably akin to ancient ones, for all empires are erected "with the natives' gore" (173), ultimately enhancing the wealth of the wealthiest class. Byron cleverly connected the objectives behind the enclosure laws to the pursuance of "foreign wealth" (174), blaming the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

propertied and monied classes for creating both national and international misery in order to stuff their coiffeurs. Byron shared Wordsworth's skepticism that the Age of Capitalism signified the dawning of a golden age in human progress. It appeared that capital was becoming another tool for despots and the upper class to amass even greater fortunes and enslave an even greater number of people.

From the very beginning of his literary career, Byron incorporated politics and history into his work, and he repeatedly attacked tyrannical forces gathering strength around the globe. Childe Harold, the poem that brought Byron instantaneous success in 1812, opens in Spain, heralding the efforts of the freedom fighters who opposed the Napoleonic yoke. In its own right, however, England was equally responsible for squashing this popular movement. Byron mocks the Convention of Cintra treaty that ended any chances of restoring Spain to independence. Despite a striking victory in 1808 against French forces, England agreed to an armistice that allowed France to control the region: "And ever since that martial synod met,/Britannia sickens, Cintra! at thy name" (185) Cintra, to radicals like Byron, instituted modern European diplomacy that contained libertarian uprisings as a way to maintain aristocratic regimes, later culminating at the Congress of Vienna which restored the Bourbon dynasty in France and other monarchies throughout Europe. In 1809, Wordsworth had published his own indictment against the new world order, "The Convention of Cintra" tract, supporting the insurrection by the Iberians against the French and, at the time, advising the King not to sign it. But Spain was not the only region radicals had pinned their hopes on for achieving independence. In Canto II, Byron draws a comparison between the glory of ancient Greece to its present state of subjection under the Ottoman Empire. Greece had become the inspiration of international liberalism, and 'philhellenism' played a significant role in rallying the European left in the 1820's (Hobsbawn 145). That included organized support for the Greeks and the migration of numerous volunteer fighters, including Byron himself, who died there in 1824. The

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

avowedly Hellenistic strain of much of Shelley's poetry, including his most famous work, Prometheus Unbound, can be attributed in part to the historical importance of the Greek cause. Byron repeats the case for Greek independence in Canto III of Don Juan, a poem so politically topical that an historical atlas of the period is required for a full understanding of its scope.

Byron defined his all-embracing epic as a "satire on abuses of the present states of society" (Letters). As in The Age of Bronze, Byron attacks financiers for their growing power and their stake in empire building. Byron notes that "the true Lords of Europe" are the banking titans, Rothschild and Baring, who appear to "hold the balance of the world" (XII. 5) with their financial holdings. But more than anything else, Don Juan is marked by its anti-militarism, a literary equivalent to Paine's argument in The Rights of Man that wars can be attributed to aristocratic governments that seek to enrich themselves at the expense of all other classes. "War," in Paine's opinion, "is the common harvest of all those who participate in the division and expenditure of public money" (77). To many leading radicals like Paine, the history of elitist leadership is a chronicle of bloodshed and oppression. In Don Juan, Byron records much of that history, from the smallest detail to the greatest infractions. For example, Byron cleverly slips into Canto VIII, stanza 46 a reference to *Baron* Menno Van Coehoorn, the Dutch military engineer who designed the mortar for throwing grenades, while "martial immortality," reserved for the nobleman but not for the common foot soldier, honors a man for behaving like "a butcher" (VII. 83). Wellington is called "the best of cutthroats," and his celebrated victory at Waterloo, Byron claims, ultimately secured the international status quo by preserving European societies for "the world's masters" (IX. 4). Byron concluded that an aristocratic conspiracy existed around the globe that sought to destroy republicanism. Furthermore, this same upper class cabal was responsible for placing a fiscal premium on human lives, for not only savaging popular forms of government but for enslaving large segments of the world's population. An entire vessel of slaves is brought to "market" where one "sweet girl" is sold for "fifteen hundred dollars" (IV.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

113). England's role in all of this is quite clear to Byron, for he accuses his/Juan's "mother" country of "butcher[ing] half the earth and bully[ing] t'other" (X. 81). Don Juan, who reads about "Horne Tooke" before going to bed, (XVI. 27), seems always on the verge of being sucked up by the global contagion nurtured by kings, princes, sultans, noblemen, military leaders, and the men who finance the whole bloody mess. Despite the failures of the French Revolution, Byron estimated that the only way to put an end to oligarchies was through rebellion: "revolution/Alone can save the earth from hell's pollution" (VIII. 51). By the time he wrote Don Juan, Byron had abandoned any prospect that social reform could be achieved through parliamentary reform (Steffan 668), although before his literary career was launched with the publication of Childe Harold, Byron hoped that as a member of The House of Lords he could work for change.

Byron's maiden speech before Parliament argued against the Frame-breaking Bill, which would make machine-breaking a capital crime and subject offenders to execution, presumably ending the Luddite uprising. Not only did Byron attack the bill in his speech but he defended the workers' right to organize themselves against the injustices caused by industrialization. As he indicated in his address, Byron was appalled by the degrading living conditions of the average citizen. "I have traversed the seat of war in the peninsula," he told his parliamentary audience in 1812, "[and] I have been in some of the most oppressed provinces of Turkey, but never under the most despotic of infidel governments...did I behold such squalid wretchedness as I have seen since my return in the very heart of a Christian country" (Complete Prose, 26). Ultimately, Byron's support for "the industrious poor," who were becoming ever more destitute in order to advance "the enrichment of a few individuals" (23), fell on deaf ears. As he noted years later in Don Juan, "Good workmen never quarrel with their tools" (I. 201), at least in the minds' of the ruling establishment, so the Luddite movement was doomed from the start. In the end, Parliament passed the bill, favoring the integrity of machinery over the well-being of humanity. In one

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

notable case, fourteen frame-workers were convicted in 1813 at York for Luddite activities, and summarily executed.

When news of the incident reached Shelley at his residence in Tremadoc, Wales, he tried to create a fund for the victims' families, which outraged the local gentry who were pleased with the stern punishment dished out to the mutinous laborers (Cameron, The Young Shelley 202-4). But this would not be the first or the last time that Shelley's radical activities would create an uproar among the upper class or state officials. While Shelley was attempting to organize fiscal relief for the families, he began distributing his pamphlet on Irish independence, which eventually caught the attention of The Home Office and black-listed him for the rest of his life. In "A Declaration of Rights," Shelley put forth many of his life-long radical beliefs, arguing that he was not only writing "with a view for Catholic Emancipation but for Universal Emancipation" (Shelley's Prose 54). Overall, the tone of the pamphlet is socialistic, and even can be considered a pseudo-Marxist account of how the rich maintain social power and control: "It is horrible that the lower classes must waste their lives and liberty to furnish means for their oppressors to oppress them yet more terribly" (55). Although Shelley intended the tract to be used as a broadside that would be tacked onto public buildings in Dublin, he went to any length to have as many people read the document as possible, including some very unique methods of distribution. Shelley stuffed the essay into a number of bottles and sent them out to sea; he also carefully crafted miniature boats that carried the message to distant shores. One of those tiny vessels wound up at Lord Sidmouth's Home Office. Another method of dispersal included packing the pamphlets into hot-air balloons and jettisoning them into the evening sky, later recorded in his poem "To a Balloon, laden with Knowledge" (Holmes 147-50). Only twenty years old at the time, Shelley was just beginning an intensive regimen of leftist writings and activities.

"The Mask of Anarchy," a poem Shelley wrote immediately following the Peterloo Massacre (1819), has been called "one of the great political poems of all time" by one scholar

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

(Foot 15), while Richard Holmes, who cautioned his readers that his biography of the poet "is not" for "Shelley lovers" (ix), considers "The Mask" "the greatest poem of political protest ever written in English" (532). Queen Mab, a poem published in 1813, became especially popular among the Owenites and Charterists. As a point of interest, Shelley's "Notes" to the poem grew more popular than the poem itself, as it explored the vicissitudes of 'great' empires—via Volney's Ruins—"the falsehoods of religious systems"—via Paine's The Age of Reason—and "the conspiracy of the [wealthy] few" against "the many to labor for their benefit" (Poetical Works 594-597)—via Godwin's Political Justice. In the "Preface" to The Revolt of Islam (1817), Shelley describes the poem as an "experiment," just as Wordsworth had done in his own "Preface," but it is an experiment from which he "scarcely dare[d] to expect success" (44). What Shelley had in mind was to see how far "the public mind" could be stretched to embrace a utopian vision of a better "moral and political society" (45). Even though Shelley presumed little in the way of literary success, he did anticipate that his work might enlighten his readers and compel them to become more politically active. The poem was originally titled Laon and Cythna, and a few copies were issued under that title, but its social and political positions were so strident that his publisher refused to proceed with the work unless dramatic alterations were made.

In the "Preface" to Hellas (1821), Shelley assailed the Quadruple Alliance for representing the governing aristocracy, with its vast armies, lawyers, and moneylenders who all act "as ringleaders" on behalf "of the privileged gangs of murderers and swindlers" (319). Meanwhile, in his most famous poem, Prometheus Unbound, it is obvious that Jupiter represents tyranny in any form, yet it is also possible to regard the tyrant more specifically as symbolizing the despotic rule of Metternich's and Castlereagh's (un)Holy Alliance (Cameron, "Political Symbolism" 121). Although Queen Mab is considered Shelley's most revolutionary poem, one critic argues that Prometheus "is consistently a more radical document than Queen Mab" (Curran 110). Despite its mythological cosmology, then, Shelley expected that Prometheus would

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

operate at the level of political propaganda, with its veiled critique of present systems of hierarchical governments.

In fact, Shelley hoped that all of his work might influence public opinion, and that a poem like Prometheus Unbound might help to realign society more justly with its appeal to libertarianism based on love and empathy rather than on hate and aggression. Although Shelley believed that poets in the modern age would become the legislators of the world, he never considered the role of the artist as uniquely special or positioned above the rest of society. "A poet is the combined product of such internal powers as modify the nature of others," he wrote in the "Preface" to Prometheus, "and of such external influences as excite and sustain these powers; he is not one, but both" (164). Contemporary rhetoricians who charge that the Romantics embraced a solipsistic approach to discovering "pure" art fail to see that a Romantic artist like Shelley considered himself *a* part of his surroundings, not *apart* from it, that while poets may be "the creators" of a work of art, they are also "the creations, of their age" (ibid). At the same time, when contemporary rhetoricians accuse the Romantics of deliberately disengaging from their material world, they are ignoring the enormous amount of social criticism found in nearly every major Romantic work, from Wordsworth's critique of leisure class discourse, to Byron's condemnation of industrial capitalism, to Shelley's denunciation of aristocratic authority.

Back to the Future

As a matter of fact, Shelley's work is so glaringly political that to this day socialists and Marxists declare Shelley as one of their own. In a recent edition of International Socialism, for example, William Keach argues that Shelley shared many of Gramsci's concerns that a true revolutionary transformation of society may only occur if the "ineluctable division between intellectuals and 'the people' disappears" (92). If contemporary rhetoricians claim that the Romantics were decisively detached from politics or history, then they are simply missing the boat—a "boat" that did not escape the attention of Lord Sidmouth. Even Shelley's essay on the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

advantages of vegetarianism is laced with politics. In "A Vindication of Natural Diet," Shelley foreshadows many of the arguments made by modern vegetarians by calling the reader's attention to how cattle farming serves "the odious and disgusting aristocracy" who can afford to be meat-eaters, while prime farmland, which could be used to raise more crops and feed more people, is being wasted to fatten cows.

> The quantity of nutritious vegetable matter consumed in fattening the carcase of an ox would afford ten times the sustenance.... The most fertile districts of the habitable globe are now actually cultivated by men for animals. It is only the wealthy that can to any great degree, even now, indulge the unnatural craving for dead flesh. (Prose 87).

Shelley's essay remains so politically correct in the eyes of contemporary vegetarians that excerpts from his essay are included in a recent book advocating a vegetable diet. To this day, Shelley's offbeat version of the death of Princess Charlotte resonated so poignantly with Alexander Cockburn that he incorporated passages from it in a Nation essay on the death of Princess Diana. Cockburn also included Paine's famous comment about Burke's sympathy for Marie Antionette. Paine charged that by supporting the misfortunes of the Queen while ignoring the interminable sufferings of the poor, Burke was pitying the plumage but ignoring the dying bird. Cockburn attacked both the British and American press for focusing on a wealthy woman who vacationed in Monaco and Aspen, while ignoring the sufferings of the world's poor. According to Cockburn, the press is simply an extension of the ruling class's power in our own time, so it should come as no surprise to anyone why Diana receives extended coverage while the dying birds are ignored. Cockburn's transition from the Romantic era to the present seems almost effortless because the Romantics were engaged in their own war of words against the powerful forces of the ruling establishment.

In the Sixties, when the New Left denounced some the American establishment and worked toward expanding the rights of the disenfranchised, it too found an historical ally in the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Romantic era's radical positions. In Gates of Eden, Morris Dickstein equates the era's radicalism with the entire Romantic movement: "Call it Romantic socialism: The Romantic vision of the redemption of the self, the libertarian socialist dream of community redeemed selves in the real world"(21) More particularly, William Blake seemed to have become a kind of literary mascot for many of the movement's focal points. The rock band The Doors acquired their name from Aldous Huxley's prose poem, The Doors of Perception, which had been inspired by a line from Blake. Todd Gitlin, a leading figure in many of the era's causes, argues in The Sixties that part of the movement's focus on spiritual growth rather than material prosperity "seemed to have redeemed the traditional Romantic promise, Blake's 'eternity in an hour'... the steady miracle ordinarily muffled by busyness." Gitlin adds that "the everyday had been converted into the extraordinary" (203), as if he had in mind the sentiments expressed in Wordsworth's poetry.

But it was Blake who seemed to be everywhere. As one college professor noted, while his more radical students marched off to Washington to protest the Vietnam war, or headed to Chase to picket the bank's involvement in floating loans to South Africa's apartheid government, they did so carrying tattered copies of The Portable Blake or Northrop Frye's Fearful Symmetry (Anderson 417). In 1968, at the MLA convention held in New York City, Louis Kampf, head of the Literature Section, Department of Humanities at MIT, was arrested for putting up posters in the lobby of the Americana hotel. Kampf was part of a modest political insurgency critical of the organization's role in maintaining an inequitable status quo in higher education. Kampf became involved in a scuffle with the hotel guards who tried to tear down the posters. One of the posters bore a line from Blake's The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, "the tigers of wrath are wiser than the horses of instruction" (Ohmann, English in America 27-9). In his critique of the MLA, Kampf was using the words of a Romantic writer to attack a seemingly a-political organization for its part in carrying on the traditions of the establishment. In 1968, however, no institution could claim to be 'innocent' or neutral in the eyes of many radicals, and it is by no means

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

coincidental that Romantic writers and Romantic idealism were popping up in some very unusual places, like the lobbies of hotels. Many Sixties' radicals seemed to be inspired by the Romantic vision of justice and the Romantic critique of aristocratic customs and traditions that had become institutionalized. During the Sixties, in fact, few institutions came under such severe criticism as higher education. Colleges and universities across the United States were being accused of complying with a corporate-military complex, practicing unfair enrollment policies, and engaging in a national curriculum that celebrated and rewarded conformity. As the schools were under attack from without, radicals were demanding that changes be made from within. One aspect of the Free Speech Movement was to allow students to have greater control over their educational destiny, including making the classroom less teacher-centered. Expressivism, a writing strategy that advocates a very student-centered pedagogy, emerged out of this turmoil, a product of history and politics as well as an agent in both.

---

[1] In addition, any *woman* who dared dabble in politics was way out of the social orbit. A woman's way of writing—especially in its epistolary and personal forms—became equated with radical discourse during the Cultural Revolution of the period. Radical feminist writing, with its validation of the subjective self against competing models of identity, sharply contrasted against the artfully rhetorical, learned, and stylized discourses dominated by men of the upper class, and it often was seen as catering to proletarian tastes, or indicative of how discourse was being tainted by unwelcome members of society. Both Wollstonecraft and Helen Maria Williams wrote 'personal' accounts of the French Revolution, for example. It was bad enough that they injected 'opinionated' subjectivity into the texts, but for a woman to write about politics was a damnable offense to the conservative establishment. As T.J. Mathias noted in The Pursuits of Literature (1797), "unsexed female writers now instruct or confuse us and themselves in the labyrinth of politics, or turn us wild with Gallick frenzy." See Gary Kelly's Women, Writing, and Revolution: 1790-1827.

[2] Wordsworth reports that he "eagerly" read "the master pamphlets of the day" (9: 97), and no pamphlet was as noteworthy as Paine's Rights of Man.

[3] The military pun is intentional. As Robert Scholes notes in The Rise and Fall of English, the word for the gun and the word for the law and the sacred texts are simply branches of a single root rather than two totally different words. And, as he notes, all empires control their terrain on their use of cannons and canons (103-112).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

[4] As Hegel noted in A Philosophy of Fine Art, in the "Pantheon of Romantic Art," versus classical modes, "all gods are dethroned" (Vol. I, 284), and the "most ordinary domestic" aspects of life finally have their day in the sun (Vol. II, 295).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SIXTIES:

BREAK ON THROUGH TO THE OTHER SIDE

"Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive," Wordsworth wrote regarding the promises of the French Revolution, "But to be young, was very heaven," he added (The Prelude X: 692-3). For Wordsworth and other Romantic writers, the opportunity to witness and to contribute to a political and cultural revolution coincided with youthful exuberance. Wordsworth was twenty-one when he visited France for the first time in 1791, when he imagined putting himself at the service of the Revolution: "Yet would I have willingly taken up/A service at this time for a cause so great,/However dangerous" (X: 134-6). And Shelley was nineteen when he began writing pamphlets in support of Irish independence.

These young idealists came of age during a boom in the British birth rate. Between 1751 and 1821, when every Romantic writer was born, the population of the British mainland doubled, from seven million to fourteen million (Williams, The Long Revolution 137). Perhaps the Romantics saw themselves immersed in a youthful epoch that would sweep away the "meagre, stale, forbidding ways/Of custom, law, and statute" that had marked earlier generations (The Prelude, X: 693-4). As Shelley noted, "The present generation cannot bind their posterity," for the "few cannot promise for the many" ("A Declaration of Rights," Shelley's Prose 71). To some extent, the Romantics believed that theirs was a generation destined to alter society. In recent times, the generation commonly referred to as "baby-boomers" transformed the shape of society.

"The Sixties," of course, will always be associated with how youth movements changed the way America thought of itself at home and abroad. According to Todd Gitlin, generational politics was deliberately deployed in the Sixties to challenge conservative conventions. Gitlin, an early president of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and an organizer of the first national demonstration against the Vietnam War, maintains that the New Left of the early Sixties crafted

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

its opposition to "the dominant ideology" of previous decades with "a hard-and-fast generational definition" of itself (The Sixties 19). And Richard Flacks, also an early leader of SDS, later summed up the values of the youth movement as steeped in "romanticism and egalitarianism" (Chalmers 75). But perhaps what most links the Romantic era to the Sixties, in addition to sharing a kind of youthful rebellion against conservative customs, is the dispute with the "forbidding ways" of a "dominant ideology" that curtailed political rights and social legitimacy for large segments of its population.

Obviously, any comparison of two historical periods separated by nearly two centuries and an ocean should be made cautiously to avoid reductive views that blur the significant differences between the two periods. Clearly, "the generation gap" played a far more crucial role in the Sixties than in the Romantic period, for example, but a number of remarkable similarities can be drawn that link the two eras. For instance, like the Romantics, who underwent a disillusionment with the failures of revolutionary politics, as noted in the previous chapter, members of the Sixties counterculture experienced their own setback with the unfulfilled promises of radical change: "The youth movement's collapse left not only political wreckage but a spiritual and psychological crisis" (Gitlin 424). On a more upbeat note, the nascent feminist movement that occurred between 1790 and 1820 in England, typified by the works of Mary Wollstonecraft, Helen Maria Williams, and Mary Hays, parallels the emergence of women's liberation in the Sixties in the U.S., although the success of feminism in the U.S. has been far greater than that achieved in England, indeed becoming what is arguably "the most successful social movement of the Sixties" that "radiated farthest" of all the reform movements (Anderson 421; Gitlin, The Sixties 432). In addition, while Romantic artists considered the slave trade a terrible injustice, student activists of the U.S. attacked Jim Crow laws in the South. Also, while radical democrats in England sought to empower the 'vulgar,' Sixties radicals demanded that largely disenfranchised groups, like gays, African Americans, Native Americans, and Hispanics

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

be recognized as equals in the national community. Meanwhile, both Romantic writers and anti-war activists in the Sixties condemned their native countries for overseas aggression, and even identified more closely with the revolutionary aspirations of foreigners who struggled against their own nations' colonial enterprises. Hence, as some students protested Washington's intervention in Indochina carrying the flag of the Vietnamese National Liberation Front, Wordsworth guiltily recalled how he rejoiced when British forces were beaten back by France's republican army: "I rejoiced/Yes, afterwards, truth painful to record,/Exulted in the triumph of my soul/When Englishmen by thousands were o'erthrown" (The Prelude X: 259-62). Finally, as Wordsworth and Byron criticized early industrial capitalism's ability to disrupt family life nationally, and to cause entire societies overseas to disintegrate, radical youths in the Sixties denounced contemporary corporate capitalism for turning Americans into 'one-dimensional' people, and for sponsoring brutal dictatorships abroad to meet the bottom line. The Sixties, it seems, had much in common *politically* with Romanticism, pointing toward an alternative view of the relationship between expressivism and its 'romantic' origins, rather than the negative (a-political and intellectually ineffectual) picture painted by several modern rhetoricians.

In fact, these historical connections have not been lost on a number of critics who either condone or condemn the two eras for what they represent. In "Romanticism and American Counterculture," Henry Remak believes that there are a "striking" number of "analogies" and "qualified similarities" between the two. But the most evident similarity, he argues, is the fixation with cultural "populism" and its relationship to an extension of personal freedom within an equitable society. "Both," Remak argues, championed "an anti-prescriptive, anti-repressive, [and] anti-institutional individualism [that] asserted itself in all aspects of living" (94). Marjorie Levinson thinks that the two eras are linked because of their quarrels with different stages of capitalism. "We must ask," she proposes, "whether the different but related crises of the Romantic and the postmodern ages—the crisis transition from agrarian to industrial capitalism,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and, from industrial to multinational consumer capitalism—could begin to explain this strange mirroring ... and the tendency to equate criticism with intervention" ("The New Historicism" 8). And, as Lester Faigley points out, the 'postmodern critique' seriously gets off the ground in France following the suppression of the May Revolution in 1968 when students were beaten back by the bureaucratic forces of both the left and the right (Fragments 25-6). The appearance of the postmodern critique of late capitalism is therefore grounded in a Sixties' radicalism that was foreshadowed by the Romantic critique of early capitalism. In a sense, the present cultural argument made against the forces of global corporate capitalism has "gone back to the future," as Levinson quips (32).

On the other hand, going back to the 'romantic' future is tantamount to a step backwards for American cultural conservatives who blame America's social decay on the vagaries of the radical reforms of the Sixties. Here again, the association of Sixties' radicalism to Romanticism is represented as one more unfortunate error that devalued American society and its institutions, and few institutions were as deeply affected as the educational establishment. According to Alan Bloom and E.D. Hirsch, America's intellectual fabric began to unravel because of campus radicals. Both Bloom and Hirsch published best-sellers in 1987 advocating a return to a more standardized system of education, and blamed student radicals for undermining the integrity of scholastic achievement. In The Closing of the American Mind, Bloom devoted an entire chapter to "The Sixties" negative impact on higher education, comparing it with the experiences of German professors under the Nazis: "Whether it be Nuremberg or Woodstock, the principle is the same" (318). There was no mistake about it, Bloom argued, the Sixties nearly destroyed universities: "About the sixties it is now fashionable to say that although there were indeed excesses, many good things resulted. But as far a universities are concerned, I know of nothing positive coming from that period; it was an unmitigated disaster" (320). In Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know, Hirsch likewise faulted the cultural and social radicals of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the Sixties, as they destroyed national standards and wrecked the time-honored principles of common knowledge shared by all Americans. It is by no means coincidental that Hirsch blames the "ever growing dominance of *romantic* (italics mine) formalism in educational theory" (110) for the decline of American education. Frequently, educational reformers who were partly inspired by the decade's social movements (as Chapter Five demonstrates) were pegged with being 'foolishly' romantic, envisioning a 'utopian' school curriculum that displaced academic standards, a perennially false charge made against Dewey and his followers in progressive school reforms. Not surprisingly, educational reformers from the sixties frequently cited Dewey for recognizing the importance of an experiential, student-centered curriculum. And, for its own 'utopian' version of a student-centered writing curriculum, the romantic label often has been stamped onto the expressivist rhetorical model.

For example, Karen Burke LeFevre lumps expressivism, Sixties' radicalism, and Romanticism into one insipid ideology that celebrates infantile egotism. As noted in Chapter One, placing the Romantic emblem onto expressivistic rhetoric remains "a problem" because of the way Romanticism has been categorized—by both its detractors and some of its 'traditional' celebrants—as a-historical, self-centered, and egregiously imaginative. To compound "the problem" even further for some rhetoricians, expressivism was born out of the social movements of the Sixties. Therefore, some rhetoricians, like LeFevre, admit that expressivism indeed arose out of the Sixties' counterculture, but for anyone who considers the Sixties a time when the nation slid into a cultural backwater of pernicious self-indulgence, that would automatically contribute to expressivism's tainted reputation. Thus, according to LeFevre, "Romantic individualism was particularly evident in the late sixties emphasis on self-expression, epitomized in the battles of the intuitively good flower-child from the country, straight from Rousseau, against the contaminated urban forces of organized bureaucracy" (18). A historical line stretching over two hundred years can therefore be plotted implicating expressivism as a childish

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

writing strategy, nearly as simple-minded as a country-bumpkin. For LeFevre, its simplistic nature stems from its relationship to the Sixties, which, in turn, had cast its lot with the inane ideas of the Romantic era. In her attempt to taint expressivism with the twin evils of Romantic solipsism and Sixties bohemianism, LeFevre suspects that Sixties youth and Romantic writers share a common bond: withdrawal from social problems. But her misconceptions about Romantic writers as being solitary nature lovers is as narrow as her conceptions about Sixties youth as being socially wayward hippies. While some counter-culture hippies indeed turned on and dropped out by seeking private Nirvanas, and while some activists disengaged from social issues *after* the turmoil of 1968 (the Democratic convention in Chicago, Nixon's Presidential victory, and the assassinations of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King) by establishing communes and early New Age culture, many of the so-called 'flower children' of the Sixties frequently risked being harassed, beaten, imprisoned, and even killed when they actively challenged the nation to fulfill its democratic mission.

Activists in the Sixties felt that national problems were inconsistent with the American ideal, with ideas expressed in The Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution. Social activism developed in response to injustices festering for many years, especially in light of the rigid, conformist Cold-War attitudes of the fifties, which pretended racism, militarism, and poverty were nonexistent. From civil rights activists to anti-war demonstrators, protesters revolted in their own way to reform what they believed was, at best, an unresponsive social order, or, at worst, a corrupt system, which was akin to the critique of reformers like Wordsworth and Cobbett during the Romantic era. The social movements in the Sixties were a revolt against the establishment, and activists wanted to change the Republic. "We wanted to remake America, not destroy it," activist Mickey Kraus stated (Hampton 42). From the viewpoint of many social activists, America needed to be altered if all of its citizens were *in fact*, not simply *in theory*, entitled to both personal freedom and social participation. In time, this would include a

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

reassessment of how building the American Empire, at the expense of other nations, was the real un-American activity. At every turn, social activists, who were largely student activists, challenged established institutions like the mainstream press, corporations, government, and education through local participation on campuses and in communities.

The (Lunch) Counter-Culture

It can be argued that "The Sixties" began at a Woolworth's in Greensboro, North Carolina on February 1, 1960, when four black students from A & T College ordered coffee at a lunch counter reserved for whites. As usual, the waitress refused to serve them. But the students uncharacteristically remained in their seats until the store closed, and politely warned the waitress that they would return the next day "with A & T College" (Carson 44). On campus that night 'The Greensboro 4,' as they became known, spread the word of the sit-in. The following day about thirty black students streamed into Woolworth's and occupied the lunch counter. After two hours of being refused service whenever they occasionally tried to order, the students left. The next day, more students showed up, and they were joined by two white students from Greensboro College. By the end of the week, hundreds of black students from nearby campuses had turned up, and the sit-in had spilled over into other areas of the community. "It spread to places like the shopping centers, the drug stores in the shopping centers, the drive-ins," Franklin McCain recounted, one of the Greensboro 4. "No place was going to be left untouched" (Raines 78). By the end of the month, ninety-percent of the students at A & T and three nearby black colleges took part in demonstrations or aided in the protest by boycotting or picketing segregated stores. Student protesters said that it was "like a fever" and "everyone wanted to go" (qtd. in Carson 12). The Civil Rights Movement was under way, and it acted as a catalyst for other movements of the decade, much like the way Paine's Rights of Man stimulated a widespread reaction against unjust "traditions" in British society.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

While several demonstrations had preceded the Greensboro incident—sixteen other cities witnessed similar protests in the previous three years—no other had the same dramatic affect. Perhaps it was the sheer spontaneity of the event and the absence of planning that enabled the students to avoid setting self-imposed limitations, or the precedent created by the Montogomery boycott (1955) that "prepared" blacks for subsequent civil rights crusades, as one scholar argues (Morris 48). Nevertheless, Montgomery did not inspire a massive civil rights movement, which clearly was the case with Greensboro. In the long run, "Greensboro helped define the new decade" (Branch 272), inaugurating a wave of direct social action that eventually turned into a torrent of protest.

Greensboro inspired a young generation of blacks to become activists, arousing some southern and many northern whites to partake in a flurry of demonstrations that the students began referring to as "the movement" (Anderson 45). Following the Greensboro sit-ins, news spread rapidly throughout the South, and students initiated sit-ins at lunch counters in Winston-Salem, Durham, Raleigh, and other cities in North Carolina. The protests fanned-out to other states, so that by the end of February demonstrators deployed the sit-in strategy in seven other states and dozens of communities, from Nashville to Baltimore. The following month more protests occurred in places like Miami, Houston, San Antonio, and even such small locales as Xenia, Ohio. By the end of the year, over 70,000 activists participated in demonstrations in thirteen states (Eagles 19-37). But there was a heavy price to pay, as hundreds of activists would discover throughout the decade.

Many white officials, who funded the colleges, demanded that black college presidents and administrators expel the agitators, or be faced with a loss of revenues. Over 140 students were expelled and nearly 40 faculty members were dismissed during the first year of the sit-ins. A week after Greensboro, police arrested 41 students who were sitting in lunch counters at the Cameron Village Woolworth store in Raleigh. They were immediately released on bail that

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

evening, unharmed. But they were the fortunate ones. More often than not, police either conducted their own brutal arrests by claiming that peaceful blacks were inciting a riot, or they looked the other way while angry white hooligans viciously attacked demonstrators. During protests in Nashville whites shoved lighted cigarettes into the necks of black coeds sitting at the counter. In Atlanta, acid was thrown into the face of one demonstrator, while in Houston three whites seized a protester, bull-whipped him, carved "KKK" into his chest, and hung him by his knees from a tree (Anderson 46).

But the repression did not deter the student activists, who sometimes were asked by older black leaders to be less outspoken for fear of enraging the white establishment. For example, the NAACP initially refused to back the student sit-ins (Colburn and Pozzetta 126). Yet, in some degree, the youthful restlessness of the students worked in their favor. The students simply didn't want to wait for incremental changes. When James Bevel, a 19-year old at American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville, was cautioned by a minister that their actions would foment a white backlash, Bevel responded that he was anxious to confront angry white mobs if it meant undercutting segregation. "I'm sick and tired of waiting," he told the minister. "If you asked us to wait until next week, then next week something would come up and you'd say wait until the next week and maybe we never will get our freedom" (Morris 206). If anything, the students responded to the repression with increased determination and a greater sense of building upon their early successes, to bury Jim Crow *laws* once and for all. And much of that success stemmed from their common bond. They were not only black and white allies trying to beat-back segregation but frustrated *young* people who were unwilling to play by the white establishment's rules and regulations. "For the first time in our history," Howard Zinn observed in 1965, "a major social movement, shaking the nation to its bones, is being led by youngsters" (SNCC 1). In due course, older black leaders were caught up in the youthful ground swell and channeled their organizational skills into erecting a more forceful coalition of radical black youth.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Reverend Fred Shuttleworth, who would be stabbed, bombed, and arrested over the years while working with Martin Luther King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), promptly phoned Ella Baker, the SCLC executive director, about the importance of the sit-ins and about the need to bring the student activists together under one roof. Baker organized a conference in April at Raleigh, North Carolina, which produced the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Roughly 120 students from 50 colleges attended the conference, and Baker assured the students that the new organization would be "youth centered," although some friction would exist throughout the decade between older leaders and younger activists. At the April meeting, Martin Luther King Jr. implored students to continue their non-violent tactics and to broaden their goals, a tactic Baker urged as well. Julian Bond, who attended the meeting, recalls that Baker insisted that the crusade must be "for more than a hamburger." What was needed was to change the entire Southern social structure (Hampton 63). The sit-ins continued in 1961, and the students made remarkable in-roads into transforming southern culture, as Baker and King advocated. Activists had integrated lunch counters and theaters in nearly 200 cities across the south, including Houston and Atlanta. The activists had incited so many sit-ins and demonstrations that they had caught the attention of the media, especially the growing medium of television, which frequently captured peaceful demonstrators being attacked by police dogs and tossed like confetti by gushing water hoses. As these images flickered across the nation, they often provoked even more young blacks to join the movement. Television, it seemed, not only incited Southern blacks, but also provoked those living in the North. Perhaps television helped transform the Sixties civil rights movement into a national event, as opposed to the localized activities of the fifties. This new mass medium may have played a role in sparking a mass movement. Until the Sixties, only a few homes had television sets. By 1960, however, over fifty million sets had been purchased. It is difficult to measure the impact of television on the budding Civil Rights Movement, but the new medium did influence the scale of activism. Robert

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Moses, who watched his set in Harlem and saw students being dragged through Southern streets by their hair, believed it was time to get involved. "They were kids my own age," he noted, "and I knew this had something to do with my life" (qtd. in Anderson 49). Before long, activists had aroused a complacent American population that racism and inequality were not simply isolated Southern incidences but a national problem as well.

1961 also marked a new phase of the civil rights movement: The Freedom Rides. Once again, young activists played a major role in actions that eventually forced a reluctant Kennedy Administration to back the movement's goals to end school segregation and provide voting rights, including the Administration's request that Congress pass the most comprehensive civil rights act in American history (not passed until 1964, shortly after Kennedy's assassination). The Freedom Rides were organized to test a Federal law which banned segregated interstate travel. Southern states ignored the statute, and also continued to segregate terminal waiting rooms, restaurants, and restrooms. The Supreme Court had declared such practices unconstitutional, but the federal government did nothing to prevent the states from carrying out their racist policies. The rides were organized by The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), whose national director, James Farmer, wanted to challenge the federal government by extending the sit-ins and "putting the movement on wheels" (Hampton 73). So, in May, 1961 seven black and six white volunteers boarded two buses in Washington D.C. and headed for Birmingham, Alabama. At Anniston, a city located 150 miles east of Birmingham, both buses were commandeered by whites who brutally attacked the passengers.

The first bus to arrive at Anniston was hijacked by four Klansmen who beat up the passengers and then ordered the driver to a destination in Birmingham, where twenty men with pipes were waiting. "This mob seized us," recalls Abe Peck, one of the white riders, "and I was unconscious, I'd say, within a minute. I woke up in a pool of blood" (77). The police station was only two blocks away, but no police ever showed up to stop the bloodshed or make any arrests.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The next day, when Bull Connor, the police chief, was asked why there were no police on hand, he replied that it was Mother's Day and all of the officers "were visiting their mothers" (78). The second bus, which arrived in Anniston a little later, was attacked by another mob of whites, including, as it was later learned, several plainclothes policemen—who obviously hadn't made it to their mothers' homes yet. This time, the mob smashed the bus's windows and slashed its tires before the driver could make a hasty escape. But eight miles outside of Anniston, the bus broke down. The whites who followed hurled a fire bomb into the stalled vehicle, and when the riders emerged from the burning bus they were beaten senseless.

The events were widely reported because a CBS reporter happened to be on the scene in Birmingham when the first bus was attacked. The television coverage enraged student activists, and a number of sit-in veterans organized the second freedom ride, which left from Nashville. This time the bus headed for Montgomery, but like the first freedom ride the student protesters were confronted by a violent white mob. Although a police escort had followed the bus from Birmingham to Montgomery, it mysteriously vanished as soon as the bus pulled into the city. Once there, 300 whites armed with pipes and baseball bats clubbed the twenty-one freedom riders and a handful of newsmen who had accompanied them. But the activists were not deterred. When the Kennedy Administration learned that another freedom ride was scheduled to leave for Montgomery and head to Jackson, Mississippi, Attorney General Robert Kennedy pleaded with the activists to engage in a "cooling-off period." Farmer responded that blacks had been "cooling off for a hundred years....If we get any cooler we'd be in a deep freeze" (Hampton 83). Farmer, like many others, believed that the time was ripe to put an end to racial injustices, no matter what the cost. Evidently, what prompted the steady thawing of racial discrimination was the "distinct radicalism" that was brought by the "youthful energy" of student activists who wanted to completely "break with the past" (Carson 1-9), A generation was in revolt. Although incremental legal changes had been occurring, like the noteworthy *Brown vs. Board of Education* ruling, the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

students were rebelling against a resistant social structure inherited from earlier decades, including the normative fifties, a similar sentiment expressed by Wordsworth in The Prelude when he hoped the French Revolution would sweep away the "forbidding ways/Of custom, law, and statute."

The Big Chill

Overall, the fifties represented consensus and conformity, a decade earmarked by its "commitment to uphold the status quo" (Whitfield 4), which mirrored the preoccupation with custom and tradition guarded by Johnson, Burke, and other conservatives. And nowhere was the status quo more upheld than in the area of racial discrimination, despite the famous 1954 decision. The status quo was equally determined to maintain air-tight gender distinctions. In addition, the Cold War mentality of the period placed a price on what it meant to be a "loyal" American. In a related development, the post-War years witnessed a tremendous growth in the concentration of military and corporate sectors, creating a powerful incorporated hierarchy. Thus, the message seemed clear: fit in, be part of the system, and never complain about it.

But in the opinion of student activists, the system needed to be denounced and to be changed. Some standards during the fifties might be considered comically absurd if they did not also reveal some very tragic consequences. Birmingham was a city so segregated that it removed a science book from the public library that featured a photograph of black and white rabbits living in the same cage! (Oates 205). In Atlanta, white and black witnesses in court were not allowed to swear on the same Bible (Kluger 8). The status of Southern blacks and other minorities in the Cold War culture of the period is aptly described by the signs the Texas Restaurant Association distributed for its members' windows: "We do not serve Mexicans, Niggers, or Dogs" (9).[1] In some cases, the position of minorities actually deteriorated as the decade progressed. In Clarendon County, South Carolina, officials spent $179 on every white student and $43 on each black student in 1950. Fourteen years later, right before the passage of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The Civil Rights Bill, the figure had climbed to $190 on every white student but had dropped to $1.26 for each black student. The overall condition of black schools in the South was deplorable. Black students frequently attended school in flimsy shacks with no heat, no running water, and no restrooms, while the teachers were paid about a third of their white counterparts. Higher education perpetuated the discriminatory cycle just as deliberately. By Texas law, three-fourths of federal land grant funds were spent at white Texas A & M, while the remaining amount went to black Prairie View A & M. This was the South's rendering of the 1896 Supreme Court Ruling of *Plessy v. Ferguson* granting "separate but equal" public facilities for the two races. As a way of solidifying white supremacy, seventeen southern and border states passed Jim Crow laws, making discrimination virtually a legal fait accompli. Jim Crow laws were particularly useful in keeping blacks from voting. The Civil Rights Commission in 1958 had determined that in Alabama only nine-percent of blacks had registered to vote; in Mississippi the figure was merely four-percent. Without a doubt, the South was a bastion of discrimination and segregation (Kluger).

But conditions in the rest of the country were not much better, and they were certainly not equal by any means. Segregation was just as much a part of life in the North and the West as it was in the South. Segregation in the South was largely imposed by law, whereas in the North and West it tended to be de facto, occurring as a result of unequal income distribution, custom, education, and residential patterns. Jonathan Kozol reported in Death at an Early Age (1967), for example, that the black students he taught at a Boston elementary school were basically written off in their adolescence by the white establishment for being intellectually and socially backwards. No law in Massachusetts or any other Northern or Western state determined that blacks did not deserve the same education as whites, but the custom and practice of treating black school children as inferiors created a segregated situation just as summarily as any statute. Although 'legal' discrimination did exist in other forms in some states. Oregon, for example, did

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

not ratify the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution until 1959, eighty-nine years after that measure had granted blacks the right to vote (Schwantes 154). In the early 1960's, Los Angeles and Chicago were ranked as the most racially segregated cities in the country. Thanks to restrictive real estate covenants—and the personal prejudices of landlords—most African Americans were relegated to separate ghettos throughout the North and West (White 588-590). To compound the problem, the federal government had a hand in supporting race segregation through the establishment of The Federal Housing Authority (FHA). The organization sparked the suburbanization of America, helping to double the suburban population between 1950 and 1970, and turning the suburbs into virtual white-only enclaves. Because the FHA refused to guarantee loans for integrated housing projects, a city like Levittown, Pennsylvania, which was created practically overnight with FHA funds, held over 60,000 residents in 1957, yet not a single person who lived there was black (Miller 135).

But the government was not alone in structuring uniformity. Perhaps the single most planned enterprise was the creation of Disneyland in 1955. The Disney company coached employees on how they should look, talk, and act, which meant that minorities need not apply, even though America's first theme park existed in the Los Angeles area, one of the most racially and ethnically represented regions in the country (O'Conor 559-561). Even then, Disney's impact on American society extended beyond the physical landscape. As a huckster of popular culture, Disney was a pioneer in packaging film, television, and products into a single marketing scheme. Culture was becoming increasingly mass produced and rarely represented or addressed the full scope of the population The nation, it seemed, was trying to cast itself as a homogenous society (typically white, suburban, and middle class), even though it was possibly the most diversified country in the world, not to speak of the countless number of its citizens living in abject poverty—and with few exceptions, class divisions were not included in the national debate. To a great degree, as the suburban culture grew so did conformity, and vast segments of the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

population were bracketed into separate and unequal parcels. Thus, in addition to the suburbanization of the cultural and physical landscape contributing to racial segregation and white hegemony, it also reinforced and augmented narrowly defined sexual roles. A woman's place remained in the home, and the climate of the post-War years made sure that women were not granted the same opportunities and rights as men. Of course, American women were never afforded the same social ranking as men throughout previous decades, but the birth of the suburbs in the fifties seemed to reassert the domestic restrictions placed on women more intensely than any other event. "Suburbia had become a female ghetto," Sara Evans argues in Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left (6).

Even though women had entered the work force in record numbers during the Second World War, after 1945, they were dismissed en masse from factory jobs and returned to lesser employment. More often than not, women were discouraged from pursuing professional careers or barred from continuing to labor outside of the home at all. In the summer of 1945, for example, 75 percent of the women working in the aircraft and shipbuilding industries lost their jobs. And they did not leave voluntarily; they were replaced by men. Employer discrimination forced women back into gender-segregated jobs, where they earned one-half to two-thirds of their pay during the War. At times, the government reinforced the sexist division of labor. In the Puget Sound area in the state of Washington, for instance, when female welders or riveters refused to take 'women's work' and demanded the skilled positions that employers denied them, the state refused them unemployment benefits (White 518). And as the following decade began, it was evident that society had determined that 'women's work' meant domestic work, and that women might even benefit from being more properly taught the finer points of domestic labor. Lynn White Jr., the male president of female Mills College, wrote a popular book that led the public debate that women should be educated differently than men. In Educating Our Daughters

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

(1950), Mills advocated a non-academic program for women who entered higher education. Women, he explained, first and foremost should be trained "in a firm nuclear course in the family." Besides, he added, if women studied the same subjects as men they would be steered off course. Studying serious academic subjects, he insisted, would only make women "resent household tasks" (qtd. in Miller and Nowak 161). Conforming to social standards was supposed to guarantee contentment. And many colleges and universities complied with White's recommendations. At the University of Illinois, the course catalogue directed its male students toward business and engineering courses, while it advised its female readers to check out Home Economics 182, "Clothing Selection" (Anderson 20). Even when women were able to escape from this biased approach to their education and study topics beyond home economics, they often found jobs that merely replicated the drudgery of household chores. Madeleine Kunin, who became Vermont's first female governor in 1984, graduated with a journalism degree from Columbia University in 1957 and was offered a job at The New York Times—in its cafeteria! Typically, though, women were barred from entering the professions entirely. Although Maria Iandolo New graduated at the top of her class, she was rejected by The University of Rochester's Medical School in 1950. Her husband, however, who had an undergraduate ranking below hers, was accepted that same year (Chira).

In addition, the mass media popularized the belief that because of the 'natural' differences between the sexes, a woman was promised greater happiness and a fuller life if she stuck to being a dutiful wife and a doting mother. Life magazine declared in its special Christmas issue of 1956 that "of all the accomplishments of the American woman, the one she brings off with the most spectacular success is having babies." And 'getting' a husband for a woman was tantamount to getting a life. In a 1956 issue of Glamour magazine, the Warner's Corporation advertised its 'Merry Widow' corset, promising that any woman who wore it would automatically "capture a gentleman's glance." The full-page ad featured two models, one

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

wearing the device and the other, in cupid-like posture, ready to fire off an arrow from her bow. Blazoned across the center of the page in large, bold-faced type was the declaration that "The husband you get may be your own!" For a woman to be single was akin to being a social pariah. In 1956, Reader's Digest published a feature article "You Don't Know How Lucky You Are to be Married," pointing out to its readers that single women suffered from emotional trauma, were susceptible to physical ailments, and spent most of their time agonizingly alone, all because they knew that they were unable to enjoy the fruits of being married and raising children (Miller and Nowak 154).

But women were capable of committing even greater social crimes, according to the mass media. The single greatest infraction any woman could perpetrate was to combine marriage with a career. Merle Miller, writing in a 1954 issue of Esquire, argued that every married woman who worked was a "menace" to society, and that if these women were all forced to resign "the republic...would be considerably better off" (qtd. in Miller and Nowak 165). Life magazine determined that working wives posed an even more serious threat to the nation. An article in one of its 1956 issues warned that when a woman worked the household will "become too democratic" and disrupt clear-cut sexual roles. Wives who worked exposed America to a social "disease." As a result, any male child raised in such a home would likely end up "a homosexual." The magazine had assembled four doctors—all men—who discussed the "fatal error" of a woman abandoning her "primitive biological urge toward reproduction, toward homemaking, and nurturing." And, the article added, "however much she might scoff at the idea intellectually (being 'independent'), she would deeply want to be able to submit to her husband" (166). A woman's submissiveness was a key component to a happy home and a stable society. But the Life article was a reflection of the larger social picture. In the fifties, especially, a woman was posited according to her sexual role, positioned as a wife or as a mother, and anything that endangered that position required rebuking. Few women could resist such overpowering

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

messages, feeling compelled to behave and act according to the 'normalcy' imposed by a male-dominated society. Luisa Krisberg, who now owns her own marketing and public relations firm, recalls that once she married in the mid-fifties she knew that pursuing a career was out of the question. "I got married at a time when it was felt that if a woman worked, it reflected her husband's failure," she claims (Chira).

But perhaps the single most influential medium that trafficked in this sexual stereotype was television, although it is important to consider that television, or any mass medium at any given time, both reflects and shapes the zeitgeist, as Donald Lazere notes in "Entertainment as Social Control." Thus, when shows like "I Love Lucy," "The Donna Reed Show," "Ozzie and Harriet," "Leave it to Beaver," and "Father Knows Best" were watched by millions of Americans, they simultaneously reinforced and created a national view of a woman's proper place in society. Moreover, at a time when the economy was humming along in its postwar resurgence, it appeared by television standards that America's prosperity was based in part on the division of labor between a man and a woman. The stability of the nation, so it seemed, depended on it. Audiences tuned in because the shows reflected what many Americans believed was the 'ideal' family structure. Even the "The Honeymooners," a show that presented a blue collar couple living in America's largest city, made sure that the wife, Alice Kramden, did not stray from her socially prescribed role—even though any income should might earn would clearly benefit them. In one episode, for instance, Ralph Kramden is temporarily laid-off from his job, and Alice is forced to work in an office as a secretary. At home, Ralph is so incompetent that he can't even cook rice correctly, demonstrating that a man's place is not in the home. At work, Alice must deal with a boss who makes passes at her, indicating that if a woman leaves the security of home and husband she will be exposed to all kinds of predators. When Ralph is put back to work, Alice immediately quits her job and admits that no man can be as successful as a woman in the house, and that no woman can succeed like a man outside of the house. Domestic

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

harmony has been restored. Almost every night, television shows like "The Honeymooners" demonstrated that a satisfying family life is best accomplished if a woman tends to the home and the man tends to business. If any event occurred to rock that steady boat, all hell would break loose—or at least the comedic equivalent of finding humor in unusual situations, like a woman working outside of the home. Changing the balance of sexual roles may be comical for a while, but ultimately changing any pattern that was viewed as quintessentially 'American' was held in check. But in reality there was nothing funny about the level of censure some citizens might encounter if they even appeared to threaten the social order. When recalling his upbringing in a New Jersey town during the fifties, the musician Bruce Springsteen remarked that it was a place "very intent on maintaining the status quo," and that "everything was looked at as a threat" (qtd in Anderson 16). And one of the great threats to American standards in this period was godless communism.

At times, the hysteria created by the anticommunist crusade in the fifties wrecked careers and ruined lives. Indeed, if a term like "The Woodstock Generation" summarizes the Sixties, then a phrase like "The McCarthy Era" epitomizes the fifties. Again, if it weren't for the unfortunate outcomes generated by the anticommunist campaign, some of the events that occurred during this period could be viewed as burlesque. In Wheeling, West Virginia, for instance, the city manager removed penny-candy machines from a store because some of their tiny geographic lessons included references to Moscow and the U.S.S.R. "This is a terrible thing to expose our children to," the manager insisted after confiscating the candy dispensers (qtd. in Miller and Nowak 21).[2] Although this was a relatively harmless episode, the manager's act typified the widespread turmoil caused by such a rabid 'cleansing' exercise. What turned the situation into an epidemic was the way in which engaging in communist activities was so broadly defined. Senator Joseph McCarthy, who essentially stewarded the witch hunt (along with a lot of help from his friends, including a young attorney from Massachusetts, Robert Kennedy, and a

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

junior congressman from California, Richard Nixon), admitted that his anticommunist net would be spread wide. On March 19, 1950, McCarthy spoke on "Meet the Press" and acknowledged that *appearing* to serve the interests of global communism was as much a crime as being one. "I'm not so much concerned about whether they have a card in their pocket saying, 'I am a member of the communist party,'" he told the reporters. "I'm concerned about the men who are doing the job that the communists want them to do" (qtd in Whitfield 44). Since that could mean just about anything, the slightest trace of 'communist' affiliation could put the policing wheels in motion.

The FBI, for instance, compiled dossiers on novelists who seemed critical of the United States,[3] and the Bureau secretly filmed patrons of New York City's left-wing bookstore, The Four Continents. While it is true that Red-baiting did not begin with McCarthy, it certainly was raised to a fever pitch by the mid-fifties. President Truman issued Executive Order 9835 which established procedures to investigate and remove federal workers if there were "reasonable grounds for belief in disloyalty." But then Eisenhower expanded the program when he became President and added that any worker could be fired if his "behavior, activities or associations...show that the individual is not reliable or trustworthy." A federal worker's personal behavior could be construed as "not in the national interest." Between 1950 and 1957, 2,700 federal workers were fired, while another 12,000 resigned fearing investigation or dismissal. In 1954, Eisenhower signed the Communist Control Act, which terminated "all rights, privileges, and immunities of the party." That same year, the government denied suspected communists their passports, their social security, and their military disability payments (Caute 48-50).

But it wasn't enough to root-out would-be communists. Americans needed to prove that they were loyal. In 1954, a number of patriotic-enhancing bills were passed, like the enactment of Flag Day and the inclusion in the Pledge of Allegiance that the nation now existed "under God."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

According to Republican Senator Homer Ferguson, who sponsored the addition to the Allegiance, the revised pledge would highlight "the fundamental differences between the free world and the communist world" (qtd. in Whitfield 89). The federal government was staging a national obsession in conformity and intolerance. Any divergence from the norm was considered suspect, including "deviant" sexual behavior. In 1950, the Senate filed a report, "Employment of Homosexuals and Other Sex Perverts in Government," that labeled homosexuals as security risks. Hiring a single homosexual "can pollute a government office" it stated (44). Even neutrality was considered a suspicious stance. When Arthur Miller appeared before the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), he was asked by California Democrat Clyde Doyle why he hadn't directed "his considerable talent" against "well-known communist subversive conspiracies in our country and in the world" (10). It wasn't enough, according to the federal government, for Americans not to be communists, they had to actively fight against it on all fronts. No wonder, then, that the novelist Mickey Spillane was the decade's most popular writer, whereby six of the top ten fictional bestsellers of the period were written by Spillane. Unlike the playwright Miller, Spillane used his literary 'talent' to thwart the communist conspiracy. In his 1951 thriller, One Lonely Night, which sold over three million copies, Spillane's macho hero Mike Hammer brags about "killing more people" in one night "than I have fingers on my hand." Fortunately, for America, they all deserved to die: "They were commies...red sons-of-bitches who should have died long ago" (qtd. in Miller and Nowak 29). Spillane's novels epitomized the kind of cultural output that the federal government insisted would help curtail the red threat.

Not to be outdone, individual states devised their own draconian measures. Almost all introduced loyalty oaths for their employees, especially teachers. Indiana announced that its official goal was "to exterminate communists," and its mission was so fiercely carried out that even professional wrestlers had to submit to a loyalty oath. In Connecticut, any citizen broke the law if he used "abusive words about the form of government in the United States, its military

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

forces, flag or uniforms." One of New York State's more preposterous prohibitions blocked communists from obtaining fishing licenses (Caute 28-45). When it came to fighting the communist contagion or verifying the fidelity of its citizens, no state or federal law seemed too extreme or too absurd. Most Americans, it appears, agreed with such stringent policies.

After Eisenhower proposed depriving communists of their citizenship in his 1954 State of the Union Address, a national poll conducted by Harvard University revealed that eighty percent of the population agreed with the President. The same poll also showed that fifty-two percent of the population wanted all communists jailed immediately, and seventy-seven percent believed that communists should be banned from the radio (Whitfield 15). Perhaps some Americans went along with the purge, or remained silent, for fear of having a scarlet "C" figuratively brandished onto their clothes, but the mass media did not remain quietly in the background, and it even contributed a rather loud voice and highly visible presence to the period's anticommunist frenzy.

While some very publicized events and individuals, like the refusal of the Hollywood Ten to name names, have received a fair amount of attention as tokens of the media's noncompliance with the McCarthy witch hunts, on the whole the mass media supported the crusade and committed itself to furthering anticommunist beliefs in the country. It encouraged the hysteria, for example, by running articles that appeared in major magazines entitled "Reds Are After Your Children," "How Commies Take Over," "Trained to Raise Hell in America: The International Lenin School in Moscow," and, of all things, "Communists Penetrate Wall Street." As late as 1960, U.S. News & World Report printed "Underground Railway for Reds Begins at U.S. Borders." No wonder, then, that as McCarthy was cleansing America of its Red blemishes, U.S. News was one of his most ardent supporters, as was The New York Daily News, Saturday Evening Post, and The American Mercury, which all ran numerous articles and editorials endorsing the senator's pursuit of Un-American activities. (Miller and Nowak 27-30).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Religious leaders jumped onto the bandwagon as well, and the media was willing to be the bully-pulpit of their primary missive: communism equaled godlessness. New York's Cardinal Spellman, for instance, wrote about the soul-less communist conspiracy in such magazines as Good Housekeeping and the Saturday Evening Post. The Reverent Billy Graham became a fixture on the American cultural scene during the fifties because he insisted that being a communist was a filthy sin. To Graham, this should have been obvious to every American since communism had been "master-minded by Satan" (qtd in Whitfield 80). So determined was the media to ride the wave of anti-communism and prove its own patriotism to the government and the American public that Life magazine featured Graham on its cover four times between 1954 and 1960. Graham was also a frequent guest on radio shows, always eager to preach to Americans about the evils of the great Satan. And mass media lapped it up. What was so appealing about Graham's message *for* the mass media was that it was so prototypically conservative, and very pro-business. Graham was not just an anticommunist; he was a company man. Graham's homilies revealed that communism was not only a threat to the nation's soul, but also a threat to its lifeblood, corporate America. As part of his anticommunist sermons, Graham would often rail against the American labor movement, which he insisted "flouted the American way of life" (81). Perhaps Satan had not masterminded the labor movement, but that didn't mean labor leaders couldn't be damned right along with communists. Thus, much of the media had turned itself into a giant pulpit that exposed communist behavior and exhorted the public about "the American way of life." All in all, it was a double-edged sword: as the media fought the communist threat, it was serving the interests of the state and also its own best interests in keeping America safe for big business. Meanwhile, another sector of the country that needed to be kept free of communist contamination, while it served the interests of *both* the state and the corporate establishment, was American education.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Administrators canvassed their files for former Communist Party members or searched for subversive professors, often with the assistance of "security officers" who clandestinely sat in classes and listened to lectures. Faculty members were called to testify before congressional committees, and if any refused or took the Fifth Amendment against self-incrimination, they were terminated from most places, including Ohio State, Temple, Columbia, Rutgers, MIT, and the University of Michigan. Harvard alone dismissed or suspended fifty-four professors (Schrecker 91-119). Yale's President, Charles Seymour, devised a more preemptive plan: he issued a policy that refused to hire any suspected communists and created a campus office that worked directly with the FBI "There will be no witch hunts at Yale," he said, "because there will be no witches" (qtd. in Montgemery xx). Most university administrations responded in the same way, and even pooled their commitment to snuff out leftist radicals with one sweeping manifesto. In 1956, The American Association of Universities proclaimed that "world communism" was the "greatest threat" to academic freedom, comparable to the threat posed by Jacobins during the Romantic period when reformers like Thelwall were forced into seclusion by a hostile British government and its conservative supporters. The association's statement, "The Rights and Responsibilities of Universities and Their Faculties," was endorsed by the administrations of thirty-seven universities, and chaired by Yale's new President, A. Whitney Griswold. The document described the university as "an association of individual scholars," who were all "united in loyalty to the ideal of learning, to the moral code, to the country, and to its form of government." The statement added that "free enterprise is as essential to intellectual as to economic progress" (xxii). Indeed, what the association had recognized was that the Cold War was one of the best things that had ever happened to higher education.

Without question, the academy was transformed by the Cold War. The government, which saw the academy as the brain-trust behind the battle against global communism, poured millions into research and development. By 1964, universities spent three billion annually for

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

research and development, and seventy percent of this money came from the federal government, of which half of that figure originated from defense-related agencies. In 1946, expenditures from the federal government accounted for five percent of college and university spending. Within fifteen years that figure rose to twenty-five percent. Furthermore, as the state became the patron of the academy, some universities were propelled into an elite status that they had never held before. A direct correlation existed between government-military spending and the stature that accrued to those institutions, as R.C. Lewinton demonstrates in his study of the influence of the government's Cold War spending spree on the growth of universities. M.I.T., Stanford, Johns Hopkins, Yale, Columbia, and Harvard all received huge sums from the government that maintained and, in the case of Johns Hopkins and M.I.T., pushed them into an exclusive academic tier. In addition, state universities were receiving large federal contracts as well, and the impact of that funding altered their educational mission and political orientation (Heineman 7-14). As a result, many universities had a stake in keeping the Cold War on ice. To oppose the anticommunist crusade ran the risk of being denied federal largesse. Administrations went along with the purges at their schools because it benefited their institutions' fiscal security. In 1952, for example, Rutgers University historian M.I. Finley had been identified by two witnesses as having organized a communist study group while a graduate student at Columbia University in the 1930's. When Finley appeared before a congressional committee, he denied being a member of the Communist Party, but he refused to answer questions about people he knew. Following his appearance there, the Rutgers University Board of Trustees fired Finley. Finley decided the nation had become so poisoned by anticommunist hysteria that he relocated to England and resumed his teaching duties there, not unlike Paine and Cobbett who fled to France and America, respectively, during the anti-Jacobin crusade in England during the Romantic period. One of the trustees noted in the report on Finley's removal that with sixty percent of Rutgers' budget coming from the state, the university "cannot offend public opinion" or antagonize the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

government because the university was also "at war with communism" (Zinn, "The Politics of History" 41).

At the same time, Chrysler, General Motors, General Electric, Goodyear and Westinghouse were all becoming major Pentagon contractors, and they were all evolving into corporate behemoths. In 1955, GM became the first company in the world to earn a billion dollars. As corporations grew in monetary strength, so did their political influence. Corporate leaders were granted major posts in the government, and the connection between big business and the government was emerging with a fury like no other time in American history. For example, the Secretary of Defense during the famous "Kitchen Debate" between Krushnev and other American officials was Neil McElroy, previously the CEO of Proctor and Gamble (Whitfield 74-5). The corporate-government link eventually spilled over into higher education. Before long, the heads of major corporations and members of government agencies that performed defense work were being transposed to serve as academic standard bearers. In 1933, thirty-three percent of all public university presidents had formerly been employed by either the federal government or had been members of the board of directors of a corporation executing defense contracts. By 1960, that figure had risen to 69 percent. In 1933, not a single public university president had ever been employed in a federal government agency engaged specifically in the promotion of national security—like the Defense or the State departments. By 1960, the number had swelled to forty percent (Heineman 16). When students protested in the Sixties that the "Multiversity" was essentially an extension of the corporate-military establishment, they had a point.

Moreover, the Cold War was creating a climate of intellectual conformity in many universities where a "near uniformity of subordination to domestic power" existed, combined with a jingoistic component that celebrated all things English and American while ignoring the contributions of other cultures and societies (Chomsky, "The Cold War and the University" 171-

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

6). Nearly every department within most universities was infected by this mind-set, while also being either explicitly or implicitly involved in serving the state's Cold War apparatus. Thus, while some departments, like math and science, were directly engaged in supporting the government's Cold War activities, other divisions, like history and English, complied more subtly with state policies. For example, history books written in this period tended to embrace and solemnize American domestic and foreign policies, while other humanities departments, like Anthropology, selected research topics, or eliminated them; dropped courses, or added them; hired faculty, or fired them; all because the Cold War was determining the intellectual direction of academic departments in colleges and universities throughout the country. (Zinn, "The Politics of History" 35-55; Nader, 107-146).

However, few administrators or faculty were willing to acknowledge or recognize that what was occurring on campus was motivated by politics. In addition, much of the academic community conveniently overlooked the collusion that was taking place between their institutions and the state's purges, military operations, and domestic policies. That would all change in the sixties in the wake of the student uprisings at campuses across the country, when such statements as "The Position of the Free Speech Movement on Speech and Political Activity" (1965) insisted that "politics and education are inseparable" (Lipset and Wolin 214). However, during the Cold War most academic divisions tacitly concurred with the sociologist Daniel Bell that America was advancing toward a stage in its social development that meant "the end of ideology," a phrase frequently used in the period to describe how the U.S. was solving its social problems by means of tremendous technological development and moderate social reforms.[4] Political reflection was especially absent in most humanities departments, and nowhere more so than in departments of English, Richard Ohmann argues in "English and the Cold War." According to Ohmann, the rise of a formalist New Criticism in the fifties was a by-product of the overall cultural atmosphere. "New Criticism," he claims, "made its own small contribution to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

'the end of ideology,' much celebrated in the postwar period, and to the eclipse of history and politics" (78). What's more, Ohmann adds, "Literary Studies played a small part in the Cold War ... by doing [its] best to take politics out of culture and by naturalizing the routines of social sorting" (85). In large part, he argues, it was intellectually expedient to insist upon timeless literary themes like love and death, "apart from the squalid mess of history" (79). But history indeed forced itself onto the scene, as Ohmann recalls, when the "nascent civil rights movement" forced many faculty members to reassess the role of the academy in American society. Although the Cold War atmosphere was beginning to show some signs of cracking in the late fifties, it was the student sit-ins that had "a bracing effect" on the "complacent" academic culture of the period (88).

Cracks in the Ice and the Emergence of a Youth Movement

Aside from the student sit-ins taking place at the twilight of Cold War hysteria, this grass-roots rebellion revealed certain qualities that actually furthered the erosion of the Cold War culture. As hard as J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI tried to label the student rebellion and SNCC as part of a communist plot, it was difficult to convince the American public that thousands of students who were reiterating the language of Jefferson and Washington were communist conspirators. The government's knee-jerk response to the sit-ins was understandable since it already had success in pinning the communist tag onto earlier labor leaders, educators, and dissident organizations. Although HUAC concluded that the NAACP was not communist-inspired, some political leaders in several Southern states proclaimed the NAACP part of an international communist conspiracy. Moreover, despite HUAC's decision regarding the organization, the FBI concluded that any whites who associated with black civil rights workers were likely communists. In fact, because J. Edgar Hoover believed that the entire civil rights movement was inspired by global communism, he ordered the surveillance of the SCLC until the early sixties, and he continuously leaked to the press (false) information about Martin Luther

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

King's communist tendencies or connections (Branch 851-79). Hoover remained true to form when the sit-ins started spreading throughout South Carolina. He quickly categorized the demonstrators as influenced by communism, and the FBI director received additional support from former President Harry Truman who said that he was certain the "sit-ins [were] inspired by communists" (Zinn, "The Politics of History" 55). But this time around, the name-calling didn't stick so firmly, not when the SNNC's "Founding Statement" addressed "a social order...permeated by love," and a movement that originated out of "the Judeo-Christian" tradition that "Justice for all overthrows injustice" (Albert and Albert 113). It was also difficult to smear an organization when its chief motto, "Let the People Decide," echoed the opening remarks of "The Declaration of Independence." What's more, the dramatic sit-ins and the emergence of SNCC had an immediate national impact. Students at predominately white Northern campuses were captivated by them, especially because the demonstrators were college students. That the civil rights movement had spread across the country and included thousands of students, both black and white, was making it more difficult to target the demonstrations as a communist undertaking, although sporadic red-baiting continued. When, for example, students in the Bay Area picketed local Woolworth's stores in support of the Southern sit-ins, the government accused them of being communists. HUAC decided to investigate the students for their "Communist Activities," and when over a thousand Berkeley students demonstrated against HUAC's inquest at San Francisco's City Hall, they were beaten and arrested by the police (Gottlieb 34). But as support for the civil rights movement spread from campus to campus (Berkeley among the first), the conspiracy rhetoric dwindled. Also, the demonstrations were taking place "all rather spontaneously," recalled Joe McNeil, one of the Greensboro Four (Hampton 57). As the next chapter will demonstrate, "spontaneity" also was a key component in the expressivist classroom which sought to curtail the rigid, controlling influence of a teacher-centered pedagogy, as part of an anti-authoritarian educational reform movement. Meanwhile,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the combination of massive, grass-roots support and impromptu protests of civil rights demonstrators had created a unique scenario that softened much of the Cold War rhetoric regarding *domestic* libertarian movements inspired by ungodly Bolsheviks.[5]

Indeed, what made this phase of the civil rights movement so special were its activists: they were students. And, before long, an ad hoc generational movement would emerge out of the Woolworth's sit-in in Greensboro. By the end of that Spring, 1960, students at nearly 100 Northern colleges had been mobilized in support of the Southern demonstrations. Over the next year civil rights activity appeared on almost every campus in the country: support groups formed, fund-raising committees were created, local sit-ins and pickets took place, campus civil rights organizations began, and students from around the country traveled to the South, including Tom Hayden, Sara Evans, Casey Hayden, Bob Zellner, Betty Graham, Jack Weinberg, and Mario Savio, all of whom were leaders who established subsequent libertarian organizations like SDS, FSM, and the Women's Movement (Sales 12-23). As one student activist stated, "The [Southern] sit-ins demonstrated that white students could act on their beliefs rather than sitting on them" (qtd. in Haber 43). In time, the initial "movement" to end racial discrimination in the South would become "The Movement," and it would include not only formal political and social *participation*, like the right to vote and the right to use public facilities, but also the dignity of social *recognition*. Furthermore, despite important differences, an initial convergence in SNCC and the predominately white New Left allowed them to share a common radical vocabulary that was participatory and anti-establishment, a view shared by expressivists like Peter Elbow and Donald Murray who attempted to introduce these values into their classrooms. Thus, the mass mobilization that opposed racial inequality would evolve into a broader movement that would question social barriers and "transform American social relations beyond recognition" (Gitlin xvii). In effect, the civil rights movement "was the template for every other movement of the decade" (xv). In addition, the relative success in the civil rights movement in the South increased

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the desire for broader changes and initiated more activism. As a result, "the South had been the boot camp for an emerging movement" (Anderson 84).

Indeed, SDS modeled itself after SNCC, according to Robert Haber, the first field secretary of the new organization (Morris 79). Other key figures who participated in the creation of SDS testified that Tom Hayden, one of the major forces behind the largely white student organization, was in fact awe-struck by SNCC's direct-action techniques and by how much they had accomplished. Shortly after his trip to McComb, Mississippi, where he met with a number of SNCC leaders (and where he was beaten by a mob of angry whites and jailed in Athens, Georgia), Hayden drafted the "Port Huron Statement," one of the foundational documents of the era. (Carson 176). In his own estimation, Hayden hoped to duplicate the goals and achievements of the civil rights movement on an even broader scale. By drawing a parallel between SNCC and SDS, he believed that both organizations would be "talking to people not only about specific issues, but about their lives and feelings" (Hayden 81). As the next chapter will show, the idea that personal lives and feelings were important in identifying larger social concerns was a primary goal of an expressivist like Ken Macrorie who championed students' rights in his groundbreaking work Uptaught (1970), wherein he described traditional schools as "perpetuating a system which robs young people of their selfhood" (78).

No Time Like Now

Like black activists in the South, Hayden and other radicals at the core of SDS were alarmed at the paradoxes of America, the sharp discrepancies that existed between the ideals and the realities in the nation. In large part, SDS had taken this cue from SNCC. During the summer of 1960, when representatives of SNCC appeared before the platform committee of the Democratic National Convention, they insisted that all Americans "must enjoy the full promise of our democratic heritage" in order to ensure that the nation fulfill "its responsibility to the free world" (Carson 14). Such appeals to the nation's founding principles was common among the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

rank and file of SNCC, and much of the "The Port Huron Statement" reverberated with those sentiments. As the statement indicated, "complicated and disturbing paradoxes" dwelled throughout the country. Similar to the assertions made by Southern black students, the document identified one of the most striking inconsistencies, racial inequality, by pointing out that the national tenet proclaimed that "`all men are created equal`" but the "fact" of black life in the South "and the big cities of the North" contradicted that creed. The proclamation also addressed the unpleasant topic of white hegemony, whereby it demanded an end to the poisonous maxim that the nation seemed to live by: "White, like might, makes right in America today." Racial bigotry, it added, must be driven out of society, while the full integration of all individuals into society would require new legislation and a dramatic shift in the nation's priorities. Thus, the document called for school integration, black voting rights, and equal opportunity "right now." Much like their Southern counterparts, who complained to civil rights veterans about piecemeal change, the activists who were now forming the New Left didn't want to wait "until the next week" or "until the next week after that." As the first sub-title in the document declared, members of SDS believed that they were creating an "Agenda For A Generation" that was eager for an immediate and a dramatic transformation of American society, also noting that "thousands of American students demonstrated that they at least felt the urgency of their times" when they "moved actively" in opposition to "racial bigotry" (Albert and Albert 176-182). In the opinion of the document's framers, change had taken place partly because a different generation had willed it so, or as Shelley noted in calling for Irish independence in "The Declaration of Rights," "The present generation cannot bind their posterity" to the past. Now seemed like a fitting time to put the Sixties' generation to the test by seeking to modify American society beyond the question of racial equality. With its broad critique of Cold-War culture, and its vision of radically altering the political and social landscape, the context of "The Port Huron Statement" revealed a number of other glaring disparities that existed in the country besides race relations.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In short, the manifesto represented the New Left's desire to present a rhetorical tonic for the country, to right the wrongs that the authors believed had endured through the fifties because of public apathy, political repression, corporate power, and official wrongdoing. To some degree, the document mirrored the attitudes expressed by reformers during the Romantic era who also condemned Pitt's repressive policies. Hayden's fifty-page draft was reconfigured over a five day period at a conference held in June, 1961, at Port Huron, a United Auto Workers camp forty miles north of Detroit. Of the fifty-nine who attended, all but sixteen were SDS members. They divided into small groups, and each committee was responsible for hammering out topics examined in the draft: racism, economics, foreign policy, domestic politics, the nuclear threat, the role of students, and communism. Perhaps the most hotly debated topic occurred in the committee that explored communism, the group chaired by Becky Adams, the former student body president at Swathmore College. The members involved in Adams' workshop mulled over the wording of how to condemn the hysterical anticommunist rhetoric of the Cold War era as well as address the lack of liberties most members agreed existed in communist countries (Gitlin, The Sixties 110-118). In the end, the statement denounced both the US and the USSR for waging the Cold War and for engaging in an arm's race that could lead to a nuclear holocaust. However, in contrast to the American Cold War orthodoxy that painted the Soviets as a monstrous global threat, the document stated that Soviet "tyrannies" and "oppressive institutions" did not mean that the Russians were inherently expansionist. In fact, the authors were more critical of America's role in advancing the Cold War to a fever pitch. Indeed, the U.S. government's anticommunist crusade exemplified yet one more of the nation's many paradoxes. While American officials attacked the Soviet Union for being a tyrannical state, the same officials robbed some Americans of their liberties because they represented a so-called "threat to national security" (Albert and Albert 63), which appears comparable to the British government's treatment of dissenters accused of conspiring with French Jacobins. As the two preceding

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

chapters outlined, Jacobins were considered to be a global threat to Europe's established order, just as dissenters were portrayed in the present era as jeopardizing the corporate-military establishment.

In addition, the authors of "The Port Huron Statement" claimed that while Presidential statements paid lip-service to America's peaceful intentions, the administration maintained a costly military budget. To add insult to injury, the Cold War culture enabled the government to support oppressive foreign dictatorships as a way to prevent communism from expanding. Third World nations were especially at risk, but the American government, the edict asserted, instead had a responsibility to "develop a reasonable theory of democracy" in these developing nations applicable to their own cultures. Furthermore, what had emerged out of the Cold War was "a permanent war economy" that had created an unprecedented military-industrial complex that was straining domestic liberties, in addition to the threat it posed internationally. "The influence of the same giants on domestic life is intolerable," the document argued, and "corporations must be made publicly responsible." As a bulwark against the excesses of big business, the authors called for "a revitalized labor movement" that had been decimated during the Cold War by accusations of communist infiltration (191). Members of SDS had long supported the labor movement, and they were fully aware that a Republican majority in Congress, in conjunction with President Eisenhower, had tattooed labor during the Cold War by identifying it with communism (Montgomery xxii). As a matter of fact, at the core of "The Port Huron Statement" is a pointed repudiation of the entire Cold War culture, right down to the celebration of American affluence. Once again, America seemed ridden with inconsistencies. Perhaps having mined the polemic contained in John Kenneth Galbraith's The Affluent Society (1958), the authors expressed alarm over the nation's presumptive rhetoric about economic prosperity, opportunities, and boundlessness while in reality millions lived in poverty. Furthermore, the authors suggested that even those Americans who felt "contentment amidst prosperity" still exhibited signs of "anxiety"

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

because they sensed they were not more fully engaged in "human affairs." Social arrangements had abstracted individuals from personal and social commitments. Ironically, the student radicals argued, the race toward affluence socially impoverished many Americans by disconnecting them from one another and by preventing them from participating in a more "worthy and fulfilling enterprise" (Albert and Albert 178). Like reformers of the Romantic era, students of the New Left believed that a viable democracy required active citizen participation.

In addition to absorbing Galbraith's work, the authors replicated the ideas of other earlier dissenters who became cult figures in the emerging counter-culture. They echoed Paul Goodman's Growing Up Absurd and C. Wright Mills' Power Elite, declaring that "the individual share in those social decisions determining the quality and direction of his life" rather than "`the power elites' of the corporations and the military" which are "still partly founded on consensus" (189). In the broadest sense, the establishment had de-personalized the population and turned the social order into a fractured community of isolated individuals. Throughout "The Port Huron Statement" the authors peppered the manifesto with pleas for a more participatory democracy that would overturn public apathy created by "dominant institutions" (178). "Apathy," the authors argued, "is not simply an attitude; it is a product of social institutions." And one of the dominant institutions that had a hand in shaping the public's passivity, according to the authors, was "the structure and organization of higher education itself" (183). If anything, higher education played a leading role in maintaining an unjust status quo while offering very little in the way of moral leadership.

Making values explicit—an initial task in establishing alternatives—is an activity that has been devalued and corrupted. The conventional moral terms of the age, the political moralities—"free world," "people's democracies"—reflect realities poorly, if at all, and seem to function more as ruling myths than as descriptive principles. But neither has our experience in the universities brought us moral enlightenment. Our professors and administrators sacrifice

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

controversy to public relations; their curriculums change more slowly than the living events of the world; their skills and silence are purchased by investors in the arms race; passion is called unscholastic. (178-9)

In mounting their assault upon The Ivory Tower, the students were claiming that members of the educational establishment had abstracted the contents of learning from the real world because they essentially had been bribed by leaders of even more powerful institutions. Meanwhile, as educators deliberated on the meaning of lofty, eternal truths, the real world around them was rift with social injustices, yet at the same time they were preparing students to accept being controlled by the very elite institutions outside of the university that were creating so many social problems in the first place.

Tragically, the university could serve as a significant source of social criticism and an initiator of new modes and molders of attitudes. But the actual intellectual effect of the college experience is hardly distinguishable from that of any other communications channel—say, a television set—passing on the stock truths of the day. Students leave college somewhat more "tolerant" than when they arrived, but basically unchallenged in their values and political orientations. With administrators ordering the institution, and faculty the curriculum, the student learns by his isolation to accept elite rule within the university, which prepares him to accept later forms of minority control. The real function of the educational system—as opposed to its more rhetorical function of "searching for truth"—is to impart the key information and styles that will help the student get by, modestly but comfortably, in the big society beyond. (184-5)

In effect, the students were advocating education for critical consciousness. Much of this critique of higher education would be taken up by other students, like those who propelled the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley in 1964, as well as by educators themselves, like Leonard Greenbaum and Rudolf Schmerl who proposed in Course X: A Left Field Guide to Freshman English (1970) that instructors allow students to examine "the academic enterprise as a specific

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

system with specific structures, people, money, myths and practices" (xx). In this way, "The Port Huron Statement" foreshadowed the decade's campus unrest, as well as more "official" indictments against American education, including key expressivists like Peter Elbow and Donald Murray who supported fundamental changes in writing instruction. As it came to pass, "The Port Huron Statement" was, to say the least, a scathing indictment against the educational system, and the antagonism expressed in it between the students and the educational establishment was an indication of things to come.

In fact, the overriding tone of "The Port Huron Statement" reveals that radical changes in American society could be achieved only through the awakening and empowerment of a new generation. The authors pegged their hopes on creating "a new left" that would "consist of younger people who matured in the post-war world," and the "university [was] an obvious beginning point" to find those new recruits. Measured in numbers, their success in establishing a New Left was impressive. By 1969, when the organization had reached its peak, nearly 100,000 students had registered with the group; it had hundreds of chapters, and millions of supporters (Gitlin 129), and its influence was causing many officials to bristle. Throughout its history, SDS was under constant FBI surveillance, while several of its members at its biggest chapters turned out to be government spies. In 1967, The University of Texas outlawed the SDS chapter on campus, and when a dozen students protested the move they were placed on academic probation, cited for "failing to show respect for properly constituted authority" (qtd. in Anderson 165). SDS also played a crucial role in organizing some of the most well-known demonstrations of the anti-war movement, like the Moratorium of October 15, 1969, when roughly 600,000 activists converged on the Mall of Washington, D.C., and the following month's Mobilization Against the War, when nearly a million protesters—including hundreds of Vietnam veterans—participated in the largest single demonstration in American history.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Un-Organizational Men

But SDS eventually suffered from its own internal 'logic' of not being a structured organization, and the New Left itself had a built-in anti-authoritarian philosophy which meant dissent was not only possible but encouraged. In short, the New Left imploded: "the ideology of the New Left was a permanent incitement to internal revolt," and the entire "movement ... encouraged revolts against its own authority in the name of its own values" (Gitlin, The Sixties 366). More specifically, because SDS's credo stressed participatory democracy, many of its founding members, like Hayden and Gitlin, were bound by their own rhetoric and felt helpless as SDS crashed and burned under the weight of its own beliefs.

In June, 1969, SDS held its ninth and last annual convention in Chicago, which turned into a shouting match between various factions. In part, the rudderless organization seemed poised for a mutiny, if not a shipwreck. As it turned out, both came to pass. Hayden and others were unwilling to turn back the most outrageous group, the Weathermen, as it staged a much publicized takeover, even as they knew they were witnessing the beginning of the disintegration of the New Left. Moreover, because many of the founders of SDS brought with them a suspicion of witch-hunting, they were reluctant to stifle dissent of any kind, and this may also account for why the organization was so easily infiltrated by the government, which played a significant role in its demise as well (Sales 590-615). Nevertheless, prior to its disintegration, SDS had a formative impact on social protest during the Sixties, while the authors of "The Port Huron Statement" articulated the growing concerns of many of its generation. And the New Left, with SDS as the largest and possibly most effective organization of its kind, led the way toward not only an opposition to most forms of established leadership but also to the liberation and empowerment of formerly disenfranchised members of American society. For many educational reformers, including expressivists like Macrorie and Elbow, this meant empowering the most repressed group contained in America's schools: students.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Of course, how widespread those liberating goals were achieved remains the subject of debate, along with the sense of urgency the New Left managed to impose on America's youth outside of its circle. After all, Gitlin later admitted, "the country was vast, the New Left was small" (The Sixties 192). Indeed, when Newsweek surveyed 800 students in 1965 at numerous universities, over ninety percent expressed confidence in higher education, big corporations, and the federal government, while over eighty percent were satisfied with college and had positive views about the armed forces. Although the numbers are not precise, between 1965 and 1968, only two or three percent of students considered themselves activists, while only twenty percent had participated in at least one demonstration (Anderson 126-8). Meanwhile, the population at large was as far to the right of SDS as those students polled by Newsweek, although as the Vietnam War dragged on public perceptions changed. At the end of 1967, only ten percent of Americans polled favored withdrawal from Vietnam, despite a two-year campaign by SDS which had staged teach-ins, demonstrations, and sit-ins, and had conducted electoral campaigns and recorded petitions against the war (Anderson iv). Even after the Kent State killings in 1970, when the nation was generally horrified to see pictures of fully-armed National Guardsmen shooting defenseless students, the majority of Americans still supported Nixon's invasion of Cambodia the following year. Actually, the deaths at Kent State were the event that mobilized the most number of students. Strikes broke out at about thirty percent of the nation's twenty-five hundred campuses, and demonstrations erupted at more than half. Perhaps between fifty and sixty percent of the students in the U.S. took part in some form of protest, while as many as a million students probably demonstrated for the first time in their lives during the month of May, 1969. That fall, when Gallup surveyed students, sixty-nine percent called themselves "doves," nearly twice as many as in the spring of 1967. In another survey, conducted in April 1970, on the heels of the Kent State deaths, forty-once percent of students agreed with the statement, "The war in Vietnam is pure imperialism," whereas only sixteen percent had done so in the spring of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

1969 (Gitlin, The Sixties 409-11). But the students were reacting to dramatic events, rather than suddenly embracing the politics or the ideology of the New Left. Even those students who went to Mississippi and participated in the Freedom Summer of 1964 claimed they were motivated less by politics, per se, and more by idealism, religion, and a desire to meet the challenges of achieving equal rights and human dignity for African Americans. "I was apolitical," one Northern white student professed, while another stated, "Politics? What the hell was that? ... I was going to spend my summer 'helping Negroes,' sort of a domestic Peace Corps number" (McAdam 44-49). Still, in spite of their seemingly apolitical reasons for getting involved, the students were showing signs of rousing from a decade-long social lethargy that the "The Port Huron Statement" pointed out was being said about America's youth, that "'Students don't even give a damn about the apathy'" (183). That now seemed less true in 1963 than it did in 1953. Not only were some students beginning to give a damn, but they were essentially carrying out what the New Left believed would radically transform American society. Whatever reasons inspired students to fight for civil rights or get involved may have been beside the point. What mattered most was that direct action became the tactic of the emerging white student movement, which had gained its inspiration from black student activists especially and SNCC. Richard Flacks, a founder of SDS, noted that direct action techniques "were seen by white intellectual students as ways of living one's values and simultaneously changing the world" (Flacks 76). Therefore, "The Port Huron Statement," as a seminal document of the era, fused of the student rebellions in the South with a hope expression of hope that such direct action could lead more of America's youth to work for broader social change.

Un-Organizational Men (And Women!)

Many of the Sixties' women who launched what became The Women's Movement, for instance, had been active in the civil rights crusade, and were also members of SDS, like Casey Hayden, Becky Adams, Barbara Haber, Marge Piercy, and Sara Evans. As Evans recalls in

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Personal Politics, the "civil rights movement welcomed female participation," and that experience altered how these women viewed themselves and slowly transformed the nation's views of a woman's place in society (109). Evans contends that the women who participated in the civil rights movement had stepped outside the rigid assumptions drawn by the Cold War culture, whereupon they eventually began to raise a radical critique about a woman's position in American society. "For them," she argues, "a particular set of experiences in the Southern civil rights movement and parts of the student New Left catalyzed a new feminist consciousness" (23). Although, the extent of that irritated many women who believed that New Left males were minimizing their contributions and their status in the organizations. Even before many women broke from the male-dominated ranks of SDS in the late sixties to start their own movement, women already were concerned about their secondary status as civil rights workers. As early as 1964 Casey Hayden and Mary King presented an unsigned memo on "the woman question" that raised the issue of male superiority in SNCC, stating that "this is no more of a man's world than it is a white world." The following year, they circulated a more elaborate letter to females in SDS and SNCC that addressed their grievances. "There seem to be many parallels that can be drawn between treatment of Negroes and treatment of women in our society as a whole," they claimed. "It is a caste system which, at its worst, uses and exploits women" (148). The complaints, however, mostly fell on deaf ears and eventually drove many out of the masculinist New Left.

Between 1964 and 1970 whenever women questioned gender roles in SDS and SNCC during meetings or rallies, they often were shouted down, and even pelted with tomatoes (Peck 64-66). In response to women demanding greater recognition and more substantial roles in SNCC, Stokeley Carmichael, who had become the organization's most visible activist, stated in 1966: "The only position for women in SNCC is prone" (Peck 208). Unfortunately for the future of the New Left, Carmichael's remark epitomized the sentiments of many men within the New Left organizations, which eventually led women to believe they had no other recourse than to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

establish their own movement. What many of these women resented was how men in the organizations dominated meetings, set agendas, and wrote most of the policy statements, all the while requiring the women to do secretarial chores and make meals—'women's work'. Of further concern to many women was how the "sexual revolution" further undermined their roles in the organizations. "The 'Free Sexual Revolution,'" one feminist told The Guardian's Margie Stamberg in 1969, "has only served to oppress women" (Peck 210). But as the sexual revolution served to perpetuate their oppression, women charged that traditional forms of sexism existed in the New Left. Many women therefore felt trapped by both new and old forms of sexist behavior and thinking. Writing in the movement journal Leviathan, Marge Piercy asked in "The Grand Coolie Dam" why movement women were no better off than women in the mainstream (Gitlin, The Sixties 373).

On the whole, women were exasperated with their treatment in the New Left as sex objects. By the late sixties, noxious traces of male bravado were permeating the New Left. (150-172). When the Weathermen and the Black Panthers ridiculed men in SDS for not taking up arms against the establishment, they charged the men with being "pussies," which irritated the women in the organization as much as it did the men (Gitlin, The Sixties 372). Furthermore, because some of the language of the counter-culture had shifted from informality to incivility, discourse sometimes was stretched to an unprecedented level of sexual explicitness, which some might argue had evolved into a crude corruption of the language overall.[6] At any rate, it seemed evident to many women in the movement that offensive sexist language was being used *especially* against them as a debilitating tool that undermined their stature in the New Left. Movement women in New York, for example, were outraged by a series of articles in the underground Rat that appeared throughout 1969 about "pussy power" and repeated references to female-oriented films as "Clit Flicks." To make matters worse, while it ran the stories the paper also featured the usual classified ads soliciting female flesh, sex hot lines, and pornography (Peck 208-10).[7] In

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

1968, the underground student newspaper, The San Francisco Express Times carried a male-byline story about a female anti-war activist who had just returned from Hanoi accompanying released American P.O.W.'s. Written in the first-person narrative form, which had become customary for the underground papers, the male author included a number of execrable sexist remarks. Many women in the movement were outraged, especially since the activist was a veteran of the New Left and her tour of Vietnam clearly placed her in harm's way. Her track record in organizing and supporting anti-war efforts was second to none. If anyone deserved respect and to be portrayed as a hero within the movement, women argued, she did. Yet, despite her credentials and her trip to Southeast Asia, the reporter used half of the article to recall how he fantasized about having sex with her during the entire interview. At one point, he professed that he wished she would just shut up and take off her clothes. Nor did it help that the paper had been referring all year to the Presidential race between the two candidates as a choice between "The Dick" and "The Hump" in the upcoming "Erection" (Gitlin, "The Underground Press" 27-8). The language had opened up, but its fissure often revealed a disturbingly sexist side. Moreover, as the incident with the female anti-war activist demonstrated, it seemed that no matter how hard women worked for peace or for social justice, men were mostly interested in them as sex objects.

The event that essentially caused many women to abandon SDS and start their own movement occurred the following year. On January 19, 1969, the New Left held a rally in Washington marking the inauguration—or the "inhoguration," as it was called—of Richard Nixon. Among the members of the New Left scheduled to speak was Marilyn Webb, a veteran of the movement. Webb had years of experience, including organizing a Head Start program in Chicago while a graduate student in psychology, and she had spoken before a number of black congregations. But when she addressed the crowd with, "We as women are oppressed," and denounced a system that views some humans as "objects and property," she was booed off the stage. Males in the audience were shouting, "Take her off the stage and fuck her," "Take it off,"

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and "Take her down a dark alley." (Gitlin, The Sixties 363).[8] For most New Left women, Webb's humiliation represented the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back. They were angry and crestfallen, bitterly disheartened to think the political movement that they believed would be different had turned out to become yet one more bastion of male chauvinism, perhaps even misogyny. To a certain degree, many of the women believed that *they* represented a paradox *within* the New Left, feeling the "pinch of a discrepancy between their potential and their position in the movement" (365). Women fought back, but in the end they believed their only recourse was to take up their own cause, apart from a male dominated New Left.

In February, 1970, women took over New York's Rat for a special issue. In it, Robin Morgan wrote a piece that created the most buzz within the New Left, "Goodbye to All That," which rhetorically outlined the need for women to organize on their own. From the start, she put forth a stinging rebuke of why the movement had failed its libertarian mission that expressed the anguish many women of the New Left were feeling: "White men are most responsible for the destruction of human life and environment on the planet today," she claimed (Albert and Albert 510). And who, she asked, is leading the revolution to change all of that? The revolution, she insisted, was therefore tainted by its leaders. Then she argued for the creation of a new, feminist movement that would clear the debris of male hegemony and make way for a true revolution: "It seems obvious that a legitimate revolution must be led by, *made* by those who have been most oppressed: black, brown, and white *women*—with men relating to that as best they can.... It is the job of revolutionary feminists to build an ever stronger independent Women's Liberation Movement, so that sisters in counterleft captivity will have somewhere to turn, to use their power and rage and beauty and coolness in their own behalf for once, on their own terms, on their own issues, in their own style—whatever that may be" (515). Morgan's article, according to one activist with a long-time history in the movement, "was the shot heard around the Left" (Peck, 213). Other declarations of women's independence from the male-centered New Left quickly

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

followed. That same year Kate Millet published Sexual Politics, a best-seller that extended an article she co-authored at Barnard/Columbia University during the rebellious atmosphere of the 1968 student strike. Like Morgan, she aimed wide, and—in what would become a derogatory term—was militant. "All historical civilizations are patriarchies: their ideology is male supremacy," she argued. As an oppressed group, she continued, women were therefore denied "economic independence, the power of office, representation, an image of dignity and self-respect, equality of status, and recognition as human beings." The degrading depiction of women in the media furthered and perpetuated the lowly status of women in society, she added. Alice Kramden was not a joke, but neither was Shakespeare's shrew, Katherina. "The woman fostered by cultural media, high and low, then and now, is a marginal and demeaning existence, and one outside the human condition—which is defined as the prerogative of man, the male" (111-12). If the medium was the message, then many women believed it was time to re-adjust the signals. In time, thousands of women began questioning the entire structure of American society, like few other periods in the nation's history.

As it came to pass, 1970 was the watershed year for the Women's Movement, largely because of the rupture that had occurred in the New Left. Although the National Organization of Women had been formed three years before the rupture within the SDS (1966), it was not until 1970 that its membership skyrocketed and it was able to organize dozens of demonstrations around the country. NOW declared a national women's mobilization to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, calling it "The Women's Strike for Equality." Held on August 26, 1970, activists urged women to walk out of their offices, leave their assembly lines, unplug their irons, stop teaching their students, and put down their mops until male bosses everywhere guaranteed that all jobs were open to female employees—with equal pay. With the slogan, "Don't Iron While the Strike is Hot," thousands of women took to the streets in cities across America. As many as 5,000 marched to Boston Commons, perhaps as

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

many as 3,000 to San Francisco's Union Square, and hundreds of others rallied in Denver, Baltimore, Seattle, and Los Angeles. At the Pentagon, dozens of secretaries stuffed waste baskets with bras, girdles, and pink panties to protest being sexually harassed and mistreated by their male supervisors (Anderson 359). The largest rally occurred in New York, where nearly 50,000 women marched down Fifth Avenue. "Today is the beginning of a new movement," Kate Millet declared to the New York crowd (Friedan 146-157). At no other time in the nation's past had so many women in so many places rallied for equal justice and equal status. It was "the day that made [women's] power visible to the world" (155). In the wake of the rallies, the Women's movement became a social phenomenon. For example, in 1969 there were about forty consciousness-raising groups in the entire nation; two years later there were four times that just in New York, Chicago, and San Francisco (Carden 35). In 1968, the first two feminist underground papers appeared; three years later, there were over a hundred journals, newsletters, and newspapers addressing women's issues. In the 1971 Books in Print Subject Guide, only nine pages existed that listed all of the titles under the heading "Woman." For the separate title "Feminism," a word that did not even exist in the edition five years earlier, the reader was re-directed to search under "Woman." Twenty years later, 129 pages were required for the titles now listed under "Women," a subtle, but significant, shift from singular to plural. In addition, three times as many titles appeared in the "Feminism" category than existed in the entire 1971 "Woman" section. Thus, 1970 turned out to become perhaps the most important year for the women's movement. Indeed, that same month that women staged their rallies, The Ladies Home Journal published a special section written and produced by feminists after its offices had been seized by female journalists who demanded that the publication address women's issues beyond baking the perfect chocolate cake or being the perfect hostess when a husband entertains his boss. Soon afterwards, women at Newsweek and Time staged their own rebellions (Evans 20-22). To a large extent, then, the August rallies acted as *the* pivotal event that ignited the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

emergence of a full-blown feminist movement that was no longer confined to women of the New Left, or to the infrequent publications of such books as Betty Friedan's The Feminine Mystique (1963). On that day, many women believed for the first time in the power of their own strength in numbers, and they were hopeful of finally becoming a social force to be reckoned with. "It made me feel ten feet tall," one participant wrote to Betty Friedan recalling her experience at the New York rally (Friedan 151). And that giant step toward empowerment essentially originated out of the growing "conscious-raising" groups that were formed by New Left women who defected from SDS.

Raising the Rafters

Shortly after Morgan was humiliated at the Washington rally, New Left women promptly began to meet on their own in what became known as "conscious-raising" or 'c-r' groups. During the meetings, women often followed a four-stage process of opening up, sharing, analyzing, and abstracting (Anderson 336-7; Gitlin 370-71). In the early stages of the developing 'c-r' groups, veterans of the New Left spoke of the irony of the movement's egalitarian ideology and the oppression they felt within it. As the meetings evolved, women began to offer a critique of their personal lives that focused on the personal side of their oppression. This led to a fuller critique of how their personal oppression was manifested in larger social spheres, like family, school, and work. By sharing their personal experiences with one another, the women discovered a key idea that would anchor the revolt: the importance of the personal. Women believed that if they could change the quality of human relationships at a very personal level then the quality of social and political relationships would be altered for the better as well. The personal could become the political, an idea later expressed by Peter Elbow who believed that personal writing could lead students to an awareness of how they are socially situated. Significantly, such an idea was one of the guiding principles behind New Left efforts to organize for social change, especially as it was delineated in "The Port Huron Statement." Both the civil rights movement in the South and the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

emergence of a radical student revolt in the North stressed the importance of first engaging potential activists at the personal level in order for them to work for social justice. Moreover, New Left women who led the fight for a Women's Movement by creating 'c-r' groups had gained a great deal of experience and learned important tactical skills as civil rights workers or anti-war organizers, which they later incorporated into formulating their own movement. But this was especially true for those women who stocked the ranks of the SDS-sponsored Economic Research and Action Projects (ERAP). Thus, both ideologically and experientially, New Left organizations like SDS and SNCC had sown the seeds for the feminist dissension that occurred within their own ranks. While women could point to the very real oppression that they felt within these organizations, they also were aware that their budding movement owed its ideological and strategical structure to the New Left, as the sub-title of Sara Evans' best-selling book testifies.

One undertaking, particularly, that stood out as a formative experience for women occurred while they worked for ERAP. According to Evans, the Northern sects of ERAP were stocked with many female organizers who were much more successful than their male counterparts in the interpersonal and the community organizational needed for this special unit of SDS. ERAP originally developed out of a conversation held between Hayden and Stokely Carmichael during the '63 Freedom Summer in the South. With a $5,000 grant from the United Auto Workers, the purpose behind the creation of the organization was to re-deploy the hundreds of Northern white students who had flocked to the South and recruit them to work for social and economic justice in other regions of the country, mostly in the Northern ghettos, but also in places like the impoverished areas of the Appalachian foothills. It was conceived, in the words of its co-sponsors, as an "interracial movement of the poor" (Gitlin, The Sixties 192). In the North, the women who filled the ranks of the local ERAP chapters discovered that much of the urban poor were single mothers, mostly on welfare, who opened up to female ERAP workers in ways that were not available to the males. As the women sat around kitchen tables drinking coffee, it

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

became evident to many movement women that by sharing their personal experiences as women with other women, even from different socioeconomic backgrounds, common ground could be found. By *first* establishing personal relationships with the predominately female urban poor, the movement women learned that it functioned as a springboard for identifying wider social grievances, as well as creating a more conducive climate to better organize them (Evans 138-41). Thus, the experiences that women gained from working in the civil rights and New Left movements were incorporated into their own struggle for social, economic, and political equality. Although the left had been insisting on a more equitable society, movement women would eventually assert that movement men were replicating the patriarchy of American society rather than offering an alternative. Ultimately, many female militants brought to women's politics a long-standing New Left commitment to equality, only now the principle would be applied to gender.

Politics *is* Personal

Indeed, even the phrase "the personal is political," so commonly attributed to the Women's Movement, had its roots in prior New Left ideology. After all, the inter-relatedness of personal problems and social change had been discussed in the earlier sociological writings of C. Wright Mills, who, along with Herbert Marcuse, was a darling among intellectuals in the New Left. Hayden wrote his master's thesis on the author, and Todd Gitlin explains in The Sixties that few thinkers had such broad appeal in the early days of SDS, wherein Mills's books, articles, and speeches were widely circulated among its members (106; 122). No wonder, then, that "The Port Huron Statement" mentions the "'power elites'" that dominate national policy, a reference to the sociologist's The Power Elite, while the document's frequent condemnations of America's permanent war economy echo Mill's 1958 book, The Causes of World War III. But the most significant appropriation of Mills's philosophy was the notion that personal problems are connected with social issues—and vice versa. As such, the movement emphasized the importance

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

of placing meaning in personal existence through an awareness—a consciousness-raising, if you will—of the link between the private and the public. Just as women had explored the personal travails of being a woman in the larger, male dominated society, so had the New Left stressed the significance of translating private troubles into legitimate political concerns. When Greg Calvert, national secretary for SDS, spoke at the organization's conference in Princeton in 1967, he aptly described the advantage of beginning with the personal in order to mobilize people, one at a time, for social change. Calvert, who came from a poor, working-class family in Washington State—his father worked in a lumber mill, his grandparents Finnish-born Wobblies—indicated that an authentic reform movement could take place only after it became a struggle by those engaged in it for their own freedom. When Guatemalan guerrillas enter a village, he said, they don't hand out tracts from Marx or Mao. That, Calvert argued, would lead nowhere. Instead, the activists talk to the villagers at a personal level, eventually leading them to join a communal effort for political and social liberation. Calvert stated:

> [They] talk to the villagers about their own lives: about how they see themselves. Then, the guerrillas encourage the villagers to talk about their own lives. Then a marvelous thing begins to happen. People who thought that their deepest problems and frustrations were their individual problems, discover that their problems and longings are all the same. (qtd. in Burns 77)

Calvert, like other young radicals in the movement, was helping to redefine what was understood as "political." As Gitlin observed, "expressive politics" had taken personal anguish into the public arena. "It trusted feeling and wanted to 'let it all hang out,'" he noted. "The implicit theory of expressive politics," he added, "was that the structures of private feeling begin before the individual, in capitalist acquisition and the patriarchal family; public in its origins, private feeling should therefore be expressed where it belongs, in public" (135). To a great extent, when Wordsworth attempted to poetically express the feelings of the vulgar, he too hoped

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

to bring their private pains and passions into the public sphere which might spark an upward reevaluation of their social worth. Wordsworth's "expressivism" was as politically rooted as Sixties "expressive politics," embraced by such leading expressivists as Donald Murray, Ken Macrorie, and Peter Elbow, as the next chapter will demonstrate. The personal *had* to be revealed if public policies were to be altered.

Although the feminist movement popularized the slogan "the personal is political," the belief in the existence of the political dimension to personal life was embraced by leftists in SDS from its inception. New Leftists were therefore calling for a reintegration of the personal with the political, especially since they had come to believe that powerful institutions were alienating individuals from each other and from the public sphere. The power elites had successfully differentiated between the public and the private realm by discounting or canceling an individual's right to participate in the major social questions of the day (Aronowitz 12-24). As early as 1962, when "The Port Huron Statement" was published, young radicals began to insist "that the individual share in those social decisions determining the quality and direction of his life" (Albert and Albert 181). They were therefore challenging the idea that elites alone have the wisdom and the expertise to control the political process and organize society, a radical reassessment of the social order not unlike that found in the Romantic era. The personal *had* to become political if individuals expected to avoid being squashed by 'the system,' a vast industrial system that dictated the terms of social organization, from decisions about foreign police to the configuration of higher education. Even many anti-war activists and draft resisters expressed their political act in personal terms. According to one protester, who was among the 1,500 young men in mid-October, 1965 who turned in their draft cards at churches and federal buildings in the First National Days of Non-Cooperation, defying the government was a "personal, deep communication-type politics" (qtd. in Burns 77). SDS activist Tom Bell, who helped organize the Non-Cooperation event, also considered the demonstration as "a fusion of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the personal and the political that would build, so we dreamed, toward a non-violent revolution" (78). Taking a personal stand against the establishment seemed noble, and in many ways linked to other revolutionary eras. "I was drawn to do things that were romantic but could also have a rationale to them," Hayden told Todd Gitlin when he was asked why he often put his life on the line to fight for social change. "Romantic in the sense that I think it is noble to stand up against an evil," he added, "and that we don't get many opportunities in the normal course of life to do anything that's noble at all" (The Sixties 291).

Despite the conservative backlash that would portray Sixties' radicals as selfishly reckless and the precursors of the yuppie "Me Decade" of the 1980's, the idea behind personal awareness was that it could be channeled into public action. Personal liberation could lead to political empowerment. "The Port Huron Statement" therefore endorsed the idea that for a *new* Left to prevail it had to "give form to ... feelings of helplessness and indifference, so that people may see the political, social, and economic sources of their private troubles and organize to change society" (180). In some ways, this idea of giving form to feelings was what Wordsworth had in mind when he hoped that his readers would be emotionally stirred by the sufferings of the poor depicted in Lyrical Ballads, and then act to change unequal social arrangements. But in contrast to Wordsworth's approach, radical youths in the sixties believed that change could occur from the ground up, rather than from the top down; that the poor and oppressed could fight their own battles once they were organized. Nonetheless, the general principles were the same, in the sense that social change would take place once people were moved at a personal level. As noted above, this idea fueled the feminist movement, but it also generated a methodology that inspired other groups to organize for their own empowerment.

Takin' It to the Streets

Gays, for example, merged the personal with the political in their attempt to seek social recognition and political justice. For years, police in New York City had been raiding well-

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

known homosexual clubs in the Greenwich Village area, arresting and harassing club owners and their clientele. Following one such arrest at The Stonewall Inn in 1969, gays decided to fight back. The night after the Stonewall raid, over 400 demonstrators confronted the police who were once again sweeping the area. A riot broke out after the police broke ranks and began arresting and beating the demonstrators. News of the incident provoked gays in other parts of the country to "come out of the closet" and openly demand equal treatment under the law and within society. Gay rights organizations sprouted up in gay communities, like San Francisco and New York, and gay organizations were formed on campuses, like Rita Mae Brown's Student Homophile League at New York University. In each of the organizations they discussed being gay, and, like the women's c-r meetings, they tapped into their personal stories as a way of examining societal injustices. "As the personal and political came together in our lives," noted Jonathan Katz, a leading gay activist, "so it merged in our heads, and we came to see the previously hidden connections between our private lives and public selves; we were politicized, body and soul" (qtd. in Anderson 318). Earlier student activism therefore created the conditions for broader militancy among formerly "unseen" groups. As the upcoming chapter will show, in such a political climate educational reformers like Peter Elbow and Ken Macrorie students likewise needed to be heard from. The time became right for students to "come out" from under the dominating control of a teacher-centered curriculum.

Like gays, other repressed groups began to insist on greater equality. And they were often led by student activists who had taken their cue from the anti-establishment youth movements that were sweeping the country during the late sixties. In Crystal City, Texas, for example, 1700 Chicano students from all grades—almost three-fourths of the student body—walked out of their classes in November, 1969, demanding that the school board hire more Hispanic teachers and counselors, offer bilingual instruction, and provide courses on the Mexican-American experience. Labeled as "the spinach capital of America" (a statue of Popeye

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

inhabits the town square), Crystal City was a typical migrant worker town, with all of the political power invested in a handful of white families, although the majority of the city's population was Hispanic. In effect, the entire community was run by an apartheid government, including the school board, whereby its ordinances were so lopsided that the high school punished any student who spoke Spanish, even though the student body was almost ninety percent Hispanic! After the student walk-out, tensions escalated between the white minority and the Chicano majority, bringing the city to a virtual stand-still. Students were able to solicit help from U.S. Senator Ralph Yarborough, a liberal Democrat who filed a petition requesting that federal authorities cut off all funds to the district because it was in violation of the Civil Rights Act. The school board backed-down, and the students won all of their demands. Two years later, Hispanics had taken control of the entire city government. Crystal City served as a model for other parts of the country as Hispanics began organizing for greater political and cultural clout.

Other disenfranchised groups sought political empowerment as well, prompting one critic to argue that the mid-sixties and early seventies "saw a so-called ethnical revival sweep the U.S., celebrating the idea of the multi-ethnic nation" (Greer, "The Ethnic Question" 122). The celebration of ethnicity and race during this period was a stunning reversal of what was championed in the fifties—the white, suburban male. Embracing the multi-ethnic nation would have been an incongruity in the fifties, and if anyone had spoken up in favor of Gay rights or for empowering Chicanos, they would likely have been branded for possessing un-American opinions. For Native Americans to even be described as *Native Americans* at a time when America's movie hero, John Wayne, was at the height of making the West safe for white settlement, would have been equally preposterous. But like many other formerly marginalized groups in the sixties, Native Americans sought to extend their rights as well. In July, 1968 The American Indian Movement (AIM) was formed by a group of "young militants" who saw it "as the last desperate hope of their people" (Matthiessen 39). Indeed, the living conditions on

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

reservations were deplorable, where life expectancy was 44 years, compared to the national average of 66. If any segment of the population represented the most silenced and the most invisible group it was Native Americans. Most reservations had no plumbing, running water, or heating, and tribes lived in make-shift shacks and dilapidated mobile homes. In 1970 unemployment on some reservations exceeded eighty percent. In addition, the income of Native American families on the reservation was the lowest of any ethnic group in the nation. AIM accused the government's Bureau of Indian Affairs of creating "the most complete colonial system in the world" (qtd. in Anderson 335). AIM, like other radical organizations of this period, attempted to generate more personal activism through an identification to cultural or racial heritage. Personal empowerment could be achieved if the individual more positively identified with the group, possibly creating the stimulus to participate in a struggle for greater social and political justice. The organization indeed had captured the imagination of young Indians in a way that earlier activist groups had not, and very soon after its inception AIM organizers were turning up at demonstrations from coast to coast, culminating in the November, 1969 occupation of the abandoned federal penitentiary on Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay. Led by a young Mohawk, Richard Oakes, and Grace Thorpe (the daughter of the Olympic athlete Jim Thorpe), the long-term sit-in lasted until June 1971, with over 10,000 Indians from dozens of tribes visiting the site. The protesters offered to buy the island for $24 in glass and beads, announcing that it should be turned into a Reservation. As the young activists mockingly declared in their "Proclamation: To the Great White Father and All His People," a former prison would be a suitable place for an Indian Reservation since, as "determined by the white man's own standard," it clearly represents the conditions on any Reservation (Matthiessen 37). Newsweek announced that Alcatraz had become "a symbol of the red man's liberation" (Burns 158). For the most part, AIM touched off a renaissance in Native American culture for many young Indians who were taking greater pride in their heritage. And, once again, larger political and social demands

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

emerged out of a politics of the personal. "We are learning how to work together," declared a Cherokee activist, "tribe with tribe" (336). 'Red Power,' like 'Sisterhood is Powerful,' 'Gay Pride' and 'Brown Power,' had surfaced.

Of course, 'Black Power' had been the rallying cry within the Civil Rights Movement for almost a decade. When Stokely Carmichael called on blacks to develop an "ideology which speaks to our blackness" (qtd. in Echols 166), he was among a number of black nationalists who believed that there was somehow an essential and authentic 'blackness' that could be reclaimed and used as a bridge toward social empowerment. Other groups, like gays and Native Americans, would borrow this group-identification thread from black nationalists and apply it to advance their own goals. Women, as well, argued that if *women* expected to challenge a male-dominated society it had to begin with a *woman's* search to find the commonalties in women's experiences based in generalizations about *women's* oppression. In the opinion of the principal architects of the women's movement, when talking about their personal experiences women would come to understand that what they had believed were personal problems were, in fact, "social problems that must become social issues and fought together rather than with personal solutions" (Sarachild 165).

For many critics of the period, however, the sixties inaugurated a divisive tidal wave of "identity politics," a belief in the idea that politics is rooted in identity, and that there somehow exists a kind of core experience, initially identified as "women's experience," or "the black experience," an attack often made against expressivists who have presumably exaggerated personal "identity" or "self-expression" in their classroom at the expense of societal signifiers. As a matter of fact, when SNCC and CORE (Congress of Racial Equality) expelled all whites from its membership in 1966, it concluded that it needed to establish racial identity, to enhance what it described as "blackness or black consciousness" (Carson 205). Ultimately, critics argue, this strategy spun progressively outward to create ever more discretely defined categories, like

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"the black female experience" or "the divorced Chicana lesbian experience." While there may be some truth to this argument—along with a noticeable absence, for the most part, of class or economic identities—"telling it like it is" was a radicalizing experience for many previously dis-empowered groups.

Tellin' It Like It Is

In some ways, identity politics gave the oppressed the moral authority to finally speak, and ultimately act, which many expressivists argue they offer to their students, as the next chapter will show. According to Peter Clecak, the result of this multifaceted search for self through group identification was "a rapid democratization of personhood" (6). In America's Quest for the Ideal Self: Dissent and Fulfillment in the 60's and 70's, Clecak maintains that the various political and cultural movements of the sixties were unified in their desire to circumvent "the experts'" who contrived biological, social, and cultural obstacles to personal liberation and fulfillment (12). Thus, the numerous movements of the period were attempts to contravene a fabricated social hierarchy. America, it seemed, was not that much different than any other empire. As such, the various movements of the sixties contained representatives from less privileged or socially peripheral groups who moved against the established hierarchy to claim their portion of social justice and to seize their cultural space. In effect, as the era progressed, many people actively embraced the ideas set forth in "The Port Huron Statement," which delineated how the power elites were limiting personal freedom and political participation, as well as obstructing some social groups from the democratic process.

As in any hierarchical regime, student activists argued, political and social elites had categorized vast segments of the American population as socially inferior, culturally un(American)important, and politically irrelevant—an observation not unlike Wordsworth's assertion that the vulgar were socially and culturally stigmatized by the leisure class. Therefore, with the assistance of the New Left, many disenfranchised groups in the sixties tried to dissemble

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the artificial social boundaries that had been erected by America's elite. To a great extent, as chapters two and three demonstrated, dismantling artificial social categories was at the heart of creating a more viable democracy in the Romantic period as well. When Todd Gitlin described the movements of the sixties as "a traditional Romantic vision" of personal liberation, coupled with an attempt to topple conservative authority, he was linking two eras that shared a utopian view of what a truly democratic society should look like. And because sixties radicals were not living under an oppressive aristocratic regime, but instead were battling against an imperfect democratic system, it is safe to say that greater social changes emerged out of America's own "Romantic vision" of a more equitable state. As Terry Anderson concludes in his study of the period, "the result" of sixties activism "is more personal freedom than at any time in the history of the Republic" (422). Personal liberation and political empowerment became the dual themes of the late Sixties and early seventies, and combined they resulted in a massive assault on the predominately white, upper-class males who traditionally governed the nation's institutions. Sixties radicalism proved compelling to many precisely because it promised to transform life, and in many ways it did. "Say what we will about the Sixties' failures, limits, [and] disasters," Gitlin argues, "America's political and cultural space would probably not have opened up as much as it did without the movement's divine delirium" (The Sixties, 435).

With this view in mind, perhaps the most significant shift in the nation has occurred in the way in which personal and social *space* has been redefined. Since the Sixties, the official *sites* of power, authority, and privilege have come under attack or have been seriously contested as the inequitable source of gate-keeping devices. For a time, people who by virtue of their color, age, and gender were far from the sites of formal power became politically engaged, agents of change who indeed transformed the political and social map with "an expressive politics of protest" (Clecak 123). According to the editors of The Sixties Without Apology, the era represented "a disruption of late-capitalist ideological and political hegemony," an assault on the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

establishment of "everyday life as the bureaucratic society of controlled consumption, of the end of history" (2). They add:

> The sixties also saw the emergence of new historical subjects, or at least of groups that constituted themselves as subjects on the basis, for instance, of sex, and race. Having formed social movements, these subjects contested institutional spaces but also declared a sort of counter hegemony to the dominant social and ideological power. (4).

Nowhere was institutional space more contested than in the student sit-ins that flourished throughout the South in the wake of Greensboro. As noted above, nearly every major movement that followed acknowledged its debt to SNCC and black student activists. Whether it was SDS or the Women's Movement, activists agreed that this new phase of the civil rights movement triggered "the revolution we hoped for," as Hayden stated after his involvement in the Freedom Summer (Gitlin, The Sixties 128). In addition, the black student activists' piecemeal methods of political action, framed by their advocacy of participatory democracy, was imitated by nearly every movement of the time. Perhaps the several movements that followed recognized that these young activists had developed an understanding of power's capillary-like nature, which to some extent foreshadowed the theories eventually formulated by Foucault and other poststructuralists. In effect, the student activists managed to defuse some of the strength and authority contained in any power structure by striking at it at very local levels. The effectiveness of the civil rights movement occurred because students organized sit-ins to attack small, individual sites with a wide-spread, grass-roots effort that replicated power's chain-link configuration. When other movements followed suit and challenged the social order, they imitated the maneuvers of SNCC and used them as a touchstone for broader political change. Thus, many Northern whites who went South to participate in the civil rights movement absorbed both the tactical operations and theoretical framework deployed by black student activists. When many of them returned North, they found another power source that they believed needed to be transformed—higher education.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

For many radical students, colleges and universities represented yet one more established fixture in the nation's inequitable power structure. Many students believed that because of the academy's association with the military-industrial complex and its over-bearing treatment of them as second-class citizens, it was ripe for change. As a result, colleges and universities came under attack like never before in American history. But like so many of the other movements of this time, The Free Speech Movement and the campaign for students' rights rose out of the South.

"After 20 years of schooling, they put you on the day shift"

In fact, so interconnected is the Free Speech Movement with the Civil Rights Movement that the incident that sparked the FSM occurred when Berkeley campus police arrested 23-year old Jack Weinberg for distributing literature about The Congress of Racial Equality. The police were enforcing a recent University of California ban on organized advocacy of off-campus political causes. When, on October 1, 1964, they spotted Weinberg handing out "unauthorized" information on the civil rights organization at a table in Sproul Plaza. But the police didn't get very far after they arrested Weinberg. As they put him into the patrol car, several hundred students surrounded it. The crowd grew to 3,000 as it sat around the vehicle for thirty hours, on occasion singing civil rights songs (Eynon 39-44). During that time, several students climbed onto the car and addressed the crowd; the first speech was delivered by Mario Savio. At this early stage of the student demonstrations, the participants were so intent on practicing a very civil form of civil disobedience, that before he leapt onto the vehicle's roof, Savio removed his shoes (Gitlin 164). Like Weinberg, Savio was a veteran of the civil rights campaign, and his concept of leadership was derived from SNCC. "There the leader was on the same level as the people," he stated (qtd. in Fraser 81). Michael Rossman, a math graduate student who was one of the first to sit down and not let the police take Weinberg away, recalled that Savio indeed delivered his speech not as a leader but as someone, like them, who was outraged by the incident.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"He spoke, but not as a leader giving directions," Rossman noted. "He said it was wrong what they were doing; that was the first speech, and that was the nature of the leadership—to give voice to the common consciousness" (77). And the common student consciousness was appalled that the university, under pressure from conservatives in the community and in the state government, had curtailed their right to speak out against racism and organize a voter registration campaign, which is what Weinberg was doing when he was arrested. Clearly, most of the student body objected to the administration's prohibition, including organizations not affiliated with the left, like Youth for Goldwater, who suspected their civil rights were being trampled (Eynon 54). By the next morning, nearly 5,000 students had gathered in Sproul Plaza, and Berkeley President Clark Kerr finally agreed to meet the activists. Savio emerged out of the meeting and climbed back on the police car announcing that a settlement had been reached. A student-faculty committee would examine the free speech issue and make recommendations to the President, Savio told the crowd. Kerr also decided not to press charges against Weinberg and review the cases of eight other students who had been suspended for allegedly inciting the demonstration.

But after a month, the settlement collapsed. Kerr had stacked the committee with his own supporters, and then they stalled for weeks. Kerr worsened the situation when he attacked the student activists in the press, raising the old Cold War bugaboo that the students were part of a communist conspiracy. The headline in the San Francisco Examiner beamed, "Reds on Campus," after Kerr had spoken to the newspaper. Kerr reported that "a hard core of Castro-MaoTse-tung line of Communists were in the crowd of demonstrators" (Lipset and Wolin 106). Then the President reissued the ban on political activity, and announced he would press charges against Savio for "entrapping a police car" and for biting a policeman "on the left thigh, breaking the skin and causing bruises" (Anderson 101), which seemed highly improbable considering Savio stood on the patrol car in stocking feet so as not to scratch it. Kerr's bumbling comments to the press and the administration's retraction of the original agreement alienated even more

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

students, bringing that many more of them over to the side of what was developing into a full-fledged movement. In fact, by the end of November, the first FSM steering committee had been formulated, which now began to address other issues beyond free speech, from the presence of the military recruiting on campus to course offerings. On December 2, thousands of students gathered at Sproul Plaza demanding that the university drop the charges against Savio and several other student activists, as well as re-examine the free speech issue. Once again Savio addressed the crowd: "There is a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart, that you can't take part; you can't even tacitly take part, and you've got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus and you've got to make it stop" (103). In time, Savio's remarks about the university functioning like a machine would become part of the lexicon of other student activists, including a statement FSM issued in 1965 that accused "the machinery of education," of curtailing real learning. Unlike any other time in the nation's history, thousands of students would offer a critique of higher education's role in the state apparatus, which they believed represented yet one more working link in the giant corporate-military establishment. What was happening at Berkeley was a prelude of things to come.

In a sense, the Berkeley students were primed for a confrontation with the university, and many of them were prepared to place their bodies upon the wheels and levers, as Savio recommended. With Joan Baez singing "We Shall Overcome," the students marched to Sproul Hall and shut down the administration. Governor Pat Brown, Sr. responded immediately. He ordered Kerr to use force if necessary to oust the students from the administration building if they refused to leave. With the governor's blessing, 600 policemen entered Sproul Hall at around 4 a.m. In what was then the largest mass arrest in California history, they rounded up nearly 800 students. That morning even more students joined the protest. As many as 7000 students had gathered in the plaza, while others began picketing all campus entrances. Flyers were distributed

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

with a caption that pronounced the event as history in the making: "IT IS HAPPENING NOW!" And it urged students to take a stand:

> In the middle of the night, the police began dragging 800 of your fellow students from SproulHall. Sproul Hall was turned into a booking station; the University has become an armed camp—armed against its own students!...
>
> Instead of recognizing the legitimacy of the students' demands, the administration is attempting to destroy the FSM.... The administration position is clear. It is saying "We decide what is acceptable freedom of speech on this campus. Those who disagree will be ignored; when they can no longer be ignored, they will be destroyed.
>
> We have not been defeated by the university's troops! Our protest will continue until the justice of our cause is acknowledged. You must take a stand now! No longer can the faculty attempt to mediate from the outskirts of the crowd. No longer can students on this campus afford to accept humbly administration fiat. Raise your voice now!

It ended with the famous civil rights declaration "WE SHALL OVERCOME," suggesting how strongly the students identified with the civil rights movement and saw their own cause in a similar light (Lipset and Wolin 18-182).

Many student activists, in fact, did draw a parallel between their own struggle for free speech within the university and the struggle for civil rights in the South. Some joined the FSM, like Steve Hamilton, because of the similarities between the two causes, while others supported FSM, like Lisa Rubens, because of "its connection to the civil rights movement" (Eynon 54-5). After the students won the support of the faculty, who overwhelmingly voted to condemn the use of police on campus and recognize the FSM as a legitimate student organization, the students declared a strike. That week half of the classes were canceled. Kerr arranged a special meeting for December 7, and about 16,000 students, faculty, and staff gathered at the Greek Theater. Kerr's speech sounded conciliatory, but the event was tainted when police prevented Savio from

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

speaking. The next day, the faculty senate passed a resolution affirming that "speech or advocacy should not be restricted by the university." Initially, the administration balked, but eventually it decided to accept the faculty's motion. When the FSM held its first legal rally on January 4, 1965, Savio informed the crowd that the movement was a success because "it's so obvious to everybody that it was right" (Lipset and Wolin 192). The students had won a major victory against a seemingly impenetrable institution. And like student activists in the South, the FSM put another chink in the establishment's armor, revealing that those in positions of power can sometimes be very obviously wrong. The older generation, the generation weaned in the Cold War climate of the fifties, did not have a monopoly on integrity, or automatically know the proper path for the next generation, the students were arguing. Although the older generation by dint of their authority did hold the reins of power, it appeared self-evident to many student activists that they sometimes utilized that power improperly. Once the students began to question the administration's leadership, Michael Rossman wrote, "then the emperor had no clothes" (qtd. in Burns 64). In the opinion of many student activists, Kerr's decision to uphold an implausible ban on their civil rights could be just as shortsighted as a Southern politician's enforcement of segregation. In many ways, the students—like black student activists before them, and feminists after them—were rebelling against their parent's ideology, or at least what they considered to be the older generation's conformity and conservative values. For many activists in the Sixties, the status quo had to go. "We'd been raised on a diet of anti-communism," Savio insisted. "America was anticommunist, anti-socialist, anti-anything critical of society in a systematic way" (Eynon 51). Therefore, when The Free Speech Movement criticized the administration's policies, it was also a reflection of a generational confrontation that was the hallmark of the era, a confrontation that pitted one decade's vision of America against another.

But the FSM was significant for several other reasons. For one thing, it demonstrated that the practices deployed by civil rights workers could be applied in the struggle against other

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

political or social hierarchies, while also embracing the ideological principles set out in "The Port Huron Statement." Many Berkeley students acknowledged that they modeled their campaign against the administration after SNCC, claiming that a series of "ad hoc" meetings would form much in the style of SNCC. Rossman recalled that student activists at Berkeley "worked through direct personal involvement in small autonomous interest groups," and the groups "strove to govern themselves by participatory democracy, and to come to consensus on decisions" (Fraser 82). As a result, campus issues increased personal awareness as students focused on themselves, their status at the college, and the status of the college within society at large.

The personal was becoming political. FSM was therefore important for another reason: Over time, FSM began to challenge the mission and purpose of the university beyond issues of free speech. Students felt that they were being treated as raw material for the knowledge factory. FSM rallies sported signs with the slogan: "Warning! I am a human being—do not fold, spindle, or mutilate me." As one activist put it, "The Free Speech Movement has given us a taste of what it means to be part of something organic. Jumping off the conveyors, we have become a community of furiously talking, feeling, and thinking human beings" (qtd. in Eynon 58). For many student activists, the university was not an isolated Ivory Tower, separated from larger social issues. In point of fact, many students believed the academy intentionally hid inside the Ivory Tower or ducked behind its scholasticism to mask its very direct association with the corporate-military establishment. While Kerr could declare at the height of the free speech crisis that "an educational institution" should be used solely for "educational reasons" and that it was "not right to use the University as a basis from which people organize and undertake direct action in the surrounding community" (Lipset and Wolin 106), it was quite apparent for many students that the university was already implicated in the political arrangements of the surrounding community, and not for the good of the community either. After all, Kerr himself admitted in his 1963 book The Uses of the University that "the university is being called upon to merge its

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

activities with industry as never before" and that "Intellect...has become an instrument of national purpose, a component part of the 'military-industrial complex'" (124). For many students, the FSM gave them the chance to jump off the conveyor belts before being shipped out to corporate factories. Perhaps some students were therefore primed to identify with Bob Dylan's line from "Subterranean Homesick Blues" that "after twenty years of schooling, they put you on the day shift." Many students didn't want to be "put" anywhere, especially if the omnipresent "they" were imposing their will on them. Barbara Garson, who edited a FSM newsletter, believed that the Berkeley demonstrations empowered students to resist the cookie-cutter orbit of higher education: "Many people were beginning to say: 'I want to do something with my life. I don't want to be a sharply chiseled tool to be used for corporate profit'" (qtd. in Fraser 79). In February, 1965, the FSM issued a statement that expressed the sentiments of many students who were beginning to question the academy's role in the corporate establishment and how they were being 'used' as instruments for its maintenance. Printed in California Monthly Magazine, "The Position of the Free Speech Movement on Speech and Political Activity" claimed that "research and training replace scholarship and learning" because the student must "serve the purely technical needs of a society." It declared that "popular government cannot survive without education for the people...but there now exists the machinery of education that has abstracted the student from real learning" (Lipset and Wolin 215). The activists were arguing that there was a reason why students felt alienated in their schools. There was a correlation between their personal estrangement and the mechanical routines the university foisted on them. By linking students' personal problems to social conditions, the FSM was able to transform alienation into a political understanding and action. FSM activists repeatedly linked alienation from the university to alienation from the larger society. As Jack Weinberg wrote in the January, 1965 issue of Campus CORE-lator, "the bureaucratization of the campus is just a reflection of the bureaucracy of American life" (Eynon 59). In effect, the FSM uncorked a radical critique of the entire social

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

structure, first by concentrating on the personal rights of the students, and then by looking at how the university's organization and social functions, which would later be picked up by "radical" expressivists who insisted on making the same connections for their writing strategies as the next chapter will reveal. But many FSM activists believed that their movement went beyond a reappraisal of the classroom. In Michael Rossman's opinion, it was a steady, but inevitable, progression toward a refutation of the entire system:

> So, for the first time the question becomes what about us? For the first time we took the conditions of our own lives, the institutionally determined conditions of our own lives, not as the base from which to address others' problems, but as the ground of our own oppression. When people began to make this sort of connection, the floodgates opened. And what came pouring out was an analysis of the system of higher education in this country, its social embedding, and a first table of remedial measures, reforms, and experiments leading towards another kind of system. (Fraser 84).

Like black student activists in the South, most Northern students were not seeking to overthrow the system, but to change it. Before long, the Free Speech Movement spread to other campuses, like the Universities of Wisconsin, Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan. At a rally in Ann Arbor, Paul Goodman, the author of Growing Up Absurd, heralded the FSM as the "vanguard proletariat-in-training of the knowledge industry" (Gitlin 174). And, after Berkeley, what many student activists objected to the most was how the knowledge industry was serving the defense industry.

Up Against the (Ivory Tower) Wall

Students were becoming increasingly concerned with defense companies that conducted job interviews on their campuses, and there were campaigns against Honeywell, Lockeed, and General Dynamics. At SUNY-Buffalo, 45 faculty members were arrested as they occupied the university president's office in protest of the city police occupation of their campus—the largest number of academics ever arrested at one time in the United States. Buffalo police arrived on

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

campus following anti-war demonstrations, heated protests against ROTC officials, and the abduction of corporate recruiters. The rebellion against the war and military-related industries had spread throughout America's universities. Student activism was therefore not an isolated series of events that took place only at the nation's most prestigious colleges, as many critics have argued (Heineman 2-7). Early on, the primary target became the manufacturer of napalm, Dow Chemical. In the minds of many students, the massive quantities of napalm being dropped on Indochina seemed to symbolize American aggression against a third-world nation, and Dow became the symbol of a "war profiteer," as Ohio University activists argued. In 1967, student activists at Ohio presented their administration with "The 99 Demands," that included everything from coed dorms to an immediate end to the war, including the demand that the university should immediately end its affiliation with the chemical company (Ferber and Lynd 210). The campaign against Dow spread to other campuses, especially at The University of Wisconsin, where nearly 300 activists blocked a Dow recruiter from conducting interviews, chanting "Down with Dow." After talks between officials and activists failed, the University called in the police, equipped with riot gear, tear gas, and billy clubs. Club-swinging police sprayed students with mace and indiscriminately lashed out at males and females alike. Within minutes, thousands of students rallied in support of the activists when they surrounded the police, freeing demonstrators from the police's grasp and letting air out of paddy-wagon tires. Students hurled bricks and rocks, and in the end seven policemen and sixty-five students were hospitalized (Gitlin 254). The demonstration tore both the University and the community apart. Thousands of students and over 300 faculty members condemned the "animalistic brutality" of the police and boycotted classes. Wisconsin State Assembly leaders viewed the episode differently. By a vote of 95 to 5 they demanded that the University expel all protesters, with assemblymen calling student activists "long haired, greasy pigs," while one legislator exclaimed during deliberations that order on campus must be restored no matter how forcefully: "Shoot them if necessary. I would...it's

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

insurrection" (qtd. in DeBenedetti 188). Fortunately, University officials did not resolve the situation at the end of a gun, but instead suspended the company's interviews for the remainder of the semester.

Meanwhile, the events at Wisconsin sparked more demonstrations against Dow at other schools. Over twenty other campuses joined the battle, with activists holding company recruiters hostage at Harvard, Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania. At UCLA, demonstrators waved signs that read, "Making Money Burning Babies," while at Harvard students chanted, "Napalm is Johnson's baby powder." On other campuses, student activists passed out flyers that included the slogan "Dow Shalt Not Kill" blazoned across the page (184-91). But perhaps the most notorious campus demonstration occurred at Columbia in 1968, where students not only vilified the university's involvement in the military establishment but also denounced its racially insensitive construction of a gymnasium in a predominately African-American community. Sixteen days after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Columbia University was turned into an armed camp.

To many student activists, Columbia represented the twin evils of much of American society, in that the college directly supported war-related industries while its official activities seemed racially motivated. As it turned out, student activists didn't have to look far for an appropriate symbol of what ailed the college. Its president, Grayson Kirk, seemed to epitomize the establishment. He sat on the board of many corporations, such as IBM and Consolidated Edison. But what irked many students the most was his association with the Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA), which conducted on-campus weapons research and was funded largely by the Defense Department and the CIA. To many students, IDA proved that Columbia was part of the military-industrial complex and that Kirk himself was a primary cog in the war machine. To make matters worse, while other colleges around the country were liberalizing their campuses, Kirk's administration seemed to grow more repressive. Many *in loco parentis* regulations were

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

still in effect, even though hundreds of other institutions had abandoned them, and the college was putting coeds on trial for "living with a boyfriend," a disciplinary measure few other colleges were practicing. Kirk also made sure the FSM never got a foothold on his turf. When activists confronted military recruiters in 1967, he promptly banned all forms of demonstrations and threatened to expel any student who participated in them. Kirk, whom many students and faculty considered haughty because of his regal demeanor, aggravated the situation by labeling student activists as wayward youth who "reject authority [and] take refuge in turbulent, inchoate nihilism" (qtd. in Anderson 194). As tensions mounted between the administration and student activists, the University's decision to build a gym in Morningside Park brought the conflict to its head.

Columbia already had a growing problem with its black students in the Student Afro-American Society and with local residents. Few blacks were ever admitted to the elite college, and that Spring less than seventy were enrolled as undergraduates. In addition, the school was located close to Harlem in the crowded area of Morningside Heights, and it expanded its facilities by buying up residential buildings and forcing tenants to relocate, almost all of them minorities. When the university announced that it planned to build a gym in Morningside Park, residents and student activists protested, some carrying signs, "Gym Crow Must Go!" When the university held a memorial service for Martin Luther King, many students believed it smacked of hypocrisy, for they believed Columbia represented yet one more white institution that bullied the black underclass. During the King ceremony, SDS campus chairman Mark Rudd and a number of other students stormed into the chapel and seized the pulpit, declaring that it was an abomination for such a racist institution to pay tribute to a civil rights leader. That same day, six students defied the ban on demonstrations by protesting the university's affiliation with IDA in Low Library, the site of the President's office. When they were ordered to report to the dean for the infraction, they refused. After being suspended, Rudd wrote his notorious open letter to Kirk,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

which was deliberately crude, although at the same time conforming to grammatical civility. "There is only one thing left to say," Rudd proclaimed. "It may sound nihilistic to you, since it is the opening shot in a war of liberation. I'll use the words of Le Roi Jones, *whom* (italics mine) I'm sure you don't like a whole lot: 'Up against the wall, motherfucker, this is a stick-up'" (Gitlin, The Sixties 307). The next day, on April 23, 500 activists held a rally at the campus sundial, attacking the administration for suspending the students, for building a gym in defiance of the neighborhood, and for supporting the war. Kirk refused to budge, and the frustrated students marched to Hamilton Hall, took a dean hostage, and prepared to occupy other campus buildings, including President Kirk's office. During the next two days, a thousand more students joined the occupation and 'liberated' three more buildings. On April 26, over a thousand students and some faculty held a rally in front of Low Library, chanting "Kirk must go!" Plainclothes police were sent in to end the demonstration. Brandishing billy clubs, they charged the crowd and knocked students and professors to the ground. But the occupation continued, and it turned into a national news story, just as left-wing luminaries Norman Mailer, Susan Sontag, and Stephen Spender showed up to lend their support. They were followed by leaders of the youth rebellion, Hayden, Carmichael, and Abbie Hoffman. Four days later, Kirk called in the police. In the middle of the night, on April 30, more than a thousand New York City police stormed the occupied buildings and arrested over 700 students, a tenth of the entire student population. Over 100 people—including faculty—were injured. The incident managed to antagonize almost the entire college community, with neutral students and professors now aligning themselves with the student activists. A general strike was called, and classes virtually ceased. Almost half the students and faculty signed a petition demanding Kirk's resignation. By the beginning of the fall semester, the students won their demands. Kirk and his vice president resigned, and the new administration asked the courts to dismiss charges against the students. They also promised not to build the gym, and to sever the university's ties to IDA. The new administration also dropped

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the ban on demonstrations, and granted students "a voice and representation at the highest level" (Anderson 203). For both student activists and the nation, Columbia was big news.

Although Columbia may have been the most publicized campus protest—how could it not be when it occurred in the nation's media capital—it represented one of hundreds of campuses that witnessed student unrest. The ongoing conflict in Vietnam had transformed more than just the budgets of universities. It had altered student activism. Through 1968 and 1972 the major issue on campuses involved the Vietnam War, either in the form of protests against the government's activities in Indochina, or in objection to the college's involvement with the military establishment—or both. In no small way the anti-war movement duplicated the pacifist sentiments expressed by such Romantic radicals like Paine and Byron who believed that the British government's military operations, both at home and abroad, were linked to preserving aristocratic privileges. Meanwhile, the use of force to protect privilege infuriated student activists in the Sixties. In 1968, an opinion poll reported that four percent of U.S. students identified themselves as "radical or far left." Two years later, the same poll reported eleven percent as radical (Yankelovich 70). In 1970, the Nixon Administration was so concerned that student activism indeed was shifting the balance of power that he organized a commission to study the problem. Dr. Edward Teller spoke before the Commission and warned that events in universities in 1969 and 1970 had "practically cut the connection between universities and defense-related industries." He added, somewhat extravagantly, that if student activism continued at its present pace, "In twenty years the United States will be disarmed" (Bowles and Gintis 214). When the Commission issued its final report, it equated student activists with religious zealots, hoping to prove that incidents at Columbia and elsewhere were being conducted by narrow-minded fanatics: "Again, in parallel with historical religious movements, the new [youth] culture advocate tends to be self-righteous, sanctimonious, contemptuous of those how have not yet shared his vision, and intolerant of their ideals (Report of the President's Commission 65). While

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

events at Columbia and other campuses was making the establishment nervous, it was boosting the New Left's confidence.

For a while, at least, the victory at Columbia buoyed the New Left, although in hindsight some activists believed that it inaugurated an arrogant phase in the movement that led to the disintegration of SDS. Nevertheless, membership in SDS swelled immediately after the occupation, and a "hip-radical identity" seemed to flourish on campuses throughout the country (Gitlin, The Sixties 288). More importantly, activists believed that Columbia demonstrated that the academy was vulnerable, so long as students were able to expose its relationship to other unsavory elements in society. SDS New York regional organizer Jeff Jones, who worked closely with student activists at Columbia, believed that the occupation had national implications. "By creating a confrontation with the university administration," he stated, "you could significantly expose the interlocking network of imperialism as it was played out on the campuses," adding that, "You could prove that they were working hand-in-hand with the military and the CIA, and that ultimately when you pushed them, they would call upon all of the oppressive apparatus to defend their position from their own students" (qtd. in Fraser 10). Nowhere was this more true than at San Francisco State College when Governor Ronald Reagan promised to keep the campus open "at the point of a bayonet if necessary" when a general strike virtually shut down the college. Reagan had campaigned on a get-tough with student radicals platform, and when the going indeed got tough at SFSC, Reagan responded in kind.

Originally, the crisis began in the fall of 1969 when the Black Student Union (BSU) demanded autonomous ethnic studies programs. At some point, the students insisted that the college provide open admissions for students of color. Neither one of those demands were met, and tensions were building between the white, conservative administration and BSU, which had wide support from the surrounding black community. Finally, when a black instructor suspected of being a Black Panther was fired, the BSU declared that they would begin a general strike from

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

classes in November. Very little was resolved while President Robert Smith held office, and when he offered to resign the conservative trusteeship (with Reagan's blessing) appointed conservative professor S.I. Hayakawa who had no administrative experience whatsoever. What he did possess, however, was a desire to squash the student demonstrators. Hayakawa immediately declared a "state of emergency," threatening to fire any professors who supported the striking students, and announcing that the police would keep the campus open. That approach simply antagonized students, and on December 2, dozens of students began taunting the police, throwing rocks and bricks, and smashing windows. The police retaliated, and the campus was turned into an armed camp. The strike lasted throughout December, and classroom attendance plummeted to twenty percent, with only a third of scheduled classes meeting at all. During a rally in January, the police arrested 450 teachers and students. The strike lasted 134 school days, and over 700 students and teachers were charged with various crimes, often accompanied by jail sentences. One professor spent six months in prison for participating in the January demonstration, much like radical pamphleteers and printers who served far more time in British prisons for "subversive" activities during the Romantic era. Of course, democratic structures had developed by the middle of the twentieth century to limit the state's repressive actions and guarantee greater liberties. As a result, the U.S. in the Sixties had a more open society than England in the 1790's or 1820's. As such, by the Sixties the SFSC administration eventually agreed to a black studies department, and appointed a black administration officer who was hired to grant more financial aid to minority students, although the next confrontation on one of California's college campuses would draw blood (Gitlin, The Sixties, 388-9; Anderson 294-99). Thus, changes were occurring in higher education, but they came slowly, and they came at a heavy price.

For many students, change wasn't occurring fast enough—either on campus or in society. Sometimes, students attempted to reconfigure the academic system, as they did at San

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Francisco State College in 1970. Students established an experimental satellite college, wherein they could design their own courses, hire their own teachers, and—with faculty approval—earn credits toward graduation (Fraser 270). On the whole, though, students remained leery of the academy's mission, and they continued to see it as a racially biased institution, as well as linked to the military-industrial establishment, as the Columbia uprising revealed. According to a survey conducted by Daniel Yankelovich, only four percent of students surveyed in 1970 were satisfied with higher education, while almost half of the students responded that "fundamental reform of universities" was necessary (92). In the same survey, three quarters of the students believed that the Vietnam War should come to an immediate end (74). As a result, activists on campus often mingled anti-war protests with demands for wide-scale university reforms. For example, in the spring of 1969 alone, three hundred colleges and universities, comprising a third of American students, saw sizable demonstrations, a quarter of them marked by strikes or building takeovers, and a quarter more by disruption of classes and administrative duties. Activists aimed their anger either at campus ROTC buildings, or at the administration for not hiring more minorities or for failing to create new departments that reflected the nation's diverse ethnic and racial population (Gitlin, The Sixties 340-343).

Often, student activists were confronted by a hostile administration and/or state government unwilling to concede to student demands. At the University of California in Berkeley, a violent showdown occurred in the spring when The Third World Liberation Front clashed with administrators and then police over establishing a department of ethnic studies. A few months later, students, hippies, and community activists grappled with police and the National Guard when the university tried to take back an area adjacent to the campus that had been turned into a "People's Park." Although the university had earmarked the abandoned lot to construct a soccer field, it lay unused for months. The "park" became common ground in the opinion of the "sod brothers and sisters" who planted trees, grass, and flowers. The school's

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

chancellor saw it differently. He accused the squatters of trespassing and built an eight foot cyclone fence around the area to "exclude unauthorized persons from the site." On May 15, a few thousand people met at Sproul Plaza and marched over to the site in order to reclaim it as their own. Even though about 80 percent of students and faculty voted in favor of keeping the park, and the Berkeley City Council had ruled in favor of its development, the administration refused to budge, in large part because it had the full support of Governor Reagan who was attempting to stack the state's Board of Regents with his own hand-picked appointees, and they seemed determined not to give in this time to student demands. Reagan appeared more eager than ever to stop radical activities on California campuses, especially at Berkeley. As he proclaimed in his 1966 run for the governorship, "Beatniks, radicals, and filthy speech advocates have brought shame on a great university," he declared, and he promised to "clean up the mess at Berkeley" (Cannon 148). When "People's Park" became yet one more campus dispute between "filthy" radicals and administration officials, the governor was prepared to take dramatic steps. "If it takes a bloodbath," he announced, "let's get it over with. No more appeasement" (150). And blood was shed. When the demonstrators who had gathered at Sproul Plaza marched over to the Park, they were met by a squad of police in full battle gear who sprayed the crowd with buckshot. One man was permanently blinded, while another, James Rector, died four days later after being seriously wounded. The Berkeley community first went into shock, but then some began retaliating by hurling bricks and rocks at the police. Reagan sent in 3,000 rifle-bearing National Guardsmen, along with helicopters that showered the campus with tear gas, choking students and professors who were conducting classes. He imposed a nightly curfew, and declared that the region was under martial law. Berkeley had become an occupied territory, and in the course of the next week, more than a thousand people were arrested (Anderson, 326-7; Gitlin, The Sixties 354-61).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

But Reagan's popularity in the state was undiminished. Most people in the state supported his brass-knuckle tactics. The majority of Californians seemed fed-up with student radicalism on campus, in part because they obtained most of their information about student unrest from the establishment press which tended to highlight the most extreme forms of activist behavior. The press frequently "framed" news stories by relying on statements of government officials and routinely disqualified student demonstrations unless there were arrests. Both print and broadcast media carried stories that included the most flamboyant activists who could be counted on to deliver the crudest comments. In addition, if students categorized on-campus demonstrations as "Movements for Justice and Peace," the mass media instead labeled the activities as civil disturbances and recorded the opinions of a handful of students who considered the protesters an infringement upon their right to attend class. During the Columbia occupation, for instance, The New York Times labeled the students "extremist forces" and "disruptive nihilists" who were doing "irreparable harm to the universities and to the whole democratic process," while Newsweek concentrated on the students' obscene language and featured a separate article on students who occupied President Kirk's office and "urinated in a wastebasket." California's major dailies and broadcast media often tabulated the most bizarre circumstances and tallied the most outrageous comments produced by the drugged-out hippies and students who congregated around the Haight-Asbury region. When the People's Park incident was reported by the mainstream press, it was noted that the police had been provoked to open fire in order to protect themselves against an unruly mob (Gitlin, The Whole World Is Watching 42-109).

An Alternative Source and the Return of Romantic Visions

The underground press, on the other hand, portrayed events in an entirely different light, similar to the dissident sources of information and analyses which Cobbett printed against government policy in his Political Register at the beginning of the nineteenth century, or the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

dissenting tracts published by Daniel Isaac Eaton's printing firm in the 1790's, as Chapter Two pointed out. Following the "People's Park" melee, few underground reporters could resist analogies to Vietnam. In Ramparts, Robert Scheer noted that Berkeley Chancellor Heyns sounded "like a Secretary of State...apologizing for possible excesses of the troops." Scheer added that just as liberal presidents had expected that their "limited" war in Vietnam was a way of placating the right, so had well-disposed administrators wished to satisfy Reagan with an imprudent counter-offensive. "The policy begins with reasonable men," he noted, "as it did in Vietnam and in Berkeley, but it must always end with the hawks....However much they demur later on, the Heynses unleash the Reagans" (qtd. in Peck 102). Throughout the decade, this alternative news source provided readers with entirely different versions of events than could be found in the mainstream press. In the aftermath of the violence that erupted during the Democratic Presidential Convention in Chicago, a Berkeley Barb reporter noted that a person could watch TV, switch channels, and "while the police were beating up the demonstrators in Chicago, you could see the Russian soldiers chasing Czech civilians in Prague." But, the reporter caustically added, "for the record, the Chicago police are much more brutal" (84).

In part, the underground press revealed the deep-seated division between the youth culture and the establishment. Two decidedly different visions of America, or "Amerika," as it was often called in the student papers, were being played out in two separate mediums. In time, students were relying more heavily on the underground papers for daily news than the mainstream press. By July 1969 the Los Angeles Free Press sold 95,000 copies a week, the Berkeley Barb 85,000, The East Village Other 65,000—and much like the radical pamphlets that circulated in the Romantic era, the number of copies sold represented only a fraction of the number of real readers who borrowed and shared copies of the papers on campus (Gitlin The Sixties 343). In 1971, there were over 400 underground publications, and the hip-radical culture seemed to coalesce there, which thousands, and then millions read. Despite the publications often

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

displaying a remarkably naïve giddiness about the revolutionary potential, and, as noted above, a stupidly sexist slant, the underground press influenced writing beyond the campus. The New Journalism really began in the underground with its first-person accounts of news events, which was subsequently picked up by the likes of Norman Mailer and Tom Wolfe. Writers in the underground publications began to treat their own notions and responses as part of the story, in revolt against the spurious objectivity of the mainstream press. Even in its publications, the New Left surrounded itself in personal politics. As Morris Dickstein observes in Gates of Eden, the cultural mood of the Sixties, which sharply challenged the premium on impersonal authority, prompted a rhetorical shift in perspective, where "subjectivity and self-display" revealed a "romantic phase" in American writing. The alternative press, Dickstein adds, was a reflection of the "Romantic trust in the ego" with its "celebration of the individual," in contrast to the fifties appeal to cultural traditions and "integrationist" conformity (137), a set of anti-authoritarian beliefs introduced by Donald Murray, Ken Macrorie, and Peter Elbow into their writing programs, as the following chapter will reveal. As it came to pass, the FSM had spawned the underground press, with its advocacy of a student's right to speak out and play an active role in the organization of society, both on and off-campus. As the FSM spread, with its open meetings, informality, and alternative vision of cultural formation, so did the desire to establish alternative forms of communication. When a 21-year old student at Michigan State created the first campus underground news media, The Paper, he presented it as "an independent alternative to the 'established' news media of the university community" (Leamer 20).

In large part, underground student writers were mirroring the stance taken by Wordsworth and other Romantics who believed that "vulgar" discourse could act in opposition to the linguistic standards imposed by the leisure class. When "expressivism" appeared in full-swing in the early seventies, it too in many respects represented an alternative to traditional forms of writing instruction. Although, as the next chapter will demonstrate, expressivism was

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

part of an overall reassessment of higher education, ultimately leading to a cultural war over the academy's mission. In effect, students "in the various power movements challenged an education based on male European civilization" (Anderson 416). And once the counter-culture movements in the sixties had swept across the nation, several major institutions were pressed into creating departments in African American Studies, Women's Studies, Native American Studies, Chicano Studies, and Queer Studies. This trend would indicate that the nation seems to have traveled a greater distance than one generation, from a time when the U.S. Senate filed its report in 1950 claiming that "hiring one homosexual can pollute a government office," or that a science book with pictures of black and white rabbits living in the same cage needed to be banned from a library. Beginning with the Greensboro sit-ins, student activists had confronted the Cold-War establishment on many fronts, and, with varying degrees of success, initiated an amalgamation of reform movements that dramatically transformed American society. After the Sixties, few cultural spaces would ever look the same, especially when it came to higher education. "Student power is no longer an issue," Donald Murray wrote in the May, 1969 issue of College English, "it is a fact" (118). Murray, who is considered a standard-bearer of expressivist rhetoric, envisioned a more egalitarian curriculum, and the article is clearly steeped in the principles of the counter-culture reform movements. In the long run, other critics would argue in favor of implementing academic reforms initially proposed by student activists. Thus, by the beginning of the seventies, Murray would be joined by other scholars who were demanding that America's educational system needed some radical alterations, and nowhere was this more true than in the emerging field of Composition and Rhetoric.

---

[1] When one black activist was informed by the waitress that the restaurant "does not serve niggers," he quipped: "That's okay, I don't eat them."

[2] Coincidentally, Wheeling, West Virginia was the location where McCarthy issued his famous "I have a list" speech in February, 1950, that launched the anticommunist crusade.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

[3] In Gates of Eden, Morris Dickstein argues that "distance and reserve" were expected not only from journalists, but also from the poet and novelist. With the exception of the Beats, most serious American novelists turned inward, like Saul Bellow, who recorded the unending personal foibles and annoyances of male, Jewish intellectuals. In the fifties, Dickstein argues, most writers played it safe and preferred to experiment with discursive forms and techniques rather than discuss politics or society.

[4] In the aftermath of the Reagan era, which seemed to be an attempt to recapture the "glory days" of the fifties, Francis Fukuyama wrote a controversial essay, "The End of History," that appeared in a 1989 issue of National Interest. It mirrored much of Bell's earlier argument, and three years later, at the end of the Bush Administration, Fukuyama published a book-length version of the article. Fukuyama absurdly claimed that Reagan's economic policies had stabilized the U.S. to a point where no other social changes were necessary, while Reagan had so thoroughly undermined totalitarian regimes on both the left and right that global stability was imminent as well.

[5] Of course, communism was still spreading around the world, as the war in Vietnam "demonstrated," and even in the early-eighties the Reagan Administration argued that unless communists were beaten back in Central America they would overrun Mexico and eventually set up camp in Texas.

[6] For an interesting account of how the language of the counter-culture shifted from informality to outlandish incivility see Kenneth Cmiel's "The Politics of Civility" in The Sixties: From Memory to History.

[7] It should be noted that the FBI forced Columbia records to stop advertising in the underground press, which had been a source of enormous revenue for the papers. The agency also pressured other legitimate companies from advertising in them, and once that economic supply had been cut off the underground publications had little recourse but to seek out advertisement from illegitimate enterprises. (Mackenzie, Angus. "Sabotaging the Dissident Press." Columbia Journalism Review. 57 (March-April 1981): 20-24.

[8] Gitlin suspects that undercover government agents had deliberately stirred up trouble in SDS between the sexes in order to destabilize the organization, leading Gitlin to suspect that the most outrageous sexists were government operatives. (Gitlin, The Sixties 364). Gitlin may have a point. After the government released classified documents, it was revealed that perhaps as many as one out of ten demonstrators at the Chicago Democratic Convention in 1968 was a government agent. As it turned out, the most violent confrontation that took place between activists and the Chicago police was started by an undercover agent.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

CHAPTER FIVE

EXPRESSIVISM IN AN AGE OF DISSENT

In February, 1967 The Los Angeles Free Press published "The Student as Nigger," Jerry Farber's blistering analysis of students in higher education. Farber's gushing metaphor proposed that students were as oppressed as blacks in American society, an analogy deployed by other activists of the era, including feminists, who likened women's conditions to those of racial minorities. In 1969, for instance, Gayle Rubin wrote "Woman as Nigger" in the Ann Arbor Argus. Within months, Farber's critique circulated through an underground network of student publications, reprinted over 400 times within two years, until officials launched a campaign reducing the number of underground papers from its peak of nearly 500 in 1972 to about 50 by 1976. In publishing dissenting material like "The Student As Nigger," the underground press threatened established institutions and was therefore muted by school and government authorities, not unlike the official actions organized against radical tracts during the Romantic era. In recent times, the F.BI. intimidated printers and street vendors, even physically assaulting some, and it staged a number of phony drug busts that shut down many publications, especially those connected to the Black Panther Party. For example, the feminist paper Off Our Backs was under constant surveillance, while its offices were frequently ransacked by "criminals" who smashed typewriters, ripped out phone lines, and rifled through mail. Local authorities also helped to curtail the spread of alternative media by harassing reporters, editors, and publishers, as in Jackson, Mississippi, when deputy sheriffs assaulted eighteen Kudzu staff members. In Miami, Florida, the editor of The Daily Planet was arrested twenty-nine times between 1969 and 1970 for "distributing pornographic material." The Los Angeles Free Press was mysteriously bombed three times, and just as enigmatically neither the local police nor the federal government made any effort to investigate the incidents (Peck 52-68; Ripps 30-120). In short, substance

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

contained in the Free Press, like Farber's attack on the academy, was considered too incendiary for the establishment.

After all, articles like Farber's encouraged students to identify with disenfranchised groups that were seeking empowerment. To compare higher education to a Southern plantation bordered on sedition for many officials. Farber's article received detailed attention because it was a landmark text of the Sixties, and while it was certainly popular among students, it also may have inspired other academicians to present additional critiques of schooling in America. In fact, two high school teachers in the Los Angeles area were fired on the spot for reading "The Student As Nigger" to their classes, and the article was debated in the California State Legislature's Education Committee, where one legislator termed it "an incredible abuse" and demanded that Farber be fired from his post at Los Angeles State College (Farber, "Preface" 13). Apparently, educators were supposed to toe the line, not stir up trouble with dissenting opinions. Arguing to alter the system was not in the best interests of the power elites. But, to Farber, higher education played a vital role in maintaining the status quo. Indeed, at the core of Farber's indictment against the academy was the master-slave metaphor, suggesting that colleges—or any school, for that matter—wielded authority thoughtlessly and abusively, as it folded, spindled, and mutilated students. In effect, Farber was concurring with many student activists who had been waging a campaign against the authoritarian "multiversity" and all that it stood for.

According to Farber, the traditions of higher education impose upon students an overbearing set of standards that mold them like putty into appropriate models for the corporate-military machine: "Thoroughly schooled and ready for GE or IBM or the State Department, the graduate is a skilled, neat, disciplined worker with just enough initiative to carry out fairly complicated assignments, but not so much initiative that he will seriously question the assignment itself" (30). In school, students are taught to "turn away from" themselves and "towards the institutions around" them, initiated into accepting a subservient role in society. But

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

this should come as no surprise, Farber argued, because "Higher education is controlled primarily by the business elite." Therefore, the academy plays an important role in preparing students to cooperate in their own disempowerment. According to Farber, schools are essentially a training ground for relinquishing personal freedom. "It's in the classroom," Farber argued, "where you learn to follow orders mindlessly and how to surrender your sovereignty to an institution" (34). And the students who can best serve the state are the students who are best at being quiet, sitting still, and taking it—or else. Conformity in the classroom maintains the status quo beyond the classroom, so that schools reward students who comply with the system and weed out students who attempt to buck it: "Schools preserve the status quo in two complementary ways: by molding the young and by screening them" (32). What's most at stake is social control, and the academy serves the state by keeping students in line. As a result, "the machine gun isn't really what is to be feared in our civilized Western world," Farber argued, because the educational establishment provides a more sophisticated means of manipulation. "If you want to see victims of repression," he added, "come look at students. They *want* to be told what to do" (28). Schools teach the young that it's in their own best interest to submit to authority, priming them to submit to other forms of authority, like corporations or political leaders, where they will carry out the goals of industry. For Farber, higher education was especially guilty of shaping students into quiescent, pliable material for the corporate state, turning students into "slaves."

The academy therefore represented one of the nation's least democratic institutions, in Farber's estimation. As such, school experience contradicted a championed tenet of the American educational system, that schools foster democracy. Instead, schools prepare students for service in an inequitable social order. Thus, like the authors of "The Port Huron Statement," who professed that the nation was rift with paradoxes, Farber concluded that the academy also revealed a disturbing inconsistency.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> Our schools make democracy unlikely because they rob the people who are supposed to be sovereign, of their sense of power and of their ability to will meaningful institutional changes.... There is an immense gap between our ideals of democracy and the system we see operating. (32)

Schools legitimize helplessness and apathy, Farber contended, but "a democracy cannot possibly function if its citizens are educated to be clever robots" (33). And at the root of all educational evil, in Farber's view, was a fallacious approach to learning. Pedagogy most of all needed to be re-examined as well, for "it's how you're taught," he warned his audience, "that does the most harm" (21).

So, while professors and administrators boast about advancing young minds or developing youth into better citizens, in the end it simply amounted to "bullshit," in Farber's opinion, because no "real" learning occurs on campus in the first place. It simply couldn't, not when students were merely parroting the words of their oppressors. Simply put, teachers intimidated students. Teachers maintain this frightful power because the entire educational establishment is built upon the rock-solid foundation of the grading system, the single most repugnant aspect of college life, Farber argued. Get rid of grades, and we'd all be better off—students and faculty alike. "The grade is a hell of a weapon," Farber insisted, and grades do not make students want to "enrich" their minds but "to please" the teacher. Any right-thinking student smiles and shuffles for the teacher, does the teacher's bidding, says yes and no on cue, and all because the student is "still a child, tempted with lollipops and threatened with spankings." When a teacher "says 'jump,' students jump." Is it any wonder, Farber added, that most college students are passive to the point of complete inertia? "Do you think you're a lazy student?" he asked his student readers. "No wonder! Slaves are almost always lazy." Therefore, the student learns the most important rule of college: "Tell the man what he wants to hear or he'll fail your ass out of the course" (92). And what of "the man?" College professors, Farber

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

protested in his unavoidably sexist manner, "are short on balls." This was particularly evident during the McCarthy witch-hunts, when "it was like a cattle stampede as they rushed to cop out." And their lack of courage seems congenital, rather than historical, demonstrated by their failure to confront the injustices of the Vietnam War. While some professors "support the war," the vast majority do not, but most of them remain silent: "They are copping out again....teachers are chickenshit." (93). Mainly, professors are equally repressed because the system is run by "the most entrenched and rigidly conservative elements in society," and instructors learn to be as compliant as their students, where they too are tempted with lollipops and spankings as well. For Farber, the vast majority of professors are concerned with obtaining plum appointments, getting to the top of their field, and pleasing the administration. Fighting for social change, or even for school reform, simply isn't in the cards for most of them because they have a stake in maintaining the status quo themselves. Farber warned students that overhauling the system was therefore impossible if they relied on faculty and administrators to initiate change. There was a solution, however, if students followed the example of other libertarian efforts: direct action.

Farber recommended that students pursue the course of action put forth by student activists involved in the civil rights movement. The only recourse that students had in fighting for school reform was to follow "The four-fold path to student liberation" which could be achieved by "way of direct action" (48). First, students had to insist that the "decision-making process be changed." Second, the only means available to place more authority in their hands was to directly "confront administrators." Third, students had to become aware of their oppressed condition. Finally, pickets, strikes, boycotts, and demonstrations worked small miracles in other social movements, Farber maintained, and "direct action" already had made inroads at places like San Francisco State, and Berkeley (50). The time had come for students to fight for massive, institutional changes. Students themselves would have to advance the transformation of the academy. But before students could begin the active process of reconstructing the academy,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Farber believed they needed to raise their consciousness about the situation, for they had been bamboozled into complacency. "For students, as for black people," Farber argued, "the hardest battle isn't with Mr. Charlie. It's what Mr. Charlie has done to your mind" (55). In order for students to move past their servitude, they first had to recognize that they were slaves in the first place. Once students become conscious of their second-class status, it "will lead [them] past the zone of academic bullshit" (90).

Obviously, Farber did not pin his hopes on school reform being pushed through by faculty and administrators, although he did propose that one way to rectify the master-slave relationship was for teachers to lessen the distance between themselves and the students, an argument made in the following year by such expressivists as Donald Murray and Peter Elbow. "Ideally," Farber explained, "a teacher should minimize the distance between himself and his students." In order to do this, teachers had to reconsider their dominant position in the classroom, as well as revise the material they presented to students, which often appeared in the form of inaccessible gobbledygook: "Teachers make themselves high priests of arcane mysteries. They become masters of mumbo-jumbo" (96). In many ways, Farber's critique of academic standards and practices foreshadowed Foucault's complaint in "What Is An Author" (1977): "Modern Criticism ...[is] strongly reminiscent of Christian exegesis" (127). The master-slave relationship was predicated on the priestly role assumed by instructors. Farber believed ending the master-slave dependence, which required that the professor get off of his high horse. Teachers, no less than administrators, needed to share authority if schools were ever to become democratic.

Clearly, Farber's message appealed to college students who reprinted his essay over and over again in the underground press. In a way, student activists had "normalized" questioning the authority and integrity of many of America's sacred institutions in ways that had rarely been done before, including—and especially—higher education. The Free Speech Movement, and its offshoot, the underground press, set the stage for an article like Farber's that condemned the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

hierarchical organization of the academy. As Todd Gitlin explained, the Free Speech Movement and other mass movements were "not simply 'about' free speech, nor even simply 'about' the right to organize for political action, but finally it [was] 'about' the necessity of revolt from the gargantuan, depersonalized, mass-production multiversity" (The Sixties 283). Student activists in the sixties therefore raised fundamental questions that remain hotly contested to this day: Who owns the university? What rights do students have? What are appropriate courses for a college degree? In these ways, student activists disrupted the academic status quo, which resulted in more personal freedom on campus "and a broader college curriculum than at any time in history" (Anderson 417). Farber's high-profile condemnation of higher education ushered in a wave of essays, articles, and books flooding the market in the late sixties and early seventies disputing the structure, contents, and pedagogy of higher learning. "Traditional education began to be reexamined," historian Howard Zinn noted in A People's History, and out of it emerged a new group of educators who also began to reassess the affect of schooling in society. To some degree, their attack against the established traditions of higher education mirrored the Romantic critique of the hierarchical formulation of society that privileged the leisure class. What began in 1962 with the publication of "The Port Huron Statement," which severely tested the link between higher learning and the inequitable organization of society, developed into more formalized assaults on the nature of schooling in society. As Chapter Four demonstrated, student activists were demanding change at every level, right down to the relationship between teachers and students in the classroom. Zinn added:

> The schools had taught whole generations the values of patriotism, of obeying authority and had perpetuated ignorance, even contempt for people of other nations, races, Native Americans, women. Not just the content of education was challenged but the style—the formality, the bureaucracy, the insistence on subordination to authority. This made only a small dent in the formidable national system of orthodox education, but it was

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> reflected in a new generation of teachers all over the country, and a new literature to sustain them. (528)

In a sense, the counterculture movements of the sixties had legitimized an assault on the academy's role in society, as well as the function of schooling overall. After the appearance of Farber's essay in 1967, it seemed that many educators were more willing than ever to criticize school policies and to introduce systematic changes. Many of these changes would be introduced in the field of Composition and Rhetoric, with some of the most well-known "expressivists" joining the fray. In fact, in the following year, Donald Murray, Ken Macrorie, and Peter Elbow all published essays insisting that composition courses be more student-centered, arguing in favor of granting students the right to their own language and experiences. As we shall see, contemporary expressivism emerged out of this period, revealing that its philosophy of rhetoric was rooted in the era's call for personal empowerment. What's more, some of its most championed tenets—"voice," "discovery," and "truth"—which would later become a source of ridicule among many rhetoricians, were also tied to the era's reform efforts. In large part, contemporary expressivists embraced the ideas of the counterculture, reflected in such pedagogical strategies as "the process model," "freewriting," and "the teacherless class." To be sure, these alternative approaches to student writing were part of a series of educational reform initiative that were all part of the era's larger social reform movements.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Growing Up Alternative

Indeed, between 1967 and 1972 a flurry of studies appeared that reevaluated the educational establishment, many of which offered alternative visions to customary patterns and procedures. For the most part, the studies exposed the tight connection between schooling and corporate culture, confirming what student activists had expressed a few years earlier. In a sense, movement activists paved the way for these fuller accounts to occur, providing an "official" attack on the meaning of schooling as an instrument of social, economic and political control. For example, in Michael Katz's estimation, the bureaucratic framework of the nation's schools, which mirrored the development of corporate bureaucracies, was at the root of many of its shortcomings. Katz's historical analysis in Class, Bureaucracy and Schools (1971) stressed the appearance of corporate bureaucracies at the turn of the century and its impact on the entire educational establishment, eventually snowballing into an impersonal monolith that maintained social hierarchies. Katz argued that the "emergence of bureaucracy in schools mirrors the bureaucracy of society at large," pointing out that the basic structure of American education "had been fixed by 1880 and remains that way" (115). Katz asserted that the appearance of oppressive school bureaucracies coincided with the rapid incorporation of America. Katz suggested that even when John Dewey's relatively popular reform efforts arrived on the scene, they were no match for the overpowering demands of the bureaucratic state which wanted to impart on young minds its two most important lessons: to be orderly and to accept control from above. Dewey's student-centered curriculum was designed to counter such dominant social forces, along with creating a more active, and astute citizenry. Although Dewey's democracy through education should have been the primary goal of the school system, Katz argued, it was doomed from the start because the rising corporate state preferred that the population be trained to be passive and pliable. From the start, Katz claimed, schools were "designed to reflect and confirm the social structure that erected them" (xviii), and the current educational prescription continues to exist in

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the exact same way. Contemporary schools are designed to serve the dominant interests of the corporate state. As a result, students are merely tools who must be shaped into appropriate material for the industrial machine to keep on working efficiently.

> The purpose has been, basically, the inculcation of attitudes that reflect dominant social and industrial values; the structure has been bureaucracy. The result has been school systems that treat children as units to be processed in particular shapes and dropped into slots roughly congruent with the status of their parents.... In their own way, they are imperial institutions designed to civilize the natives; they exist, especially for the lower classes, to make these children orderly, industrious law-abiding and respectful of authority. (xxiv).

Katz shared many of the concerns voiced by student activists who argued that the nation's schools strengthened the corporate state at the expense of creating a more democratic society. Moreover, by arguing that students were being treated as "units" who were being "dropped into slots," Katz was revisiting the arguments expressed by many activists in the Free Speech Movement who claimed that the university was guilty of folding, spindling, and mutilating students in order to meet the needs of the military-industrial complex. What began as a youthful critique of the poisonous relationship between education and the corporate establishment evolved into notable scholarship by some educators. In many ways, the counter-culture movements of the sixties fanned the flames of dissent among educators and brought about an even more thorough examination of the educational establishment. In part, Katz's indictment of the American school system was a more extensive version of what students at Berkeley or Columbia had posited a few years earlier or what Farber had laid out in "The Student As Nigger." And many leading expressivists accepted this view as well, typified by Peter Elbow's criticism that too many Freshman English instructors "delivered the goods" at the expense of student empowerment.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In his massive study of the educational establishment a year earlier, Charles Silberman also blamed a mindless bureaucracy for being preoccupied with control and sapping the spirit from school children. Silberman spent three and a half years examining the problems that beset American education, and he concluded in Crisis in the Classroom (1970) that schools were joyless places obsessed by rules and regulations.[1] On the whole, students were bored into intellectual apathy and brow-beaten to the point of complete indolence. Silberman visited dozens of schools, from rural to urban areas, and they all exhibited a consistent tendency to create an implacable environment that actually turned students off to learning. In a sense, Silberman repeated the sentiments of movement activists when he described students being abused by a tyrannical state of affairs that suppressed individuality.

> It is not possible to spend any prolonged period visiting public school classrooms without being appalled by the mutilation visible everywhere—mutilation of spontaneity, of joy, of learning, of pleasure in creating, of sense of self...grim, joyless places most American schools are, how oppressive and petty are the rules by which they are governed, how intellectually sterile and aesthetically barren the atmosphere. (10)

Students had to be kept on track for the state to run smoothly, which meant that students from different economic backgrounds would be required to fulfill designated roles. Of course, low income children were particularly vulnerable since schools, at the behest of the state, dictated that they would remain at the lower rungs of the economic ladder. According to Silberman, schools performed the task of preserving social inequalities by "facilitating the movement of the poor and disadvantaged into the mainstream of American economic and social life" so they might continue as poor and disadvantaged adults (53). Upward mobility was a myth. If anything, schools solidified economic inequality.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The Corporate-School Complex

In The Great School Legend (1972), Colin Greer also blamed schools for maintaining economic disparities. Like Silberman, Greer analyzed the historical trends that produced a school system organized for maintaining social hierarchies. In his compact study, Greer likewise linked the emergence of the corporate state at the turn of the century with unequal education. Schools were colossal sorting machines. According to Greer, the great school legend was based on the myth that education provides economic and social advancement, turning any student into a Horatio Alger success. The myth was particularly useful for keeping the poor and disadvantaged in line, for the legend assured anyone who worked hard enough that social rewards would inevitably follow. However, Greer asserted, "Public schools were just the reverse of the legendary function: it certified the children of the poor as socially inferior at an early age" (142). Death would come at an early age, to paraphrase Kozol. The legend began nearly a hundred years ago, but "the legend continues to exist," Greer argued, "as does the reality that the school stamps students" (147). Overall, public schools were founded in order to confirm social selection and legitimate economic discrepancies. In Greer's estimation, nothing had changed in the century since the inception of the legend: "Schools continue to select out individuals for opportunities according to a hierarchical schema which runs closely parallel to existing social class patterns" (152). Thus, schools disguised the realities of class divisions by depicting their function as the great equalizer, to use Horace Mann's phrase. Greer had expressed an identical view three years earlier in an article in Saturday Review, titled "Public Schools: The Myth of the Melting Pot." Although the November, 1969 essay presented a less elaborate analysis of the role of public schools, it addressed many of the same issues:

> The history of education has played a crucial role in maintaining a conventional wisdom about schools that promise economic mobility and democratic process. These myths are used to rationalize existing inequalities ... public education [is] a class-based institution

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

in the service of the corporate state. (32)

Because public education was so closely tied to the needs of the corporate state, the question for the age became how to transform schools into democratizing institutions. Expressivism fit into this big picture as one facet of democratic reform, as will be more fully explained below.

Other educators also attempted to draw out the connection between industry and education, and the title of Joel H. Spring's exhaustive study of the history of the subject unequivocally announced the relationship: Education and the Rise of the Corporate State. Published in 1972, Spring argued that nearly everything about the educational establishment was designed to meet the demands of corporate America. At the beginning of the twentieth-century, Spring contended, the establishment of clubs, athletics, assemblies, student government, and school newspapers all paralleled "the factory activities" of industry that were "used to create a corporate spirit" (84). Guidance counselors also became a fixture of the school system during this period, and Spring argued that counselors frequently guided students toward potential academic advancement or career paths according to a student's economic background (75-83). In a sense, educational profiling reproduced the social order of things. But none of this should surprise anyone, Spring suggested, because the same people who controlled the schools back then (and continue to control them now) were the very same business leaders and politicians who were running the corporate community: "Since 1900 the power of schooling has tended to be in the hands of businessmen, political leaders, and professional educators who have been instrumental in the development of the modern corporate state" (149). For Spring, the evolution of capitalism, with its corresponding reliance on education to "train" citizens to be manipulated and accept the hierarchical inevitability of corporate culture, meant that human beings would be programmed at a very early age. Education prepared the masses for their proper place in the corporate culture. In large part, it was necessary to present children with an abstract learning process, according to Spring, since the work they would be performing in corporate America

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

would be alienating to them anyway. Thus, acting in conjunction with the advancement of corporate capitalism, schooling increased "alienation by making alien the very ability to act" because learning had been turned over to "experts who grade, rank, and prescribe." Activity itself, Spring added, "no longer belongs to the individual but to the institution and its experts (154). This would become one of the major complaints of expressivists, who considered the teacher-centered classroom organized around the linguistic "expert." In response to this predicament, expressivists would highlight individual identity to counter the institutional pressures that squashed "free" expression and choice. In large measure, educational reformers like Spring and leading expressivists were responding to what the New Left had pointed out earlier, that the power elites had wrestled the decision-making process out of the hands of individuals.

Although some progressive school movements at the beginning of the twentieth century fought against the spread of business-based, factory-education, Spring ascertained, "by the middle of the twentieth century the one-sided contest had apparently ended and the public school was unchallenged as the central instrument for corporate control and the primary instrument for socialization in the United States" (100). But Spring saw some light at the end of that dark, educational tunnel, and he pegged his hopes on the rise of student activism in the Sixties and early seventies. In fact, the critique that American Education was tightly bound to the corporate establishment was an argument that student activists had already made, as Chapter Four noted. Throughout the nation, students had spotlighted the connection between higher education and the military-industrial establishment by kidnapping ROTC recruiters, demonstrating against the likes of Dow Chemical, and protesting against curricula that molded them into ready-made tools for corporate use. Furthermore, student activists had been insisting that school policies reflected and reinforced wider social injustices before many educational reformers began surfacing with their own radical critiques of the same issue. Thus, prior to the steady stream of more "official"

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

verifications that the educational and corporate establishments were one and the same, and that schools furthered unequal social arrangements, students were already on the march making very similar arguments. When students at Columbia, for example, accused the university of cooperating with the military-industrial complex, while also ignoring the needs of people based on race and class in its plans to build a gym in Morningside Heights, they essentially had set the table for more formative analyses of the relationship between the school and the corporate state. Of course, just as Spring published his historical analysis of American education in 1972, student activism had begun to reach its peak, thanks in large part to "tin soldiers and Nixon coming," as Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young sang, to counter much of the social and cultural revolution. As Ira Shor has pointed out in Culture Wars, the oppositional language of the sixties, which had reached a crescendo on campuses nationwide, "forced conservatives to come forward even louder in their attempt to reimpose their once-universal standards" (11). So, by the time Spring went to press, reactionary forces were already at work destabilizing the underground press, for example, and even the liberal wing of the Democratic party. Nevertheless, Spring viewed the student uprisings as a breath of fresh air in the traditionally stifling school atmosphere, comparing them to the Luddite movement in the Romantic era:

> In recent years the situation has again come to be challenged, mostly spontaneously and by the students in the public high schools and colleges themselves. Not surprisingly, the initial form of the challenge has been unselfconscious and entirely negative, a modern form of the Luddite movement, striking out blindly and destructively at the modern machinery of control and oppression. Although still unformed and unclear of its goals this new movement is much more widespread and organic than the early opposition to corporate control of education. Its successful development will require not only the disestablishment of the public school system as we know it, but also the construction of a humane alternative. (101)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

For Spring, the termination of public schooling would put an end to the interlocking network of dehumanizing institutions, which echoed Ivan Illich's call for the "de-schooling" of society. According to Spring, public schools were the "central mechanism of social control feeding trained and conditioned workers into the whirring gears" (167). To a large extent, Spring shared the sentiments of many student activists who believed that their education was a training ground for placement into the well-oiled machine of corporate America. As one activist put it, "The Free Speech Movement has given us a taste of what it means to be part of something organic. Jumping off the conveyors, we have become a community of furiously talking, feeling, and thinking human beings" (Eynon 57). In effect, student activists had given impetus for a dramatic reassessment of the educational establishment. Many students were unwilling to be churned out of the educational factories and be considered as only so much raw material. Several educational reformers, including the most well-known expressivists, were paying a lot of attention to the voices from "below."

For Ivan Illich, student activists were correct to resent being man-handled by the educational community. In no small measure were students being sold a bill of goods which prepared them for corporate society rather than for democratic society. Illich, like Paulo Freire, believed that schools were foisting the "banking concept" of education upon the student population. Every school, Illich warned in Deschooling Society (1970) "sells curriculum," and "the distribution-teacher delivers the finished product to the consumer pupil." Two years earlier, Peter Elbow presented the same analogy in a College English essay. In creating such a curriculum, Illich argued, "Consumer-pupils are taught to make their desires conform to marketable values" (41). After years of being spoon-fed standardized information, the unsuspecting student has learned the most important lesson of all, they have "learned [to] lose their incentive to grow in independence" (47), an argument contained in Ken Macrorie's Uptaught, published that same year. For both, the curriculum imparts its wisdom and the student

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

must follow along. According to Illich, not only does the curriculum sap independent will and desire, but students are also trained to accept their station in life. Like the testimony of many other school reformers from this period, Illich asserted that the "curriculum has always been used to assign social rank" (12). This may work perfectly well for the upper class, Illich argued, but is debilitating for all others who have come to believe that their formal education will lead to economic advancement. While educational opportunity is both a desirable and feasible goal in an advanced society, Illich maintained, the current school system actually "has an anti-educational effect on society" (8) because it is used as the "preparatory" step to accept the "alienating institutionalization of life" (47). In the end, students transfer "responsibility from self to institution," and therefore "put themselves in their assigned slots, squeeze themselves into the niche which they have been taught to seek, and in the very process, put their fellows into their places, too, until everybody and everything fits" (39-40). This was precisely what students involved in the FSM argued against five years earlier, as well as the authors of "The Port Huron Statement" before them. It is also the same argument Farber included in "The Student as Nigger"—three years before Illich had reached similar conclusions. But while Farber wanted to abolish grades, and leading expressivists wanted to reduce the teacher's dominance, Illich wanted to abolish public schools entirely. Illich's solution was to end public schooling so that "learners should not be forced to submit to an obligatory curriculum" (75). By distinguishing schooling from learning, Illich believed that "deschooling [was] at the root of any movement for human liberation" (47). In terms of the Composition and Rhetoric revival occurring at this time, "deschooling society" was the macro-concept into which expressivism's "writing without teachers" and "teacherless classes" comfortably fit.

Students at the Center

While other reformers shared Illich's view that schools essentially hampered learning, few of them went so far as to seek its complete elimination, just as in Composition and Rhetoric

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"abolitionists" contended with "reformers" in offering visions for change (Connors). For example, Herbert Kohl's The Open Classroom (1969) presented a practical guide for creating an open or unstructured classroom. Like Farber, Kohl espoused the egalitarian idea that the distance between students and teachers needed to be narrowed (a distance addressed by Elbow as well), and that the main goal behind any curriculum should be creative freedom. Kohl described the typical school setting as "authoritarian and oppressive" (14). Two years after Kohl's publication, the Michigan Council of Teachers of English issued "Lecture Alternatives in Teaching English," offering practical examples of classrooms that are "structured for freedom" (qtd. in Judy 56). Educators, like activists, were insisting that students had rights too.

To build alternative school reform, Kohl maintained, change had to begin within each classroom, an approach compatible with expressivism. Similar to student activism during the civil rights movement, Kohl felt that working towards change at the smallest sites would effectively stimulate broader changes in each institution and perhaps transform the educational establishment as a whole. Contrary to traditional school environments, where "the entire staff of the school was obsessed with control," an open classroom reconfigures "the role of the teacher" who is no longer fixated "to control his pupils but rather to enable them to make choices and pursue what interests them" (20). Sounding as if he borrowed passages from "The Port Huron Statement," which attacked schools for abstracting students from society and from each other, Kohl also blamed the traditional classroom for separating student from student and for turning the classroom into a covert anti-social experience. The standard classroom "not only segregates young people from society," he insisted, "It segregates them from each other" (57).

At times, Kohl describes his own experience inside an open classroom as a "radical" departure from the norm, describing it as "creative disorder" which might look like "apparent chaos" to an outsider. In Kohl's opinion, one of the features of an open classroom was that teachers were less likely to arrive with preconceived opinions of their students' abilities.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Normally, those preconceptions placed the students in an adversarial position because teachers all too often branded students as ignorant, unprepared, and disobedient. A teacher's expectations were particularly detrimental for low-income students because they would be judged as inferior by virtue of their low social ranking. Thus, the best choice that any instructor could make, and which was more likely to occur in an open classroom, was for him or her "to cultivate a state of suspended expectations" (20). Kohl cited the work of Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobs, who conducted a nationwide study on the effects of student responses to teachers' expectations in Pygmalion in the Classroom (1968). Their report revealed that young people are sensitive to what the teacher perceives as their capabilities, especially when it involved minority and economically disadvantaged children, demonstrating that a "teacher's [negative] response to that background" plays a part in the child's intellectual development (18). The poor performance of such children is therefore self-fulfilling: "It is that the child does poorly in school because that is what is expected of him" (22). According to the Rosenthal and Jacobs study, it appeared that poverty and race stigmatized students, leading them toward inevitable failure in the eyes of educators.

It certainly seemed that way to both James Herndon and Jonathan Kozol, who each taught at predominately black schools in separate regions of the country, the former on the West coast and the latter on the East. Herndon was a first-year teacher at a Bay Area junior high school, George Washington—or "GW" as everyone called it—whose students were mostly defeated and demoralized, as described in The Way It Spozed to Be (1968). Herndon discovered a siege-like mentality among the mostly white staff, with teachers constantly referring to the students as "them," a euphemistic expression that parted "them" from "us," or which distinguished the white staff from the black students. Inside the classroom, expressivists would attempt to defuse such a divisive atmosphere by creating writing classes that replaced "us" versus "them" with "we." Otherwise, schools reinforced disparities between the elect (teachers) and the damned (students). Once, Herndon revealed, when he was driven downtown to the district office

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

by the school's secretary, she confided in him that the cause of "all our troubles" started when "all these niggers" moved into the neighborhood (86). At the school, Herndon learned on the very first day that the school's primary mission was to keep order. The Vice Principal suggested that GW was "like the Army" and therefore students had to be controlled and disciplined just like so many recruits (17). Herndon found out that so long as the students were kept in line administrators and teachers alike believed the school was operating smoothly, despite the very obvious fact that the children weren't learning anything. That, Herndon quickly realized, was beside the point. Some of Herndon's colleagues suspected he was failing to adequately discipline his students, so they suggested he incorporate mindless busy-work so "The Tribe"—a far less euphemistic term used by the teachers—would be held at bay. They advised Herndon to write a paragraph on the blackboard and have the students copy it, which seemed altogether absurd to him since many of them were illiterate. "How can I have kids copy stuff off the board," he asked himself, "who can't read their own names?" (115). But, as an official from the district office noted after observing one of his unruly classes, "teaching these kids is like training animals." Disciplining them was simply a matter of dangling "a carrot" "or perhaps a sugar-cube" (111) in front of them so they'll pull along. That's what Herndon was 'spozed to do, but he rejected all of this "sound" advice for something that looked messy and chaotic to his peers. While Herndon prayed the revolutionary tide of the Sixties would topple such hard-line institutions as GW, he decided not to wait. "I wanted that revolution now," he testified, "in my classroom" (124), a sentiment shared by many expressivists who also embraced the era's dissenting opinions. Thus, contrary to standard procedures, he organized reading and writing groups that grew out of the students' own concerns. Before long, students who hadn't read or written before began to care about being able to, which furthered their own development. One example was the "Slambooks," notebooks in which the students wrote about their classmates. They represented a classic kid-culture activity, which no teacher would think up himself, but became a far different stimulus to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

learning than offering carrots or sugar-cubes. Other teachers were appalled by the Slambooks and wanted to get rid of them, but Herndon saw it differently: "All I could see was that they'd finally come across something that needed to be written down to be successful or interesting to them, which couldn't even exist without writing, and they were doing it enthusiastically as possible" (147). For a change, the students were doing something real and valuable, demonstrating an eagerness to learn that Herndon had never seen before, an observation that Macrorie stands by in Uptaught, once he allowed students to "discover" their own topics and use their own "voice." In Herndon's case, the administration was unimpressed. Herndon's classes looked out of control. After completing that first year at GW, he was fired (as was Kozol in Boston, for reading the poetry of Langston Hughes).

The Way It Spozed to Be demonstrated that pedagogy played a key role in how schools organized themselves. By stepping outside traditional models at GW, Herndon created a more student-centered curriculum, which challenged "The Student as Nigger" syndrome—in this instance, both literally and figuratively. But in doing so, Herndon was punished. Unfortunately, GW represented just one of many school districts across the nation obsessed with authority and convinced that certain children are inherently doomed to fail. In Death at An Early Age (1967), Jonathan Kozol disclosed that Pygmalions also existed inside a Boston elementary school that housed poor black children. As Kozol noted, even some of the few black teachers expected the students to founder. That was the way it was supposed to be, and the school was designed to maintain racial discrepancies outside of the classroom as well, according to Kozol. The school's approach to its student population revealed that its "compensatory program...had been designed for Negro children and that was intended to preserve the racial status quo in Boston" (21). Race and class were unfairly used to forecast academic success. For Kozol, as for many educators who were developing critical appraisals of the educational establishment during this period, America's schools both reflected and reinforced social inequalities. Kozol continued to be

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

concerned with the imbalances of America's educational system, as demonstrated by his recent award-winning book Savage Inequalities, which compared schools for poor black children with those for more affluent ones. Clearly, traditional schools continue to duplicate wider social injustices. But even non-traditional schools seemed incapable of addressing the problems of the poor, Kozol believed. When Free Schools began to appear in the late sixties as an alternative to traditional schools, Kozol worried that they were being established in elite communities. As Kozol reported in Free Schools (1972), the majority were erected in "relatively isolated" and "generally all white rural areas" like Vermont, Western Massachusetts, and the hills of Southern California. For Kozol, this was a counterculture version of white flight, where the "exodus to the woods and hills" was an "escape" from urban problems. Kozol believed that educators had "an obligation" to "work out these problems in the cities where there is the greatest need and where, moreover, we cannot so easily be led into a mood of falsified euphoria." For the most part, Kozol considered the *establishment* of free schools as a misguided alternative to the real problems confronting the nation's worst schools. On the other hand, Kozol did embrace the *idea* behind free schools. If handled properly, he claimed, they could prove useful in combating problems faced in the very urban settings that needed the most attention. Kozol's criteria for creating workable free schools involved minimizing the size of the institution, to "not more than eighty to one hundred children" (163). He based this model on an essay written by Paul Goodman who advocated creating "mini-schools" in order to subvert the power invested in any large operation. In sharing Goodman's view of the utility of a modest scale of operations, Kozol felt that the "urgencies" of "the poor, the black, [and] the dispossessed, who have been the most clearly victimized by public education" would be better served. For Kozol, a decentralized and localized school system was preferable to the impersonal forces of a centralized and ponderous institution. Free schools did not furnish an instant panacea, in Kozol's view, but they did offer greater advantages compared to the overbearing bureaucracy of standard schools. For many school

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

reformers, bureaucracy was one of the biggest obstacles confronting a dramatic alteration in America's schools, as it was for the authors of "The Port Huron Statement" who complained about "the cumbersome academic bureaucracy" which "contributes to the sense of outer complexity and inner powerlessness" (184). Student activists believed that the only way to build a truly democratic school system would be if students and faculty could "wrest control of the educational process from the administrative bureaucracy" (196), a demand that many progressive educators, like Kozol and Katz, would subsequently make.

As a matter of fact, as part of their five-step approach to setting off a "true revolution in our schools," Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner recommended "eliminating all full-time administrators and administrations." They also advocated eliminating "all conventional tests," "all courses," "all requirements," and "all restrictions that confine learners to sitting still in boxes inside of boxes" (151), an anti-authority motif that underlies Elbow's Writing Without Teachers. In Teaching as a Subversive Activity (1969), the authors argued that conventional education was mummified by its blind devotion to "fixed categories" (87), when all the while "change—constant, accelerating, ubiquitous—is the most striking characteristic of the world we live in and that our educational system has not yet recognized this fact" (xii). The authors believed that if change became the modus operandi of the teaching establishment, it would subvert the institution's penchant for reinforcing social inequalities, a belief held by many reformers during the Romantic period. Remember, change for cultural conservatives in the pre-Romantic era was considered a threat to the established order. As Dr. Johnson informed the Earl of Chesterfield in The Plan of the Dictionary, "All change is of itself an evil," and all right-minded Englishmen should worry about those "who seem to take pleasure in departing from custom" (10). Departing from custom was at the heart of Painite radicalism, as well as the stated purpose behind the composition of Lyrical Ballads, so Wordsworth claimed in the two "Prefaces." Many educational reformers who emerged out of the Sixties shared the Romantic belief in bucking the system,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

especially a school system that seemed bent on maintaining and promoting unequal power relations. As Chapter Four indicated, preserving the status quo was a key feature of the McCarthy era, when a white, male-dominated society employed any means possible to maintain its power, which included using education to bolster these imbalances. In fact, the authors of "The Port Huron Statement" had charged earlier that "professors and administrators" were much too slow to develop change: "their curriculums change more slowly than the living events of the world," which stemmed from being "purchased by investors in the arms race" and "old categories" (179). But New Left activists believed that "thousands of American students" who had "moved actively and directly against racial injustices, the threat of war, violations of individual rights, [and]...against economic manipulation," were supplanting "the stillness of the McCarthy era" (182). In their own way, many school reformers, including many leading expressivists, began to join student activists by trying to put an end to the previous era's educational paralysis. Thus, in order to confound customary academic practices, some not only embraced change but even advocated studying it. Change, in and of itself, was considered a key component in overturning a school system that seemed structurally undemocratic. Change certainly seemed to work in the struggle to outmaneuver other institutionalized injustices, as both the Civil Rights Movement and the Feminist Movement proved. By insisting on change, Postman and Weingartner expected the same results within the educational establishment.

In addition, the authors condemned the unfortunate link between schooling and the business world, like so many progressive educators at this time: "The similarities between mass-production industries and most existing school environments are striking" (30). Of course, as Chapter Four pointed out, this relationship was considered a detriment to real learning by the authors of "The Port Huron Statement," as well as thousands of other student activists who complained about being "folded" and "mutilated" to meet industry needs. For Postman and Weingartner, it proved that the system indeed needed to be changed. But as their title suggests,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the authors targeted the position of teachers within the academic assembly plant, and they insisted that the environment could be changed for the better if teachers reconsidered their place inside the classroom. Thus, at the root of the current educational crisis stood teachers "who think they are in the 'information dissemination' business" (13). This kind of one-sided pedagogy lends itself to a teacher-centered dominance of instruction that "demonstrates to students to believe in authorities" (19), rather than in their own independent abilities to make meaning for themselves. Far too many teachers therefore view the student as "an empty bucket," "the receiver" of an "object (subject matter)." If, on the other hand, teachers approached the student as a "meaning maker" a more "student-centered" classroom would develop, and "almost everything about the schooling process would change" (92), a sentiment shared by expressivists like Murray and Elbow. In fact, Postman and Weingartner felt that "no significant innovation in education" could occur unless "the attitudes of teachers" were altered. In order to avoid the trap of "programmed learning," teachers should instead employ the "Inquiry Method" and pose "a set of questions" which "forces students to become more involved in the methods of their own learning" (29). If teachers incorporated this method, the authors believed that a "new education" would emerge, whereby "the major content of what is to be learned by the students results from inquiries structured by the questions that are raised" (81). In no small measure, the authors anticipated that the entire system could be transformed if pedagogical changes were introduced. All in all, if such a curriculum were deployed schools would develop critical thinkers rather than mindless robots. As the authors noted, "We believe that the schools must serve as the principal medium for developing youth the attitudes and skills of social, political, and cultural criticism" (2), and the only way to achieve this goal was for the teacher to pose problem-solving strategies that would, in turn, create a student-centered curriculum.

Thus, the activist context for educational change proposed that revolutionary instruction would radically alter the entire school system, so long as teachers remained open-minded to the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

idea of relinquishing their authoritarian position. But the authors were skeptical that one group of professionals would remain the most inflexible: English teachers. As a group, Postman and Weingartner insisted, English instructors seemed obsessed with abstract categories and suspicious of ordinary language, therefore preventing them from advancing a problem-posing pedagogy and from relinquishing their dominance as language experts. "The fact is that many teachers of English," the authors began, "are fearful of life, and, incidentally, of children." They acerbically continued:

> They are pompous and precious, and are lovers of symmetry, categories, and proper labels. For them, the language of real human activity is too sloppy, emotional, uncertain, dangerous, and thus altogether too unsettling to study in the classroom. It was Kafka, we believe, who remarked that he could not understand why some people were so disdainful of 'everyday life' since that was the only one they had. He must have had in mind the kind of English teacher we are describing. (55)

As far as Postman and Weingartner could tell, it appeared that English teachers were enamored of their own arcane categories and therefore unlikely to embrace a student-centered curriculum, a complaint that Peter Elbow likewise leveled against his peers in a 1968 College English essay, which also promoted the benefits of a problem-posing curriculum. Besides, the authors implied, why would pretentious teachers pose questions to students if they already knew all of the answers? But while they reserved their harshest criticism for English teachers, some *were* influenced by the progressive movements percolating during this period, whether as advocates or practitioners of a more student-centered curricula, like Peter Elbow and Ken Macrorie. In fact, nowhere were these changes more evident than in the emerging field of Composition and Rhetoric, which, as Chapter One revealed, had developed as a separate domain within departments of English. As it turned out, some of the most outspoken proponents of boosting students' critical thinking skills, establishing student-centered classrooms, celebrating

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"everyday" language, posing problem-solving approaches, and paying more attention to the language of "the other" were launched by compositionists. The field was becoming as politically charged as the era itself, and many rhetoricians probably would have agreed with the FSM "Position" statement issued in 1965 that "politics and education are inseparable"—or at the very least that the political climate of the sixties was bringing about dramatic changes in the field of Composition and Rhetoric. This orientation seeped into the development of expressivism at this time, conveying its approach as a renewal of self and discovery of personal "truth" against restrictive traditionalism. Changes in society were creating changes in writing instruction

School Reform and Writing Instruction

At times, some compositionists even borrowed the very phrases of the counterculture movements, revealing the close link between social reforms and rhetorical reforms. In the November, 1967 issue of College English, for example, Charles Deemer described "English Composition as a Happening" as an alternative to the "undeniably rigid" constructs of traditional Composition courses. Deemer begins his essay with a quote from the cherished counterculture figure Paul Goodman, who edited Seeds of Liberation in 1964. Goodman's contribution to the volume, "From John Dewey to A.S. Neill," dealt with liberating the American school system, and Deemer not only starts out by quoting from him but sprinkles passages from Goodman's piece throughout his own critique of standard composition courses. "'Our entire school system,'" Goodman argued, "'like our over-organized economy, politics, and standard of living, is largely a trap.'" Students are trapped in a "'bureaucratic death-grip'" that instills them with "'a uniformity of conception and method,'" Goodman warned. Deemer agreed with Goodman's unflattering assessment of schooling, while adding that English Composition "is the rigid child of a rigid parent" (121). Composition teachers needed to lighten up, kick-back, and relax the reins of their authority, Deemer insisted. Like other critics of teaching practices at this time, Deemer viewed

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the situation as a function of a top-down/master-slave/distributor-recipient relationship, although he affixes one more negative metaphor: master-dog.

> Consider the fragmentation of the composition course in its daily inaction. The "teacher" speaks from his place in the front of the classroom, sheltered more than likely by the wall of his podium, while the class in the rear listens or pretends to. Even when discussion occurs, the fragmentation of the inaction into two segments (the "teacher"-as-wise-authority and the class-as-recipient-of-knowledge) is retained. The division is as clear as stimulus and response. Lecture and note-taking. Assignment and essay. Bell and saliva. Watch the class yawn for its food. (121).

But a composition course—*especially*—did not have to bore students to tears, in Deemer's estimation. Of all of the "products of the university," Deemer argued, composition did not have to present lifeless matter. Deemer believed that the strength of a composition course rested in it having "no real subject content." As a result, a composition instructor could use this strength to deal with contemporary issues that students were interested in and that they would find engaging. Unfortunately, Deemer maintained, composition teachers mostly followed the "organization of content-courses" and became imbedded in stasis, like any fixed subject course. Similar to other critics whose anti-authoritarian positions were accordant with the expressivist model, Deemer considered pedagogy an important instrument in changing the face of learning. Deemer asserted that the only way to "engage the student's active participation" was "to remove the 'teacher's' authority," and the best way to achieve this would be to appropriate "a recent art form" called "The Happening" (123), as described by Susan Sontag in Against Interpretation.

In Against Interpretation, which Deemer quoted liberally, Sontag characterized "The Happening" as an artistic event that completely reconfigured the relationship between artist and audience. According to Sontag, this new art form treated the audience in a radically different way, teasing and even abusing the audience with a series of shocks and surprises. "The

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Happening," Sontag pointed out, "'merely follows Artaud's prescription'" of eliminating the artificial stage, therefore lessening "'the distance between spectators and performers'" (124). Deemer proposed turning the classroom into a "Happening" in order to lessen the distance between teacher and students, which Murray, Macrorie, and Elbow would adopt as the centerpiece of their "teacherless" classrooms, and which Farber had proposed in "The Student as Nigger" in the LA Free Press. "What I suggest," Deemer wrote, "is that the characteristics of the happening that reduce the distance between actor and audience" can be applied to reduce the "distance between 'teacher' and class" (124-5). He also suggested that a Composition teacher "shock" students just as "Happening" artists shocked an audience.

> Let the "teacher" shock the student. Let him speak, not from behind a podium, but from the rear of the room or through the side window. Let him discuss theology to Ray Charles records. As long as there is *reverence* for the student and the *process* (italics added) of education, no shock is too great. (124)

For Deemer, the process is more crucial than the product, an important distinction that would become a calling-card for expressivists. In addition, Deemer believed that the analogy between stage and classroom would reach its logical conclusion if the teacher considered himself as an "actor" rather than as an instructor. To make his point, he cited the important "acting" abilities of two counterculture figures who had addressed large groups of students outside of the classroom.

> The best "teachers" have always been actors by their very ability to move an audience to an experience, an active engagement with and in the performance, a process fundamental to real education. It is no surprise, for example, that Stokely Carmichael by putting on a pair of shades in an auditorium punctuated by the annoyance of flash-bulbs, or Timothy Leary by symbolically stripping out of his establishment gear to preach by candlelight from a stage floor, can elicit enthusiastic responses from a highly participant student audience. (124).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In Deemer's estimation, the leaders of the era's various movements could be used as models for teachers inside the classroom. Reforming education was therefore akin to reforming society.

In linking higher education to society, Deemer argued against some social pitfalls. Like other reformers at this time, Deemer believed that schools were reproducing the factory system: "And the university should not be a factory molding students" (124). A way out of this mess, Deemer believed, was offered years ago by John Dewey, long before any current happening. Thus, in addition to citing "hip" contemporary leaders or authors like Carmichael and Sontag, Deemer relied heavily on Dewey, who, as noted above, was frequently referred to by other reformers. As a matter of fact, many educational theorists who emerged out of the sixties favored resurrecting Dewey's progressive initiatives. And this was especially true among many leading expressivists. In Uptaught (1970), for instance, Ken Macrorie called Dewey a "seer," while in the opening pages of Elbow's Embracing Contraries (1986), he described the "well-thumbed" pages from Dewey's works helping to lead him out of the "restrictive" curriculum he had followed and toward "the sort of nondisciplinary course" (8-9) he started practicing in the late Sixties. Perhaps many reformers hoped that the Deweyan system could be put into practice while the fires of the educational reform movement was still hot. Deemer, for one, considered him to be a role model. He cited Dewey as someone who understood the need to make education experientially part of the social process, rather than an abstraction taking students away from everyday life. According to Deemer (and Dewey), the school as factory represented education at its worst. Deemer therefore concluded that once "The Happening" was folded into a teacher's pedagogical approach, the contents of a composition course would become socially relevant. Citing Dewey, Deemer pointed out that "'the only true education comes through the stimulation of the child's powers by the demands of the social situations in which he finds himself'" and that "'education, therefore, is a process of living and not a preparation for future living'" (123). Since all students were required to take a Freshman Composition course as part of higher education's socializing

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

process, then the social situation that all student's encountered was the very nature of the university and the very structure of a composition course, Deemer resolved. Deemer determined that a Composition course "could become an introduction to what the University is about," a consideration of how the university has shaped itself ("its forms") and how it attempts to shape students, "a familiarization with its current media (the traditional medium being the so-called academic essay)" (123). Thus, once the actor/instructor had turned the class into a real happening, then the students could examine a very real and pertinent issue: their own education. This experiential emphasis also appeared inside expressivist classrooms, with the writing workshop as an interactive, cooperative social experience, as well as Murray's "process" model.

Unlike expressivists who largely asked students to study themselves and their experiences, Leonard Greenbaum and Rudolf B. Schmerl also advised studying the "academic enterprise" in a Composition course. In Course X; a left field guide to freshman English (1970), the authors advocated examining higher education "as a whole" as well as analyzing it "as a specific system with specific structures, people, money, myths, and practices" (xx). In effect, educators were now agreeing with student activists who had insisted that "politics and education are inseparable." For decades, and right up to the present, in fact, higher education has largely been presented to the public as a unique, exclusive institution—that Ivory Tower standing above the mundane affairs of the rest of society. Not so, argued the authors of "The Port Huron Statement," who concluded that not only was higher education deeply connected to society at large, but even accused it of utilizing its "academic resources...to buttress immoral social practices" (194). In effect, once student activists had uncovered the unsavory link between the academy and other institutions, like the Pentagon, some of the veneer had been scrubbed from its lofty surface, perhaps making it as vulnerable to scrutiny as any other institution. Moreover, if students were demanding that their schooling be more socially relevant, then an examination of the school system itself seemed worthwhile. After all, students had rightly concluded, few other

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

places were as deeply connected to the corporate-military establishment; if they wanted to learn about relevant, contemporary issues, many educators now were willing to offer the academy as a suitable subject steeped in contemporary matters. As Horowitz and Friedland explained in The Knowledge Factory: Student Power and Academic Politics in America (1972), once students had mounted "the most coherent challenge to the entire authority system of the university" (48), it was becoming increasingly apparent that higher education was no longer a special entity entitled to be unaccountable for its activities. On the contrary, students had proven that the university was "the articulating mechanism of the larger society (and its war) and the student" (3). Students were insisting that the academy should not be allowed to escape from its own history, and many educators were in full agreement. In addition, as far as Greenbaum and Schmerl were concerned, focusing on the operations of the academy was far better than what was customarily being studied in a composition course: literature. In their estimation, all Freshman English courses displayed "an enormous literary bias" that severed students from the consequences of everyday social life. Studying literature and writing about literature, the authors concluded, has "nothing to do with the kind of writing the students will do for the rest of their lives—including the three years remaining in college" (179). Literature, the authors argued, was chiefly responsible for generating a faceless Freshman English course, for turning it into "Course X": "Literature is the most rapidly spreading form of Course X" (219). Because most teachers of English believe that students lack any knowledge of anything significant to write about, the authors sarcastically argued, then the best way to repair this deficiency was through the increased study of literature. As a result, a Freshman English Course was built around the belief that students were profoundly inadequate, a deficit theory of teaching against which expressivists also campaigned. For expressivists, students brought a wealth of material to class—a "word-hoard" Elbow called it—that made the dominance of literature unproductive.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

But literature was not the only cause for concern in the authors' estimation. Greenbaum and Schmerl briefly described the history behind modern American composition courses that began at Harvard in 1874. Of course, that now seems like a familiar story to most rhetoricians, now that tracking composition's evolution has been examined by such rhetoricians as Richard Ohmann, Susan Miller, James Berlin, and Michael Halloran. Now a rather well-known story, back then Greenbaum and Schmerl were among the first to point out that the Harvard curriculum in the last century inscribed the fixation with composition as a remedial subject, at the expense of content, which "rapidly spread to other places" (87). By 1910 Harvard offered nine courses in English composition, all of them essentially skills courses. At the University of Michigan, the authors pointed out, freshmen were required to take "Paragraph Writing" (English I) and "The Science of Rhetoric" (English II). As they make known, it was at this point that a clear distinction emerged between impure student writing and great literary writing, which influenced not only the shape of "Course X" but how it was taught. According to the authors, since students were completely devoid of writing well on their own, and of having anything meaningful to write about in the first place, then they lacked the authority to create both their own meaning and their own writing, so to speak. As a result, the instructor in "Course X" delivered a prepackaged bill of goods that created a lopsided exchange of information. In a Freshmen writing class, the authors contended, students were treated like children, a relationship that both Macrorie and Elbow sought to alleviate in their composition courses. To amend the situation, the authors proposed "the intrusion of adult patterns of learning," the creation of a more balanced classroom that would replace the uneven parent-child dependency. It was the kind of "academic world...founded on a teacher-student relation analogous to the parent-child relation" that had been described in "The Port Huron Statement" (184). Thus, for Greenbaum and Schmerl, pedagogy was also a major problem in "Course X," as it was for many other reformers at this time. As far as the authors were concerned, the typical framework in a traditional "Course X"

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

revealed "the teacher as transmitter" (xiii). Everything about "Course X" was wrong, from curricula to content.

But there was a way out of the mess, Greenbaum and Schmerl maintained: more student power. So crucial was empowering students to their reform initiative that they devoted an entire chapter to it, "Student Power," proposing that students "would be better off" if they wrested control from the teacher "and decided on their own topics," an idea put forth at this time by many expressivists, like Peter Elbow and Donald Murray. Greenbaum and Schmerl anticipated students would come up with topics relevant at that time. Students might, for example, produce "a short but convincing paper on the regulation of the underwear industry, citing an article by Ralph Nader," or they might conduct an examination of the environment by studying "the work of Rachel Carson," or deal with some other issue that the students considered important (186). The decision-making process would now be left up to the students rather than the teacher. By calling for the complete transformation of "Course X," the authors were essentially offering a course of study that was being charted by student activists at San Francisco State, Berkeley, and other campuses. It was also the kind of composition course that expressivists were calling for, arguing that by concentrating on the "process" of writing instead of the product, students would be making their own decisions. "Ownership" would replace dictatorship. To a great extent, this shift in the makeup of a composition course was a sign of the times. Students were demanding that they play a larger role in society (as indeed they were!), which included taking part in decisions that affected their own education, and Greenbaum and Schmerl were willing to embrace those demands, especially since they believed such changes would create a more dynamic learning experience. Moreover, just as students were questioning authority everywhere and seeking a more active role in the organization of society, they were also questioning the authority of their instructors, while seeking to reverse their subservient role. As it came to pass, student activists had initiated a reformation within the educational community itself. Greenbaum and Schmerl had

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

accused "Course X" instructors of lecturing "for fifty minutes from their podiums"(xiv), with all knowledge and power invested in that uneven experience. A radical change inside the classroom would occur only if the distance between teacher and students was lessened, as Jerry Farber noted in "The Student as Nigger," and as expressivists like Elbow codified in their composition practices. But several teachers, like Deemer and the authors of Course X, indeed were coming down from their pedestals and joining the students, hoping to democratize the classroom rather than duplicate the hierarchical structure of other institutions. As an overall reform movement was underway, many educators within individual departments were urging an overhaul of their own programs.[2] English was no exception. And some of the biggest changes were occurring in the growing sub-field of Composition and Rhetoric where expressivism was challenging orthodoxy and reinventing the role of "writing teacher."

The Steady Winds of Change

A survey of topics from the pages of College English, for example, reveals how critical the field was becoming. The April 1970 issue, for instance, was dedicated entirely to "Literature: The Elite Tradition and Other Cultures," with such articles as "The Teaching of Afro-American Literature," "College Classrooms: The Mute Rebellion," "Afro a.m.: Renaissance and Revolution," and "Training Teachers for an Open Classroom." Other issues of College English also explored non-elite traditions, such as February 1971, which featured an essay on "Literary Cultures: Majorities and Minorities," and, perhaps for the first time, an article that addressed Native American culture: "Vision and Experience in Black Elk Speaks." In May 1971 College English devoted its entire issue to "Women in the Colleges: Status, Teaching, Feminist Critics," as it did in October 1972, titled "Women, Writing, and Teaching," which included essays by Tillie Olsen and Adrienne Rich. In November 1974, the journal focused on "The Homosexual Imagination." In December 1971, the publication addressed the relationship between students and teachers, examining the subject in ways comparable to Farber's critique of classroom

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

practices. On the cover, the publication asked: "How Can We Shift Responsibility and Authority in the Classroom?" Articles featured that month included, "The Unalienated Teacher," and "The Politics of Reform in Higher Education."

The next year began with Kenneth A. Bruffee's survey of "Innovations in College Teaching," an analysis of the articles that appeared in the December special issue that focused on progressive teaching strategies. By concentrating on pedagogy, teachers were realizing that how they taught was as important, if not more so, than what they taught. To be sure, the crisis in pedagogy stemmed from the notion that classrooms were organized around a dominant figure (the teacher) that duplicated the hierarchies of other unjust institutions, a critique laid out at the beginning of the decade in "The Port Huron Statement," and a key feature of Farber's underground release, which advanced the idea that the distance between teacher and students had to be lessened. Thus, as Charles E. Silberman noted in Crisis in the Classroom, "teachers need[ed] to be trained differently" (489) if schools expected to avoid setting up an intellectually barren and aesthetically sterile wasteland. Bruffee likewise argued that traditional pedagogy was a stifling experience for students. Moreover, like the authors of Course X, who claimed that Freshman English exhibited an "enormous literary bias," Bruffee argued that English courses and composition courses centered on literary texts created a dependency on a literary expert—the teacher—rendering the teacher's dominance inevitable. He concluded the article by stressing the importance of the teacher being able "to give up his own dependence on student docility" as a conventional pedagogy. Traditionally, he argued, a teacher's high-minded concept of his own intellectual talents created a case of "informational philanthropy" and therefore placed the teacher, and his knowledge (usually of a text he selected), at the center of the learning process. Instead, a properly designed pedagogy envisions the teacher arranging "optimum conditions for other people to learn" (470), a strategy put forth by the authors of Teaching As a Subversive Activity. Other articles in College English made similar claims. For example, in April 1972,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Gaylord C. LeRoy discussed "The Radical Teacher in Our Discipline," which considered replacing the mostly aesthetic interpretation of literature with an historical one, presaging the New Historical method that blossomed in the late eighties. But LeRoy also argued in favor of turning over the critical analysis of literature to the students, and replacing the idea of teacher-as-expert with the teacher-as-coach. English was being turned upside down.

In fact, teachers of English were so aware that the shifting social tides had affected the profession that the January 1973 edition focused on, "Teaching English, Post 1965: Politics, Relevance, Race, Ethnicity." Indeed, before 1965 College English rarely examined political, racial, or ethnic matters, and there was rarely any question involving the relevancy of studying (mostly white, Western) literature. More often than not, essays contained in College English before 1965 analyzed traditional literature, with New Criticism acting as the dominant model of inquiry. Thus, it was assumed that both traditional British and American Literature, examined through New Critical measures, was in and of itself relevant. Before 1965, it seemed that there was never any doubt that exploring "Irony in the Pardoner's Tale" (January 64), "Measure in 'To His Coy Mistress,'" "Form in 'The Nun's Priest's Tale'" (May 1964), "Structure in Dreiser's American Tragedy" (March 1963), or "Form and Content in Keats' 'Ode on a Grecian Urn'" (January 1962) was intellectually and socially relevant. Within a short span of time, however, such titles would almost seem like ancient literary history. Of course, after 1965, what was being studied in the academy would become a hot topic in its own right, leading to a culture war. In fact, even in the early seventies, not all of the College English articles praised the shifting literary sands. Stanton Millet, who was the Chair of the English Department at the University of Florida, believed that "the matter of student activism" was not a "salutary" moment for higher education. Writing in the December 1970 issue, Millet described the "New Left drive to 'radicalize' the campus" as creating "a crisis of public confidence in the universities that will have profound adverse effects on higher education" (250). On average, though, comments like Millet's were the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

exception rather than the rule. Most of the articles appearing in College English after 1965 welcomed the change. It is also clear that after 1965 Composition and Rhetoric was becoming a force to be reckoned with within departments of English, which makes historical sense since colleges were burgeoning with new students, and the vast majority of them were required to take a Freshman Composition course. Moreover, since many of them were part of a growing student population that would not have traditionally attended college in the past, compositionists also began addressing non-traditional, or non-academic, discourse in ways rarely examined before. Twenty years prior to this period, for example, "Black English" was not an issue because few blacks attended college—unless, of course, they attended all-black schools. The growth of Composition and Rhetoric therefore accompanied the growth of the college population—just as the counterculture movements were peaking as a social phenomenon.

As a result, entire issues of College English were devoted to composition or to teaching, and nearly every issue contained an article featuring some aspect of writing instruction. Typically, the essays either implicitly or explicitly referred to the social movements spawned by student activists. To some extent, the demands student activists were making about sharing power in the classroom had forced educators to explore pedagogy more profoundly than ever before, perhaps no more so than in the teaching of writing, which dealt primarily with the students' own language rather than the "fixed" literary text. Indeed, prior to 1965, few numbers from College English dealt exclusively with pedagogy or teaching writing. Pedagogy was not a cause for concern. And why should it be? Again, based on the titles, it was assumed that teaching literature was the best thing possible. That changed in 1968—as did so much of American society. In March 1968, for instance, the entire edition discussed "Teaching Writing," and later that year the November edition included Peter Elbow's very first published essay on the composing process, "Teaching Writing" (which will be addressed later). The January 1969 publication carried only one article, Robert Zoellner's lengthy "A Behavioral Pedagogy for

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Composition." The next issue, March 1969, included "Composition and Group Dynamics: The Paradox of Group Freedom," and the May College English divided itself between "On Writing as Behavior" and "On Relevance." October 1970 was devoted entirely to "Composition," which included such articles as "Writing About Experience: A Report on Freshman English," and Joan M. Putz's "When the Teacher Stops Teaching—An Experiment with Freshman English." Putz observed a non-directive course that had placed the decision-making process in the hands of the students. The informal class abandoned traditional modes of writing instruction, and Putz reported that "deemphasizing formal instruction in grammar and rhetoric, and the formal elements of English Composition, does not have a detrimental effect on writing achievement." She added that the study also proved that "the traditional emphasis on the formal elements of English won't necessarily improve writing achievement" (57). Thus, rhetoricians were abandoning traditional strategies and trying out approaches that had essentially stemmed from the demands of student activists. In fact, the winds of change would sweep across the field so forcefully that Maxine Hairston borrowed from Thomas P. Kuhn's analysis of scientific revolutions to describe what was happening as "a paradigm shift." Indeed, Lutz's comment about "deemphasizing formal instruction" coincided with perhaps the most controversial document associated with Composition Studies, "The Students' Right To Their Own Language," which also placed less emphasis on formal instruction. If English Studies was changing, as the pages of College English testified, then Composition Studies was changing even more dramatically. But "you don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows," sang Bob Dylan in one of the era's most popular songs, "Subterranean Homesick Blues." And, as Chapter Four demonstrated, the winds of change had been sweeping across the entire nation. In the late Sixties and early seventies, Composition and Rhetoric was setting its sails to accommodate those changes. Just as activists in the social movements demanded that the nation abandon the culture of consensus and conformity of the fifties, so too was Composition Studies discarding previous

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

ideas about teaching standardized English at a time when those "standards" were viewed as reinforcing inequalities based on race, sex, and class.

The Four C's of Change

Indeed, the changing tide of Composition Studies was most evident after 1968 within its own ranks, as it evolved through the organization designed specifically for rhetoricians, the Conference on College Composition and Communication. And, like other reform movements of this period, the question of civil rights played a prominent role. During the annual CCCC meeting in Minneapolis on April 4, members learned that Martin Luther King had been assassinated. On behalf of the organization, Richard Braddock wrote a letter of condolence to King's widow, Coretta Scott King, subsequently published in the October, 1968 edition of College Composition and Communication. The letter described a memorial service held at the convention, where a number of speakers "made eloquent statements about the racist sickness among Americans, including our own members, most of whom are white" (239). The letter also addressed the need for rhetoricians to broaden the scope of Composition Studies by incorporating an examination of other cultures and languages, particularly that of black students. The following year, the CCCC convention was held in Miami, in what became "probably the most politically active in the history of the CCCC" (Faigley, Fragments of Rationality 44). One of the first orders of business included the committee's decision to move the 1971 convention from Chicago to another location, a decision made to protest police brutality against demonstrators at the 1968 Democratic Convention. The committee's statement argued that what was "wrong with Chicago...is wrong with our society [in] its expression of values." The statement, which appeared in the October 1969 College Composition and Communication, reaffirmed that "teachers of English" should be "in the business of trying to improve our society's expression of values," and therefore they should "rededicate" themselves to a "belief in just language" (Roth 270). But a radical group within the organization, the New University Conference Caucus

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

(NUC), believed that the statement had not gone far enough. The issue, they claimed, was not simply unjust rhetoric but an unjust social order, and that unfair *expressions* of value stemmed from an unfair social system . According to the NUC, teachers of English therefore needed to be more critical of the social order itself rather than focus only on the rhetoric of the powerful, which they believed was an ancillary problem. In their "Counterstatement," which also appeared in the October issue of College Composition and Communication, the NUC insisted that teachers, just like many students at this time, should play a more active role in fostering change, "fundamental change, in the country." At the convention itself, as Lester Faigley reported in Fragments of Rationality, the NUC recommended a number of proposals that included teaching Black Studies for black students (a proposal originally made by the Black Student Union at San Francisco State College), banning racist textbooks, and taking a position against the grading system, a key component of Jerry Farber's essay, "The Student as Nigger." Thus, political events were influencing the direction of Composition Studies. And, like so many other social movements of this period, more radical factions, like the NUC, had sprouted from within the ranks of organizations that already were considering change. As a result, the NUC was pushing the organization to consider even more drastic changes than what it might have originally intended. In fact, the last of six resolutions proposed by the NUC influenced Composition Studies in a way that was probably inconceivable five years earlier.

The sixth resolution addressed students' language, eventually leading to the Executive Committee's 1974 approved statement, "Students' Right to Their Own Language," which was published as a special issue of College Composition and Communication that fall. At the 1969 Miami Beach Convention, the NUC had urged both the Executive Committees of CCCC and the National Council of Teachers of English to "work actively to make non-standard dialects acceptable in all schools from kindergarten on." According to the NUC, language had to be opened up, just as social spaces were being opened up throughout the nation, in order to avoid a

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

hierarchy of usage. Much like Wordsworth's remarks in the "Prefaces" to Lyrical Ballads about the dominance of leisure class language, the NUC advised "Linguists and English teachers [to] concentrate not on trying to teach everyone to speak and write upper-middle-class white dialect." The NUC also insisted that other dialects were as valuable as the dominant one, reiterating Wordsworth's assessment that vulgar speech was as valuable as the speech of the leisure class—if not more so. The Sixties in the U.S., like the 1790's in Britain, unveiled challenges to linguistic hierarchy that stemmed from challenges to political hierarchy. In Wordsworthian fashion, teachers of English, the NUC declared, should devote themselves "to teaching the truths that all dialects are effective and valuable and that no dialect is any more indicative than any other of intelligence and even language ability on the part of the speaker" (qtd. in Faigley, Fragments of Rationality 60). In the aftermath of the NUC declaration, the CCCC Executive Committee selected a task force to look into the relationship between student language and socialization. The first special committee failed to write a report and a second one was appointed, presenting a resolution that was embraced by the Executive Committee. In it the document restated much of what the NUC initially proposed.

> The claim that any one dialect is unacceptable amounts to an attempt of one social group to exert its dominance over another. Such a claim leads to false advice for speakers and writers, and immoral advice for humans. A nation proud of its diverse heritage and its cultural and racial variety will *preserve* (italics mine) its heritage of dialects. We affirm strongly that teachers must have the experiences and training that will enable them to respect diversity and uphold the right of students to their own language. (60)

Unlike Samuel Johnson, who believed that only the language of the leisure class was worth preserving, the authors who drafted the resolution argued in favor of preserving a variety of dialects. No one language, they argued, should be dominant based on the political dominance of "one social group." Following a discussion at the 1973 CCCC meeting in New Orleans, the draft

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

was officially approved at its meeting in Anaheim in 1974. To a large extent, new ground had been charted leading to dramatic changes in Composition Studies and the teaching of English generally. As the statement noted, the United States was composed of a rich heritage, one imbued with racial and cultural diversity that was worth protecting. And by advocating that teachers of English "uphold" and "respect" that heritage, the document shifted attention from student writing as product to student writing as process.

In fact, the "Students' Right" statement also accused writing instructors of being preoccupied with correctness while rarely focusing on the composing process itself, which happened to be one of the major proposals offered by expressivists during this time. What's more, the statement charged that students were being corrected in order to meet socially prescribed standards. At the root of the problem was a misguided reliance on handbook-pedagogy, a form of writing instruction that saddled students with a class-based model. In a section titled "What Do We Do about Handbooks?" the authors charged that "Many handbooks still appeal to social-class etiquette and cultural stasis rather than to the dynamic and creative mechanisms which are a part of our language" (10). Writing it right was as much an enforcement of social standards as it was an imposition of "neutral" grammatical requirements. In addition, the handbook approach flattened language, leaving it listlessly uniform, a complaint that Ken Macrorie made in a 1968 English Journal essay, which he addressed more fully in Uptaught. By forcing students to subscribe to rigid linguistic regulations, which the document described as an "exaggerated concern for the *least* serious aspects of writing," language would be left for dead on the cutting-room floor. As Wordsworth pointed out, sometimes we murder what we dissect. Moreover, the authors added, "deviation from the handbook rules seldom interferes with communication" (11), a qualification that sought to place higher value on expression rather than correction. As it turned out, the "Students' Right" statement was keeping up with the times, both in and out of Composition Studies. As Lester Faigley noted in Fragments of Rationality, the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"deemphasis of errors advocated in the 'Students' Right' statement was harmonious with the new focus on the process of composing rather than on the written product" (61). Officially, then, the organization was advancing the idea that students were entitled to do their own thing. And in order for that to occur, the CCCC statement also acknowledged that the process approach would have to replace past practices that emphasized "proper" diction. "The student uses his own language," Donald Murray advised in "Teach Writing as a Process not Product," which was published in 1972. Murray, who is frequently associated as a leading proponent of contemporary expressivism, also insisted that "Mechanics come last." By and large, the "Students' Right" statement complemented the emergence of modern expressivism as a counterpoint to traditional, teacher-centered writing strategies that had adhered to the "handbook" model. And, much like the "Students' Right" statement, expressivism sprung out of the Sixties' counter-culture movements. The protest culture of the Sixties had spawned a "movement" in Composition and Rhetoric.

Go With the Flow

For some writing instructors, the writing-as-process movement was an answer to student activists who were rejecting traditional authority and teacher-centered composition. As a student-centered process for writing, expressivism emphasized values that students were calling for, a pedagogy that was autonomous, antiauthoritarian, and personal. "Student power is no longer an issue," Murray wrote in the May, 1969 issue of College English, "it is a fact" (118). And that fact forced a reassessment of the way students learned to write in a Freshman Composition course. Now a standard-bearer of expressivistic rhetoric, Murray then believed the composition class needed to follow in the radical footsteps of the counterculture. The title of Murray's essay, "Finding Your Own Voice: Teaching Composition in an Age of Dissent," itself attempted to bridge the political events of the day with the possibility of re-inventing and re-invigorating a tired, ineffectual "teacher-centered educational system" (118). For too long, Murray argued,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

writing in the composition class crushed the student into a carbon-copy of the teacher's desires or thinking.

> Too often the composition teacher not only denies his students freedom, he even goes further and performs the key writing tasks for his students. He gives an assignment; he lists sources; he dictates the form; and, by irresponsibly conscientious correcting, he actually revises his students' papers. Is it not surprising that the student does not learn to write when the teacher, with destructive virtue, has done most of his students' writing? (118)

Murray envisioned a more egalitarian curriculum, one clearly based on the principles of the counterculture. If the Sixties generation attempted to enlarge the personal freedom of oppressed social groups, then a more socially progressive writing program should similarly strive to empower each student. In Murray's estimation, enabling students to master their personal voice would accomplish this goal, a move designed as an end-run around teacher-centered methodology.

> Democracy is forged out of a responsible Babel, and the mature English teacher welcomes a diversity of contradictory voices, each student speaking of his own concerns in his own way. There is not single standard, no one way to think or write, and we must not give our students the illusion there is. We must glory in contradiction and confusion, the human cacophony..... Each writing teacher should be a revolutionary, doubting, questioning, challenging, and, above all, encouraging his students to be individuals. (118-19)

Plainly, Murray shared many values of other school reform advocates, including the authors of Teaching As a Subversive Activity who stated that "any curriculum of a new education would, therefore, have to be centered around question asking" (81). Murray also viewed questioning as a revolutionary act, as well as doubting. Shortly, another expressivist would promote the benefits

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

of "doubting," which became an important ingredient in Peter Elbow's recipe for a student-centered program. In truth, though, Murray's cacophony of student voices could be construed as unbearably unnerving to a writing instructor accustomed to dictating terms and to dominating the class. That is because Murray's "responsible Babel" unraveled the controlling presence of a teacher-centered pedagogy, as advocated in Farber's "The Student As Nigger." Murray sensed that "the times they are a-changing," and so he had one important piece of advice to give to compositionists: carpe diem.

> The times indeed are revolutionary, cleansingly so. And they uniquely offer the composition teacher the opportunity to play a pioneer role in constructing an educational system which removes students' responsibilities from the teacher and places them firmly on the student. (118)

Murray found the revolutionary times a welcome relief, a unique moment in time that might rid the present from a dreary past, from a period when the composition teacher saw himself as the "principal defender of good taste [and] an evangelist of tradition" (118), a similar sentiment expressed by Wordsworth who hoped the revolutionary tide in France would sweep away the "meagre, stale, forbidding ways/Of custom, law, and statute."

Murray, like other school reformers, wasn't only satisfied with wiping the slate clean. He also proposed an alternative pedagogy, one clearly based in counterculture values. "In this age of dissent," he wrote, "the student must be given four freedoms—the freedom to find his own subject, to find his own evidence, to find his own audience, and to find his own form" (120). Murray wanted to empower students, concluding that students were not only entitled to such freedoms, but that their independence would lead them toward greater responsibility. Just as Greenbaum and Schmerl had proposed "the intrusion of adult patterns of learning into the classroom," Murray likewise believed that a writing curriculum had to provide the means for students to sever the umbilical cord attached to the teacher.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> It is ironic that a nation built by teen-age pioneers, sea captains in their twenties, and statesmen in their early thirties has created a teacher-centered educational system which keeps most of its students in a state of permanent adolescence through, and sometimes beyond, the awarding of the Ph.D. Too often our students have not been allowed to speak, and when they have spoken no one has listened, and when we have listened we have not allowed the freedom of action which encourages responsibility. (118)

In a traditional classroom setting, Murray argued, students were not allowed to grow up. And why should they when the instructor remained the author of everything that transpired? It was time for compositionists to recognize this unfortunate error from the past and share power with students. As a result, the writing instructor also has a responsibility "to create a psychological and physical environment in which the student can fulfill his responsibilities" (121).

As part of the this new approach, Murray agreed with Farber that teachers had to abandon the grading system. According to Murray, grades acted as a deterrent to student maturity. "Grades, of course, are ridiculous," he insisted, adding that "They are much more than irrelevant, they do positive harm" (121). Consequently, what began in an underground student paper as a case against the traditional grading system had seeped into an edition of College English. The counterculture was no longer an issue, it was a fact. Murray therefore concluded his essay with the same rallying cry that linked the social movements of the era with an appeal to reform writing instruction.

> The teacher of composition should welcome an age of dissent. He should glory in diversity, and he should discover that by giving his students freedom they will accept responsibility. Perhaps in this age when students are using their voices to attack and transform the educational establishment, the teacher of composition may return to his important educational role when rhetoric—the art of effective and responsible argument—was the foundation of a classical education. (123)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In Murray's view, as long as students were babied in a composition course, the field also would remain at an infantile stage in its development. As Charles Deemer noted in "English Composition as a Happening," the standard composition course revealed that it was "the rigid child of a rigid parent." By empowering students, Murray assumed the discipline itself would become a more potent force in the educational community. The freedom bestowed to students through a student-centered pedagogy would actually benefit the profession. Granting students the right to own their own language would be a radical step in the right direction in creating a more seasoned composition course. In no uncertain terms, Murray believed that rhetoricians had to embrace the revolutionary tide sweeping across the nation.

Murray's best-known contribution to the profession surfaced four years later with the appearance of "Teach Writing as a Process not Product," an essay confirming much of what he discussed in the earlier work, although he added some twists to the composing process: "discovery through language" and searching for "truth." As Chapter One argued, such expressivist claims became anathema to many rhetoricians who believed it signaled a self-centered writing strategy that denied students an awareness of the social function of language. For other rhetoricians, it also failed to meet the higher intellectual standards of academic discourse. In either case, the process approach of expressivists like Murray, according to its critics, was a revamped version of all the problems associated with "Romantic" writing, with sublime overestimatations of the value of personal discourse. However, viewed in the context of the Sixties, Murray's prescription that writing involved "discovery" and "truth" neither advised students to escape from their social surroundings, nor did it presume that a person's language could be pulled out of its social context. Rather, language was rooted in the real world, beyond the rigidly manufactured discursive universe imposed by traditional composition. In a traditional writing program, Murray claimed, students were satellites spinning in the teacher's orbit. The process approach offered students an alternative, a chance to break free from the teacher's pull

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and explore the world for themselves. Thus, by freeing students to encounter language as it existed for them—instead of it being produced by the instructor—students could discover reality for themselves. This notion of discovering reality was a social process set in a larger context, as Murray's catechism proposed:

> What is the process we should teach? It is the process of discovery through language. It is the process of exploration of what we know and what we *feel* (italics mine) about what we know through language. It is the process of using language to learn about our world, to evaluate what we learn about our world, to communicate what we learn about our world. (11)

Like Postman and Weingarner, who maintained in Teaching As a Subversive Activity that "English should focus on how language is produced by human beings for human purposes...inseparable from human situations" (38), Murray also believed in the importance of an experiential writing curriculum, of engaging students with the world around them. Otherwise, writing was merely an abstraction. In just the same way, the authors of SDS's "Port Huron Statement" complained of traditional learning as "a loss to personal attachment" because the curriculum was "dividing the student from life" (184). From expressivists as well as student activists, education examining the everyday was becoming the agenda.

By arguing for a curriculum that emphasized writing as a process rather than a product, Murray offered a composition pedagogy akin to the New Left. As Stanley Aronowitz argued in "When the New Left Was New," social activists at this time attempted to practice what they were preaching, deploying at their organizational meetings a process-focused approach unlike previous political organizations.

> Critics of the New Left have mocked the SDS for spending the first half of any meetingadopting the agenda and defining the rules of debate. But this criticism misunderstands the nature of the New Left, summarized in a single word: process. It was

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> a break from the abstract red politics of the past. It was part of a way to fuse the personal with the political, of creating a community, not primarily of interest but of *feeling*. (20)

To foster the politics of the personal, an ideology drafted to experientially challenge the politics of the power elites, the New Left believed that the process was as important as the ends. Process was as significant as outcome, since the process itself contained real participatory democracy. Furthermore, as the editors of The Sixties Without Apology argued, student activists connected "a disruption of late-capitalist ideological and political hegemony, to a disruption of the bourgeois dream of unproblematic production, of everyday life as the bureaucratic society of controlled consumption, of the end of history" (2). Perhaps, then, New Left activists practiced a "process" political style as a way to supplant capitalism's obsession with product and production, an event that Marx described in Capital as causing the "process to disappear" in all its forms, from "the instruments of labor" to "nature and its materials" (178-79). And, as many educational reformers were arguing at this time, schools were reproductions of the factory system, revealing the same kind of preoccupation with product over process. "The similarities between mass-production industries and most existing school environments are striking," Postman and Weingartner maintained, "and the most striking within the administration's concern for product rather than process" (30). On a smaller scale, within the classroom the teacher's concern with the final product reflected this concern as well—test scores, for example, that proved information had been properly *consumed* by the students after being *distributed* by the teacher. In "The Definition of Teaching" (1968), Peter Elbow's first essay dealing strictly with pedagogy, he argued against product-centered pedagogy: "the most central characteristics of higher education are in fact functional with showing-up-with-the-goods," the conception that teaching involves the distribution of "information, ideas, or answers—conveyable commodities" (188). Like Postman and Weingartner, whose Teaching As a Subversive Activity appeared the following year, Elbow believed that the curriculum should center around a process of asking questions, rather than

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

supplying answers—placing the emphasis on process rather than product. "Therefore," he argued, "what the teacher has is not a thing but a process—a capacity for seeing and asking new questions" (189). By stressing process over product, expressivists and educational reformers were attempting to place the means of production—the making of meaning—into the hands of the workers—the students.

In addition, the era's various reform movements believed that wider changes could occur after individuals realized that what they *felt* personally was rooted in social and political structures. Politics was not an abstraction. It was only an abstraction because the power elites had made it so. Connecting personal feelings to being oppressed by male dominance, for example, would lead to an even deeper understanding of that oppression, eventually inspiring a person to fight for change. And part of that strategy to work for social change was embedded in the *process* of self-discovery, of finding your personal "truth," which will set you free. Perhaps it is possible to consider that rhetoricians critical of the process approach have themselves misunderstood the nature of a movement that emerged in a milieu dominated by New Left values. The process of self-discovery was considered a liberating personal and social act, empowering individuals one at a time; the process of discovery through language was viewed as liberating students, one at a time, from the teacher's dominance. Writing as process was therefore seen as democracy in action inside the classroom. Murray claimed that writing as process meant that students would be dealing with "language in action" (11), contrary to the language of inaction that takes place when a teacher *distributes* discourse. Murray, like other educational reformers, was seeking to break from an educational past that had turned learning into an abstraction for most students, particularly for students learning to write. Writing instruction in the past had suffered from "narration sickness," as Paulo Freire categorized traditional classroom teaching, depersonalizing both language and the ways in which humans signify themselves to the world with language and orient themselves in the world through language. And, like the leaders of SDS

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

who hoped to connect reform with "feeling," of identifying personal feelings with the social experiences that may have caused them, Murray likewise believed that feelings played a role in the linguistic reconstruction of the world: "It is the process of exploration of what we *know* and what we *feel* (italics mine) about what we know through language (11). Just as activists believed that reality acted on humans cognitively and emotionally—that personal feelings could be re-connected to previous social experiences—so Murray believed that language was both cognitive and emotional. Language could be personally felt because it too was connected to previous social experiences that had acted on the writer intellectually and emotionally. Language, like politics, was not an abstraction. Language, like politics, was also *felt* at a personal level. Moreover, as feminist c-r groups at this time demonstrated, by articulating personal feelings an individual could gain greater insight into the social causes of those feelings. This could then lead to a fuller critique of how feelings of personal oppression were manifested in larger social spheres, like family, school, and work. In psychological terms, the talking cure worked itself out of an individual's ability to bring feelings back to life. Getting in touch with your feelings, as one of the era's most popular expressions stated, could be applied in a composition course. Even powerlessness, the authors of "The Port Huron Statement" argued, was felt at a personal level: "The apathy here is, first *subjective*—the felt powerlessness of ordinary people." And, as they maintained throughout the document, much of that apathy was felt by many university students. They identified the causes of this powerlessness stemming from the "structural" organization of American institutions which had separated "people from power, from relevant knowledge [and] from pinnacles of decision-making" (186). In his own way, Murray envisioned empowering students in a composition course by teaching writing as a process not a product. At the very least, the decision-making would be left in the hands of students who would hopefully discover relevant knowledge for themselves.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In short, Murray's proposals subverted traditional paradigms, which arose out of the counter-culture's attack on traditional discourse, just as Wordsworth's critique of leisure class language emerged out of Painite radicalism. In effect, Murray was not encouraging students to ignore the thorny business of politics or hide from social ills. In fact, during this period, the ability of powerful institutions to dehumanize and depersonalize social life had been identified as one of the greatest social evils. For Murray, the process approach was an attempt to counteract that from within the classroom. "Finding meaning in life that is personally authentic," as the authors of "The Port Huron Statement" suggested, could be a worthwhile pursuit for students enrolled in a freshman composition course. Indeed, Murray wanted to avoid subjecting his students to a traditional classroom environment that placed the teacher as the sole distributor of making meaning. Students should find meaning for themselves. That the student appeared in a typical classroom as simply the "receiver" of information who was "confronted by a 'meaning maker,'" as Postman and Weigngarner argued, was the most common complaint made by educational reformers during this period. According to Jerry Farber, the first step in the "Four-Fold Path to Student Liberation" involved the "decision-making process" being turned over to the students, ending the slavish ritual of students following the teacher's orders. Murray, likewise, wanted to reverse traditional roles. "First, by shutting up," he argued, rhetoricians would reduce their dominance. Therefore, teachers had to acquire new skills of their own, learning to understand that they "are not the initiator or the motivator" but "the recipient." Thus, in contrast to conventional practices, the *teacher* becomes the recipient of the student's language in Murray's schema. Murray, like other reformers, favored students making their own meaning—by discovering it through their own language. In "Teach Writing as a Process," Murray laid out ten "Implications" that follow from his advice, beginning with: "The text of the writing course is the student's own writing." From the start, the teacher as text is eliminated. Or, as Jerry Farber described it, "the high priest of arcane mysteries" is removed from the altar. In the third

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"Implication," Murray insisted that "The student uses his own language," a course of action steadfastly promoted in "The Students' Right" statement, and later by Elbow in a College English article (1991) on academic discourse. To argue in favor of placing the student at the center of the learning process at that time was equivalent to joining the devil's party, as Blake described it, and to view teaching as a subversive activity.

In addition, by stressing the significance of using language to figure out "what we learn about our world and to *evaluate* it," Murray also recognized that social forces influenced the shape of student discourse. Language did not appear magically from inner inspiration, but from an exploration of the outside world. Murray was not ruling out the importance of language existing as both a personal and a social construct, although Murray maintained that students had "learned a great deal of language before" class, and an appropriate composition course tapped into that truism. Therefore, it was wrong to assume that students were "empty buckets," using Postman's and Weignartner's metaphor, who needed to be filled with the teacher's contents. Nor were students, in the Frereirean sense, like deficit bank accounts that required deposits. Instead, according to Murray, students were already filled with meaning that they derived from their experiences in the world, and by furnishing students with the opportunity to use their own language, they would be reconstructing those experiences. Also, if post-structuralists and some Marxists are correct to claim that "reality" is shaped by language—especially the language of the powerful—then the best way to retrieve "reality" would be to reconstruct it through the language already in existence. For that to work, students had to discover it using their own idioms. In a sense, this relates to one of the principles that Dewey and Freire stress: authentic knowledge is knowledge in action and knowledge from action. Unless students use their own language, Murray was arguing, then they won't really know anything either. In the traditional composition course, on the other hand, students remained safely insulated because of the teacher's guardianship. Treated as empty *vassals,* students had little reason to look beyond their parent-teacher. In

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Murray's opinion, the teacher-centered classroom abolished the social aspects of language because only the teacher's language, and the teacher's terms, existed. As he stated in "Implication No. 2," "it is not the job of the teacher to legislate," but "it is the responsibility of the student to explore his own world" (12). Thus, Murray was not advising students to turn inward. On the contrary, he was proposing that students look outward, and this could only be achieved if the teacher buried his supremacy, a dominance that created a lopsided pedagogy that directed all of the attention towards the altar. In Murray's view, the teacher-centered classroom trafficked in solipsism. In contrast, by placing the student's own language at the center of the course, Murray expected that students would discover that meaning was gained outside of the classroom, away from the language legislated by the instructor. Furthermore, Murray thought that the process approach connected students to life in ways that the handbook method could not, as well as demonstrating to students that language throbs with vitality.

> This is not a question of correct or incorrect, of etiquette or custom. This is a matter of far higher importance. The writer, as he writes, is making ethical decisions. He doesn't test his words by a rule book, but by life. He uses language to reveal the truth to himself, so that he can tell it to others. It is an exiting, eventful, evolving process. (11)

Writing should not be "a drag" for students, as Jerry Farber claimed it was for most in an English class.

In part, student disenchantment with traditional forms of instruction stemmed from the unreal and untruthful intellectual life they were living. This is what was meant by the authors of "The Port Huron Statement" who argued against traditional instruction that created "inner powerlessness that transforms the honest searching of many students" (184). Viewed in this light, Murray's recommendation that writing instructors learn to "respect the student" as he "search[es] for truth" seems less like an invocation of what James Berlin described as expressivism's ability to deny "the inherently communal nature of the art" because of the "insistence on the private and

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

personal in discovering and communicating truth" (Writing Instruction 42). In the Sixties and early seventies, the search for personal truth was presented in opposition to the power elites that were calling the shots. Finding your own truth, like doing your own thing, or getting in touch with your feelings, was a radical departure from the culture of consensus and conformity of the fifties. As one commentator noted, the fifties had turned so-called rugged American Individualism into "Rugged American Collectivism" (Anderson 14). For activists to celebrate individualism over collectivism was akin to celebrating individuals for being black, female, gay, Hispanic, or Native American over celebrating the homogenous white, suburban male. For Murray to argue in favor of students using their own language, finding their own subjects, and discovering their own meaning was equivalent to aligning himself with the present (the Sixties) rather than the past (the fifties). Murray insisted that rhetoricians "glory in diversity," and "shut up" long enough to allow the voices of diversity to flourish in the class. His student-centered process emerged out of the social movements that sought to grant greater personal freedom to formerly disenfranchised groups. And, as other reform educators insisted, students as a group were one of the most widely disempowered segments of society, relegated to a slave-like status. To counteract that trend, Murray believed that teachers "must respect [their] student for his potential truth and for his potential voice" (13). As Todd Gitlin asserted in The Sixties, "the human potential movement sprang from countercultural visions" (426), eventually spilling over into educational reform initiatives. For an expressivist like Murray, encouraging students to find their potential through truth and voice while they wrote reaffirmed the reform movements of the period, as he pointed out five years earlier in "Finding Your Own Voice." To infuse the traditional consensus curriculum with the tonic of Sixties rebellion, the "teacher of composition should welcome the age of dissent," and "he should glory in diversity" (123). Finding your own voice was as much a political act as it was a personal responsibility.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Goodbye To All of That

In many ways, Ken Macrorie's career in Composition mirrors Murray's. Both rhetoricians insisted that writing instruction incorporate the ideas from the social reform movements, and both went on to become important figures in the process approach by setting up writing programs at schools across the country. However, in Uptaught (1970) Macrorie chided Murray for calling some students "boobs" in a Teacher Teaches Writing, although Macrorie later recanted that criticism in "The Preface to the New Edition" of Uptaught, reprinted for the first time in 1996. "I owe Donald Murray a separate acknowledgment of how premature I was in chastising him in Uptaught," he stated. "Since then," he went on, "his program in A Writer Teaches Writing has influenced thousands of students to extend and sharpen their writing powers" (xvii). Now, Macrorie considers Murray "a friend" who shares a common purpose (xviii). But even when he had some reservations about Murray's opinions, they already held similar views in their approach to student writing. Macrorie, like Murray, believed that if writing instructors adopted the ideas of student activists, much of the harm inflicted on students in previous Freshman English programs could be redressed. In what appears to be the first article that poses freewriting, Macrorie's "To Be Read" (1968), explicitly links the social movements of the period with an urgency to provide a more student-centered writing curriculum.

> Now we are living in a great series of revolutions, testing whether the present forms of school, church, state, family, and relationships between blacks and whites will endure. Already high school students are following the lead of college students—publishing underground newspapers, asking for a voice in making rules of their schools. Tomorrow they will be suggesting or forcing changes in the classroom—in what they are asked to read, to write, and in how their work is to be evaluated. (686)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Macrorie, like the authors of the "Students' Right" statement, also believed that a slavish devotion to correctness should be a thing of the past. Not only were students justifiably intolerant of this approach, but it was clear to him that it had failed as an appropriate method of instruction.

> We ask students never to judge ideas or events out of context, but fail to see our composition classes in any larger world. That is why they are such astonishing failures. For decades we have been smearing bloody marks (*sp, awk, gr*) in the margins of what we call "themes." These papers are not meant to be *read*, but *corrected*. (686)

Those war-torn, bloody responses, in Macrorie's view, testified to how composition instructors were mostly managing to abstract students from the contexts of their own lives, and, by design, from the world. Macrorie believed that unless drastic changes were implemented students would turn against the educational establishment and perhaps even destroy it. Thus, under the banner of school reform, many rhetoricians were presenting alternative approaches, offering a less teacher-centered writing curriculum, and presenting curricula that examines "the surrounding social order," as posited by the authors of "The Port Huron Statement" (184). The academic world was being turned upside down, and individual departments like Composition and Rhetoric were welcoming and responding to calls for change.

In "To Be Read," Macrorie claimed that he was "trying to reform writing" (686). Like Murray's "Implications" in "Teaching Writing As a Process," he provided a number of steps that a teacher could follow to implement reform. Thirty suggestions were listed, and he advised compositionists to allow students to find their own subjects by "free writing." He also implored teachers to "ask for honesty," "look for truth and liveliness," and to remind students that they have "the authority" to create their own meaning. He also stressed that students had to be responsible for all aspects of the writing process, including editing. Students should work in small groups and correct papers themselves, therefore avoiding "all that blood in the margins" (688) that indicated the instructor was dominating the entire process. Macrorie was seeking to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

place full responsibility on students to use, create, and shape their own meaning, replacing customary methods that emphasized the teacher's authority. Even individual conferences with students should be done away with, according to Macrorie, since "most teachers dominate those sessions" anyway (692). Peer-review groups should supplant that one-sided relationship. Such groups would further the development of student maturity, putting an end to the parent-child curriculum. In the long run, by "doing something different" students would develop into more responsible writers and more responsible students. And, like Murray, Macrorie believed that truth and discovery were key in offering a "different" tact. "Finally," he wrote, "the students' writing will be as good as the amount of discovery and wonder it contains," while the "surest way for a writer" to succeed was to strive "unbearably for truth" (692). Of course, for many critics of expressivism, truth and discovery reminded them of the so-called Romantic reliance on inspiration, a belief that language appears transcendentally once the individual artist captured the muse in a heightened state of illumination. In asking students to follow this method, students will think that language arrives as easily as a chicken lays an egg, as Patricia Bizzell claimed. But truth and discovery for Macrorie was viewed in opposition to "phony" academic discourse, "pretentious, empty" writing that exulted in the plumage but ignored the bird (687). By asking students to search for their own truth, Macrorie was attempting to place language in the hands of the student and undermine the powerfully elite position invested in academic writing. "Truth" and "discovery" did not arise out of a desire to place student discourse in a cultural vacuum. Instead, it was closely linked to other reform movements of the period which sought to empower individuals, and thereby lessen the role that power elites played in dictating the meaning of what was suppose to be "real"—the way it was 'spozed to be. And, as James Herndon demonstrated, sometimes schools ritualized inequality. Like many powerful institutions, educational elites could impose their version of what was true. And sometimes that "truth" reinforced the inequalities found in most hierarchies. As many educational reformers and student activists were

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

pointing out at this time, higher education epitomized an elite institution, and academic discourse stood atop a linguistic hierarchy, just as leisure language stood at the top of Samuel Johnson's cultural pyramid. As Cobbett, Wordsworth, and Paine argued, leisure language was intentionally artificial and abstract in order to keep the masses at bay. The concrete language of the people was more earthly, and more "common"—in all senses of the word—but it was categorized as infantile, and a lower form of discourse so elites could maintain their positions of power. As the authors of Course X argued, writing in college typically had "nothing to do with the kind of writing students will do for the rest of their lives" (179), which is why Macrorie described it as the kind of writing that is not really meant to be read. It's too phony and empty. In Uptaught, Macrorie extended his criticism of academic discourse, especially among English teachers, and demanded that "the Mother Tongue of the American people" (x) replace empty rhetoric. In fact, Macrorie argued, English taught in school was like a foreign language, like the Greek and Latin that Cobbett complained about which was 'spozed to reveal literacy, intelligence, and even social worth. So removed was academic English from the real world, in Macrorie's opinion, that it required its own category: Engfish. Thus, for many students, English in the academy was indeed Greek to them.

On the whole, Uptaught crusaded against "Engfish," the "bloated, pretentious language" that Macrorie saw everywhere in student papers and in the writing of his colleagues. In contrast, Macrorie's text is filled with counterculture expressions, passages reminiscent of Farber's essay, and samples of student writing that defied Engfish, written in a powerfully straightforward style that appear as a history of the era, from accounts of the Vietnam war to student demonstrations. Susannah Sheffer, who edited the Innovations in Education series (which also included reprinting James Herndon's The Way It Spozed To Be), describes Uptaught as "a kind of extended Tom Paine-like pamphlet produced by many individual students and a few teachers who had awakened to find they could write their true voices and feelings." The book, she argues, is an "attempt to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

make sense of that roiling era," and anyone who "picks up Uptaught is to hold a piece of those years in your hand" (viii). But, as Macrorie himself recalls in "The Preface to the New Edition," for a professor to remark "about the impersonal nature of the universities" was an act of betrayal within the academic community. And to write in a style that differed from academic standards, like the simple style that Paine professed to use in The Rights of Man, was further evidence that the author had radically questioned customary academic discourse: "The book was further insulting to the academic establishment because it was written by both the professor/author and his students not in academic language, but in the Mother Tongue of the American people" (x). Macrorie readily admitted that the book had been inspired by student activists who—like Peter Finch's character in the film Network—weren't going to take it anymore.

> It wasn't polite to publish a whole book on how it felt for students to be alive and often demeaned in school; but in the '60s, young people forced their way into a society of elders that had seldom taken them seriously. They marched in the streets. They publicly condemned the power structure of the country, including banks, "the military-industrial complex," as retiring President Eisenhower called it, and universities that didn't expect to hear criticism from students. It had been all "We'll tell you what are the important things you should know." In the '60s and early '70s some college students said to people in the power structure, "Now *we'll* tell you what are the important things *you* should know." One of them was that the Vietnam War was wrong, and they didn't want to die in a war they didn't believe in....(xi)

The students' version of the "truth," Macrorie argued, contrasted with the government's, which turned out to be misleading after all. "The students were right and the government was wrong," he noted. It was this kind of "oppositional" truth that Macrorie asked his students to discover.

> When I invited students in our writing courses to try harder than ever before for truth (not "the" truth, whatever that is, but their truths), they began to discard what

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> I call Engfish and develop *voices* (italics mine) in their Mother Tongue that fit what they were saying. They began to communicate with each other and people outside the classroom. (xi).

By developing voice, Macrorie claimed, students would be abandoning the irrefutable "truth" that allegedly existed in academic discourse, the Bakhtinian notion that official language automatically carried truthfulness. To counteract the dogmatic language of officialdom, as Bakhtin maintained in Rabelais and His World, the language of the folk, in all its bizarre concreteness, acted as a liberating counterpoint to "conventions and established truths," a subversion of "the narrow seriousness of official 'truth'" that in fact was often far from the truth (34-39). The contradiction between official declarations and social realities, the authors of "The Port Huron Statement" pointed out, contributed to the growing absurdities of American life. As they professed, "The declaration 'all men are created equal...' rang hollow before the facts of Negro life in the South and the big cities of the North" (177). But such false statements managed to both maintain the status quo and overshadow the reality of social injustices. Higher education contributed to such social paradoxes with its official statements that it was helping to democratize society, but in reality—as Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis pointed out in Schooling in Capitalist America—it was perpetuating social injustices. Marcrorie recognized the same conflict. "Now I see the central sickness of liberal education," he wrote. "It hopes and promises, but doesn't deliver" (Uptaught 47).

> The university is dedicated to [truth] and organized to prevent it.
>
> How could a student feel he's freely pursuing truth sitting in a large room listening to a man lecture every day?...While he's writing essay answers to questions he didn't think up?
>
> Professors seldom, if ever, think of academic freedom for students in their own classroom. There they are in charge, not the university president or dean. They ask the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

questions and give the assignments. They will exercise the freedom. (48)

In Macrorie's opinion, Engfish was a manifestation of the disease, and since it materialized as part of the problem, it also contained its own contradiction. Academic discourse might be touted as the best language to convey important cultural and social experiences, but, he argued, it was actually a "feel-nothing, say-nothing language, dead like Latin, devoid of the rhythms of contemporary speech. A dialect in which words are almost never 'attached to things,' as Emerson said they should be" (18). Macrorie was attacking academic discourse for being inconsequential and immaterial, the very same assessment that was made by Paine, Wordsworth, and Cobbett regarding leisure class language. Academic discourse, in Macrorie's estimation, was the modern American equivalent of the language of the leisure class.

For Macrorie, Engfish was the officially sanctioned "truth" of the academy that professed to be neutral and/or claimed to be empowering. Meanwhile, it actually constrained the construction of other meanings or realities, yet one more contradiction revealed. "From kindergarten through graduate school the American school system is built upon the fact of students talking and writing for Teacher," he stated. "Not with other students, and him, but to him and for him" (105). Discourse in school was a one-way street. As Min-zhan Lu later argued in an essay that examined the struggle among competing discourses, "Each discourse puts specific constraints on the construction of one's stance—how one makes sense of oneself and gives meaning to the world" (27). For Macrorie, at that time, it was worse than that. In traditional composition courses as he saw them, there are no competing discourses. There's only one. In Macrorie's estimation, Engfish was the specific discourse of the academy that imposed its world view onto student (in the Sixties as well it still does in the nineties). By breaking free of Engfish, Macrorie believed his students could make sense and give meaning to the world on their own. For Macrorie, to use Engfish was to employ the one-sided, stilted language of the academy, which ultimately suppresses all truths but its own. In the absence of personal truth, in Macrorie's

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

opinion, only the official "truth" of the power elites flourish, encoded in such pointed proclamations as: peace is at hand, blacks are inferior, work hard and you'll get ahead, the atom is our friend, unions are linked to the communist conspiracy, Native Americans are savages, children should be seen and not heard, capitalism enhances democracy, gays are social deviants, militarism ensures freedom, women should stay at home, and wars must be fought to keep the peace. At this time, student activists and educational reformers were insinuating that the academy promoted and fortified the "truths" of the establishment, and Macrorie believed that "Engfish" was its carrier.

Of course, some compositionists in the eighties and nineties—like Mike Rose and David Bartholomae—argued that students must learn the language of the academy, the language of social and cultural power, in order to gain insight into how the powerful operate, and perhaps even get a toehold into regions of power. Also, they might add, since the academy is already a powerful place, which reflects society's power structures, not to teach Engfish would be pretending that students could escape from its powerful grasp. To hide academic discourse from students is a terrible disservice. "There is no better way to investigate the transmission of power, tradition and authority," Bartholomae argued in a College English "Conversation" with Peter Elbow, "than by asking students to do what academics do" ("Writing With Teachers" 66). Students might feel free by abandoning Engfish, but they would only be theoretically free, wherein "the 'democratic' classroom becomes the sleight of hand we perfect in order to divert attention for the unequal distribution of power" (66). The students' real freedom, or their real empowerment, will arise once they make the leap from one rhetorical level to the next. Empowerment can occur only if Engfish is celebrated, learned, and practiced. In other words, the best way for a slave to set himself free is to learn the language and customs of his masters. And this is why expressivism is a failed rhetoric, according to such critics, because students fail to learn a masterful language. Instead, they remain mistakenly convinced that the freedom to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

express themselves is socially empowering, or even culturally relevant. "I don't want my students to celebrate what would then become the natural and inevitable details of their lives" (69), Bartholomae argued, in the debate on writing theories. According to Bartholomae and others, learning Engfish is as socially important as was an understanding of Greek and Latin in England in the 1790's. In the opinion of many rhetoricians, acquiring academic discourse is the best way for students to succeed in the world, and to know its powerful forces. But this was not Macrorie's way. Macrorie envisioned "a Third Way," as he described it.

In the First Way, teachers "hand out" information and the students follow along; in the Second Way, "the teacher provides complete freedom and no direction at all;" in the Third Way, which Macrorie admitted he "stumbled onto," students operate "with freedom and discipline. They are given real choices and encouraged to learn the way of experts" (27). As he explained it in the chapter titled "The Third Way," Macrorie envisioned it as "*Freedom* to follow the direction of one's own movement and the *Discipline* of considering the response of others to it" (167). It's telling that he used one of the era's most identifiable words—"movement"—to define his pedagogy. Equally revealing is that the Third Way, while stressing the self—"one's own"—also takes into account "others." To some extent, Macrorie was trying to resist "the imagined classroom," as Mary Louise Pratt called it in "Arts of the Contact Zone" (1991), where the "unified social world" that is likely to be created in the teacher's "own image," curtails "oppositional discourse, parody, resistance, [and] critique" (504). This may be one way to explain why college seems so unreal to many students, and why Engfish seems so empty: the university is governed by an imagined "set of rules or norms" that all participants are expected to share (503). Perhaps the academy exists for many students as a heightened, overblown "imagined community" that seems artificial to many of them, causing some to refer to circumstances outside of its borders as "the real world," or to point at the window and say "out there in the real world." For many of them, academic discourse seems equally unreal as well.[3] On the day the class "killed

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Engfish," Macrorie reported, the students were "speaking in their own voices about things that counted for them" (21), and they finally broke through "the unreal world of the university" (11), where the "English professor has dehumanized the writing of his students" (7). In Pratt's "imagined" classroom community, which underlies "much of the thinking that gets done in the academy," the teacher stands as "the finite, sovereign, and fraternal figure" who oversees the project, the essential lynch pin who holds together "homogeneous competence or grammar shared identically and equally among all members" (502-3). But it is a delimiting community with established boundaries. As such, its structure confines students within its borders, disengaging them from the outside world, a situation that the authors of "The Position of the Free Speech Movement" described in 1962 as "the machinery of education that has abstracted the student from real learning" (215). Macrorie, like Murray, had embraced the ideas of student activists, and he believed that students of the Third Way "easily and naturally connect their class work with the world they know outside the classroom" (170). Macrorie's Third Way, like the Contact Zone, made the "traditional" unifying presence of formal instruction "anomalous and unimaginable." It offered the "range and variety of historical relationships" that Pratt later envisioned as an alternative to the "lecturer's traditional (imagined) task...of a monologue" that revealed what "was true for all" (505). Thus, twenty years before the Contact Zone became something of a fixture in the lexicon of Composition and Rhetoric, Macrorie already identified one of the major problems inherent in the contrived, or "imagined," writing classroom. "How could a student feel he's freely pursuing truth sitting in a large room listening to a man lecture every day?" he asked. In asking students to find their own voice and discover their own truth, Macrorie hoped to supersede the teacher's traditional task of disseminating a universal wisdom true for all. Macrorie wanted to subvert the educational establishment's master paradigm which had produced a classroom environment that enforced a master/slave relationship between the teacher and his students.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Indeed, in many ways Macrorie's Uptaught picks up where "The Student As Nigger" left off, even calling for "abolishing grades" (92), the "whip" that keeps the slaves in line and provides the teacher with the "advantage over the unwashed, the careless, and the lazy" (71). Throughout Uptaught, Macrorie identifies the central problem with writing instruction much in the same way that Farber proposed that students were a separate, repressed class in their own right. Macrorie devoted two chapters to the issue, "Slavery" and "Overseers," which included frequent references to Frederick Douglass' Life and Times to illustrate the analogy, as well as caustic comments from the "overseers" themselves who remarked that students "can't think for themselves" (70), and have "nothing useful" to say in the first place (72) . Students, like all slaves, "know they are inferior" (60) and "know how to act" (65) because of the *master* trope of school life, the imagined community. The overseer's role is to convince students that because of their inferiority they must be treated like slaves. Equally important is to convince the students that their enslavement is in their own best interests, Macrorie maintained using a passage from Frederick Douglass. In most thriving slave communities, Douglass noted, it is important to make the slave willingly accept his condition as much as possible:

> "To make a contended slave, you must make a thoughtless one...He must be able to detect no inconsistencies in slavery. The man who takes his earnings must be able to convince him that he has a perfect right to do so." (59)

Thus, the circumstances and discourse surrounding the slave's life, which are manufactured by the master, plays a crucial role in his personal behavior and demeanor. It is no less so for students who are shaped according to the powerful signals they receive inside the classroom. Once more, to demonstrate the similarities between slavery and school, Macrorie drew on Douglass' Life and Times:

> "Man derives a sense of his consequences in the world not merely subjectively but objectively. If from the cradle through life the outside world brands a class as unfit for

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> this or that work, the character of the class will come to resemble and conform to the character described. To find valuable qualities in our fellows, such qualities must be presumed and expected." (75).

As a class, students are expected to conform and to accept their own docility, whereby they will willingly "know where they stand" (69) in relation to their masters.

In addition to mirroring parts of Farber's "Student As Nigger," Uptaught also encompasses ideas expressed by other reformers. "First and foremost," Macrorie stated, most teachers are "tyrants" who treat "college students as children," a common complaint among several progressive educators. And, like the "clever robots" that Farber accused the educational establishment of churning out, Macrorie also attacked the system for turning out "automatons" (8). Macrorie also spotlighted the English teacher's fixation with correctness, as did the "Students' Right Statement," noting that "errors must be called to [the student's] attention" at all costs since they revealed a discursive "sin," making it "a matter of morality" for the teacher. "Correction is a holy duty," he added, and most writing instructors "can't pass by the words without circling them in blood" (71). This, of course, makes perfect sense in a Freshman Composition course where the student does not "write truths that count for him," but in order to "master an academic tongue" (8). Macrorie also shared with others the belief that John Dewey's work offered insights into solving school problems that remained unresolved. In fact, Macrorie suspected that Dewey had "described the nature and causes of Engfish" back in 1899 with the publication of School and Society. It is worth quoting Macrorie's citation nearly in full, for the passage not only points toward an early recognition of the existence of "Engfish," but also sheds some light onto why so many educational reformers of this period considered Dewey a prophet for change.

> "Think of the absurdity of having to teach language as a thing by itself. If there is anything the child will do before he goes to school, it is to talk of the things that interest

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> him. But when there are no vital interests appealed to in the school, when language is used simply for the repetition of lessons, it is not surprising that one of the chief difficulties of school work has come to be instruction in the mother-tongue. Since the language taught is unnatural, not growing out of the real desire to communicate vital impressions and convictions, the freedom of children in its use gradually disappears, until finally the high school teacher has to invent all kinds of devises to assist in getting any spontaneous and full use of speech. Moreover, when the language instinct is appealed to in a social way, there is continual contact with reality.... he has a thought to express, and a thought is not a thought unless it is one's own.... In the traditional method, the child must say something that he merely has learned. There is all the difference in the world between having something to say and having to say something." (118)

Although Dewey was "a seer," in Macrorie's estimation, his insight "was not applied in a way that freed many American children to use their own voices in the classroom" (118). But that seemed to be changing in 1970, just when so many social and school reform initiatives were peaking. As Macrorie surveyed the situation then, he was confident that Dewey's principles were on the brink of finally being realized. Macrorie was so convinced that reforms would sweep aside traditional teaching practices that he borrowed the title from Robin Morgan's groundbreaking feminist tract to describe the situation: "Goodbye To All That,"[4] he proclaimed, pointing out that while activist students were forcing some teachers to abandon Engfish, many of them were bidding farewell to traditional models on their own (153). From the magazines and newspapers being produced at Free Schools (166) to the underground presses, which proved that students were "through with Engfish"(184), along with the publication of such recent books as Herndon's The Way It Spozed to Be and Herbert Kohl's 36 Children, the winds of change seemed to be in the air. Macrorie was also encouraged by the work of Peter Elbow, who "has begun to write

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

about the teaching of English with an insight and grace that led the editor of the journal College English to give him more space than I think any other author has been accorded in the history of this respected publication" (159). Indeed, by 1970 Elbow had begun to make his mark in the field, and like Macrorie and Murray, his work reflected that he too was a product of the times.

Elbow Room

Perhaps Elbow is the most widely known proponent of expressivism in Composition and Rhetoric (a role he explicitly refuses to assume, as Chapter One noted). Based on his early work it seems apparent that his evolution towards expressivism began with the radicalization of American society during the Sixties. Elbow's first published piece of writing, which appeared in the August 7, 1968 edition of The Christian Century, explained the kind of persuasive "personal" essay that frequently allowed Conscientious Objectors to convince their local draft boards to grant them official "C.O." status and not be sent to Vietnam. According to Elbow, the "task of the objector seeking C.O. classification, then, is to work out and articulate what his 'inner' or 'ultimate' beliefs are" (990). As a counselor for conscientious objectors, Elbow believed that the self revealed in words was the best rhetorical strategy for those seeking C.O. classification. And this was clearly a case when the personal had very serious political implications. What's more, Elbow's assertion that C.O.'s articulate their inner beliefs as a way of situating themselves within larger political issues was the guiding tactic behind many social movements at this time, as Chapter Four demonstrated. Elbow was therefore applying a common strategy deployed by civil rights activists, gays, feminists, Native Americans, Chicanos, and members of the FSM. In the opinion of one anti-war protester, who was among the 1,500 young men in mid-October, 1965 who turned in their draft cards at churches and federal buildings in the First National Days of Non-Cooperation, defying the government was a "personal, deep communication-type politics" (qtd. in Burns 77). In his own way, Elbow was working against his own government's attempt to wage an imperial war, just as many English Jacobins had resisted Pitt's colonial policies. Perhaps

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Elbow's attempt to expand the number of C.O.'s through an articulation of their core beliefs had been fueled by the era's "fusion of the personal and the political," as SDS activist Tom Bell argued (78). In any event, by asking C.O.'s to "work out their inner beliefs," Elbow was deploying a strategy used by countless movement groups that sought to grapple with larger social and political events through a "personal" language. Those C.O.'s coached by Elbow were "getting in touch with their feelings," as one of the era's more famous slogans described it, just as much as feminists, blacks, gays, and others advised group members in order to personally identify with larger social and political issues in order to better manage them, and possibly work for change. As Elbow stated in an essay that appeared in College English three months after the Christian Century piece, where he referred to his position as a draft counselor, "We are slow to realize that belief is what you call on when action is required" (121), and the form of action that the men he was counseling required was to resist participating in the war machine. They needed an invention strategy to discover a discourse that would persuade local draft boards of their sincerity in their CO applications. As far as Elbow could discern, expressing deep-seated personal beliefs was "writing with power."

In that College English essay, Elbow's theory of personal writing is grounded in what he learned as a C.O. counselor. "What is really meant by a self revealed through the words on the page," he explained, "is not literary but pragmatic—the experience of being a draft counselor trying to help conscientious objectors in their preparation of #150 forms for their draft boards" (120-21). From *his* personal experience of being politically involved at that time, Elbow arrived at a theory of writing that focused on the "inner" voice, applying it to a writing pedagogy to teach anyone to write well: "When words carry the sound of a person...they are alive. Without it they are dead" (120). These words resonate with eerie significance considering how Elbow must have realized that C.O.'s who failed to carry the sound of their own person on the page might in fact wind up dead somewhere in Southeast Asia—or in jail as a draft resister, or in exile in Canada,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

or underground hiding in the U.S. What's more, like other activists at this time, Elbow connected a personal experience to a wider social issue. In this case, Elbow was joining other educational activists, like Murray and Macrorie, who were attempting to reform writing instruction. Elbow concurred with these educational activists that one of the unfortunate problems with traditional classrooms is that "the teacher is a repository of authority" who automatically becomes "the repository of standards and excellence" (117), he stated in "A Method for Teaching Writing." In most instances, Elbow argued, top-down instruction leads to "empty wordiness" (120). Not only does academic writing appear to students like a foreign tongue—Engfish—but few students believe in it. It's not *theirs*. Elbow envisioned a different *way*, one in which the students are asked to unlock their own storehouse of language, or what he described as their "word-hoard." In effect, Elbow believed that students who used their own language and wrote about their own experiences would be connecting "the language instinct" in a "social way," as Macrorie's quoted passage from Dewey revealed, distinguishable from Engfish. Furthermore, by insisting that students already had their own store-house of language and information, Elbow was refuting the traditional belief that students were showing up to class as empty buckets who needed the teacher to pour the goods into their heads.

> The student who has a voice can "unlock his word-hoard." The connotations of the poet's kenning are appropriate. Every one does have a "word-hoard": a collection of words that are connected to his strong and primary experiences in the world—as opposed to words which (putting it inexactly) are only connected to other words. (120)

Elbow believed that if students used their own voice, they would more likely advance their own learning. Also, "voice" is linked to worldly experiences, in sharp contrast to the claims made against expressivists, like Elbow, that by relying on "voice" in a composition course the student will ignore worldly matters and remain buried under a selfish quest for personal truth.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Actually, Elbow believed that unless students applied their own voice—connected to their out-of-class experiences—discourse would remain empty rhetoric. Words would be fancily stitched together, or what Cobbett considered to be "the long habit" of the leisure class of "attaching too much importance to 'words' instead of things" (Opinions 287). In effect, Elbow was championing student ("vulgar") discourse, over academic ("leisure class") discourse, not unlike Paine, Wordsworth, and Cobbett who argued in favor of the "plain," ordinary language of the people. Several years after the appearance of "A Method for Teaching Writing," Elbow more extensively outlined his grievances against academic discourse in "Reflections on Academic Discourse: How It Relates to Freshmen and Colleagues" (1991). In his wider assessment of it, he argued that "it tries to peel away from messages the evidence of how those messages are situated as the center of personal, political, or cultural interest." As far as Elbow was concerned, the impersonal nature of academic discourse masked its social origins, due in large part to its phony scientific "objectivity" and "disinterestedness" (141). An additional problem with this discursive philosophy, Elbow argued, was that academic discourse also "avoids the ordinary" (145). As a result, those who practice it assume a set of "social and authority relations" that essentially "exclude ordinary people" from participating in the construction of society or culture (146). Language is distributed in one direction, largely because the academic expert holds all of the cultural cards. It is a discourse more highly valued than any other, Elbow claimed, and it denies "ordinary" language from being entertained as a viable means of communication. It's as if academic discourse has replaced what Johnson, Lowth, and others considered inherently valuable about leisure class language. And like leisure class language, academic discourse lacks genuineness, Elbow insisted, by being disconnected to the concrete world. Elbow maintained that it was "faceless and passionless by design," largely because its "conventions tend toward the sound of reasonable, disinterested, perhaps even objective (shall I say it?) men."[5] Because of these conventions, he added, "people who write academic discourse pretend to be objective or

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

assume that there are absolute standards for truth" (141), the same problem Macrorie expressed about it in Uptaught. As the official language of "high" culture, then, its users automatically assume they speak the truth, thereby excluding "other" voices. Academic discourse may indeed carry weight, but it also squashes the "ordinary" who get in its way. For Elbow, like other expressivists who emerged out of the Sixties, personal "voice" and discovering personal "truth" were alternatives to academic discourse, which had officially crowned itself king of truthfulness, in the Bakhtinian scheme of things. Because of this, it also seemed unconnected to real experiences, or the material world. Academic discourse was therefore more like the negative conception of Romantic language in that *it* transcended reality. Expressivism, on the other hand, was rooted in the real world, much like Wordsworth's vulgar speakers. Elbow's conception of "voice" was akin to Dewey's conviction that "a philosophy of education" must be "based upon a philosophy of experience" (Experience and Education 29). Learning academic discourse, in Elbow's opinion, fails to meet that Deweyan philosophy: "When students write about something only in the language of the textbook or the discipline, they often distance or insulate themselves from experiencing or really internalizing the concepts they are allegedly learning" ("Reflections on Academic Discourse" 137).

In fact, in calling for experimental writing courses that offered "teacherless classes" (123), Elbow believed they could evolve into a welcome model of experiential learning. Like Murray and Macrorie, Elbow advised that "the class must think of assignments" rather than the teacher (116). Such a class would begin with the teacher's direction, in that he would ask the class "to reflect on situations—past or present." But "it is important" to remember, Elbow argued, that the assignments originate "out from the class's own experience and speculation—not the teacher's" (116). Next, the teacher will no longer decide what is good or bad writing. That judgment call will be in the hands of students: "Therefore every member of the class will judge all the papers" (117). Elbow's "teacherless class" resembles Macrorie's "Third Way" and

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Murray's "Process." In it, Elbow felt he had discovered a strategy that reflected Dewey's belief in language being taught naturally, growing out of a real desire to communicate.

> I feel the need for solid, empirical bedrock in this mysterious matter of words on paper—even at the cost of some gentility or sophistication.
>
> So let the class invent its own assignments. If it wants more sophistication, fine. So long as it keeps to this empirical model of writing.

In advancing his "teacherless" class, Elbow warned teachers about what must seem obvious: the mutation of their traditional role. "The teacher gets a new role," he stated. "He is no longer the authority of standards and excellence" (117). But Elbow understood that teachers would reluctantly abandon their traditional role. After all, he argued in a subsequent essay, teachers not only had a stake in maintaining their authority, but they also had been trained to assume a position as the high priest of learning. And nowhere was this more evident than in English classes, Elbow asserted.

In "The Definition of Teaching," an essay that appeared one month after the publication of "A Method for Teaching Writing," Elbow complained that many teachers treated their field of study as a "personal fiefdom" (199), which often led to an uneven classroom experience. All power is invested in the teacher because only he has mastered the truly important knowledge contained in the subject. In obtaining their Ph.D's, Elbow pointed out, teachers are required to become specialists in their field, sometimes becoming the guardians of esoteric material, or what Jerry Farber caustically characterized as "high priests of arcane mysteries" (96). Years later, in Professing Literature (1987), Gerald Graff categorized it as "the field-coverage principle," a seemingly "innocuous" prescript at first glance that in fact "created a system of instruction [that] could proceed on automatic pilot" (6-7). In 1968, Elbow had already identified this problem as "showing-up-with-the-goods." In Elbow's estimation, it was "the most central characteristic of higher education" (188), especially within the compartmentalized departments of English.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> I am referring to those conditions which too easily permit the very metaphor "goods": a tendency to conceive the ingredients of the teaching enterprise as information, ideas, or answers—conveyable commodities. The current conceptions of "discipline," "field," and "professional" reinforce these conditions and thus ultimately reinforce showing-up-with-the-goods as the definition of teaching. (188)

As a result, Elbow claimed, many teachers consider their knowledge separate from the knowledge of their students, so that "when you know something well, what you know are things unknown to others—what is private to you, secret, arcane" (198). Because of this mind-set, teachers "leave no room for knowing as joining with others, diminishing separation" (199). Ultimately, this approach never allows the "distance" between teacher and student to be "reduced," as Charles Deemer advocated in "English Composition as a Happening." Thus, because of their training, Elbow asserted, teachers crown themselves "king: carving out a territory of [their] own and having exclusive sway; a competitive model of knowing as beating others" (198). More often than not, Elbow argued, they beat up on the students. Compared to the "king," the student-charges "display those behaviors [teachers] call 'lazy' and 'stupid'" (188). It is instruction by decree, a fait accompli that casts learning into a relationship between the master and his slaves.

Elbow considered this "a dreadful state of affairs" (193), particularly as it related to Freshman English. The English teacher is never compelled to consider that any other statement but his is valuable. In "most cases," he argued, "teachers often *profess*" their knowledge as if it stemmed from objective truths, but it is ultimately "dogmatic" because it leaves no room for argument (193). So entrenched was this idea of "professing" literary and linguistic truths among professionals that Gerald Graff used the term to historically explain the syndrome. Graff revealed what many educational reformers, like Elbow, were pointing out in the Sixties, that the English teacher assumes the role of the "disseminator and explainer" of the most important cultural

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

artifacts (206). During the Sixties, progressive educators were arguing that this disproportionate relationship led teachers to discount the students' own language. And why should it? Nothing could possibly compare to the enlightened discourse of the instructor. For students, it's discourse with no recourse. As Elbow argued, the English teacher's statements are "the truth," creating a "dreadful state of affairs" for anyone interested in establishing a democratic classroom. Language flows in one direction, becoming "a 'priest' model of discourse" (193). In a sense, Elbow had foreshadowed Foucault's argument in "The Discourse on Language" (translated into English in 1971), which pointed out that scholars "in the educational system" tended to "speak the truth in a void," and they maintained that "truth" by recycling their own special brand of discourse: "Disciplines constitute a system of control in the production of discourse, fixing its limits through the action of an identity taking the form of a permanent reactivation of the rules" (224). Three years prior to the American publication of Foucault's essay, Elbow had already identified this problem in the academy, and he concluded that it had "disastrous consequences for the classroom." As he noted: "For everything makes the teacher look like the priest. He has the mantle, the training, and the initiation" (193). By arguing against this system, Elbow hoped to demystify the instructor's priestly role, and his ancillary production of a fixed discourse. How ironic, then, that in subsequent years—as Chapter One indicated—some rhetoricians would find much to use from "The Discourse on Language" to accuse expressivists like Elbow of asking students to discover their own truth "in a void." At any rate, in 1968, like Murray and Macrorie, Elbow presented "A New Model for Teaching" that sought to eliminate the teacher as high priest of arcane mysteries.

Elbow categorized the priest-model as "the wrong definition of teaching;" the "right definition" of teaching has much in common with Postman's and Weingartner's argument in Teaching As a Subversive Activity, that "any curriculum of a new education would have to be centered around question asking" (81). Like those authors, Elbow believed that question-asking

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

would supplant the know-it-all pedagogical stance of traditional teachers. "The spirit of questioning" should replace the old uneven strategy, wherein the teacher would "share a spirit of questioning, wondering, and doubting," the precursor to Elbow's eventual "doubting and believing" game. Left on its own, standard models enforced the notion that the teacher was always right and that the curriculum was set in stone, thereby creating an unnatural environment that failed to reflect the very real changes occurring in society. As Postman and Weingartner noted, "the most striking characteristic of the world we live in" is that "change is constant, accelerating, and ubiquitous," yet the "educational system has not yet recognized this fact" (xii). Elbow wanted to change this "fact" by introducing change and doubt into the classroom. Just as Murray and Macrorie had done, Elbow invoked the spirit of the times to make his point: "Student pickets against teachers in the humanities should read, 'When was the last time you changed your mind in class?' and 'I beseech you, in the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken'" (194). Moreover, Elbow added, many professors had embraced dissent *outside* of their classrooms, but refused to allow dissent from within. According to Elbow, it was about time that they did:

> We have come almost to take for granted the spectacle of departments which surpass in their conduct of academic policy the very practice which members criticize the President's conduct of foreign policy: causing or trying to cause opposing points of view forcibly to disappear. The charge that national government is intolerant of dissent is emasculated when it comes from men who strive to prevent their own students from being confronted with teachers who conceive and practice their discipline in a different fashion. (191)

In short, teachers were hypocrites. And, according to Elbow, by squashing dissent in their own classrooms, teachers were weakening their own declarations that the government engaged in undemocratic practices. Thus, Elbow advanced his "Right Definition" of teaching by invoking

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the era's dissenting movements. As Murray noted, in an age of dissent it was necessary to view dissension as an appropriate teaching philosophy. In the long run, teachers had to stop "giving students something or doing their work for them" (200), putting aside the parent-child relationship in which "holding their hand" replaced any sense of "autonomy and independence" on the part of students. Perhaps the best way to impart more student autonomy and independence, Elbow suggested, would be to create "independent courses" where the students choose the topics and "define and focus it," much like the "teacher-less" classes he suggested in his earlier article that dealt strictly with writing.

By 1973, in fact, Elbow had worked out a more elaborate guide for establishing a teacher-less writing program. In Writing Without Teachers, he offered a pedagogical approach that automatically placed the student at the center of the writing process and extricated the teacher from a dominant position. In doing this, Elbow believed he was in line with the era's other social movements which were seeking to empower people. He makes this clear in his prefatory remarks: "Many people are now trying to become less helpless, both personally and politically: trying to claim more control over their own lives. One of the ways people most lack control over their own lives is through lacking control over words" (vii). Indeed, an apt synopsis of the book might state that it asks writers to do their own thing—on the page, that is—and become *rhetorically* empowered by it. But each writer also had a duty to encourage and be responsible to others, Elbow pointed out. Similar to Murray and Macrorie, Elbow likewise stressed collaborative work, advocating a "responsibility" toward "the other members" of the class rather than toward the teacher. As noted above, with respect to Macrorie's respect for "other voices," it is difficult to see how such an idea forces the student to approach writing as a self-contained process, as many critics of expressivism charge. Nevertheless, Elbow hoped to invest as much power and authority into the hands of students, to set up a working model that reflected the spirit of the age.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Empowering students, however, immediately posed a problem for the Current-Traditional camp in the field of Composition and Rhetoric. A review of Elbow's book, which appeared in the Harvard Educational Review, found Writing Without Teachers to be "wise and witty" but wondered if such a teacher-less class could achieve the required "level of competence" that all college students must attain. The reviewer, Geraldine Pittman Rubenstein, asked where "the standards and dialect of the larger community" fit into such a program—as in the community of standards that Pratt later mentioned—especially if the students are "ghetto youngsters" and need to be "properly" schooled in academic discourse. As James Herndon learned at "GW," those ghetto youngsters were wrongly tagged as America's great unwashed who needed to be scrubbed rhetorically clean. Thus, for Rubenstein, received standards outweighed any degree of "growth through writing" which she admitted seemed possible for anyone who followed Elbow's outline (469). From the beginning, Elbow's desire to create a teacher-less class and allow students to discover *their* voice and express *their* version of the truth threatened standard pedagogical models, the teacher-centered class built for the presumed benefit of guiding "ghetto youngsters" toward standardized English, a belief later held by Rose and Bartholomae. For some, students did not have a right to their own language. Instead, students must "master an academic tongue" rather than their "Mother-tongue," Macrorie complained. Furthermore, as Murray pointed out, traditional writing strategies posed the teacher as the rhetorical "legislator," the establishment of what Elbow labeled as the "'priest'-model of discourse." Elbow, and other "expressivists," preferred to develop a student's own voice, which was as much a political decision as it was an educational one at this time since the two had essentially merged into one during the era's many reform movements. If the personal indeed was political as this age insisted, then granting a student's right to their personal "voice" and personal "truth" was motivated by the politics of the personal that was sweeping across the nation. After all, back in 1962, with the publication of "The Port Huron Statement," student activists were

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

already calling for the inter-relatedness of the personal with the political, rather than the disconnection between the two that had been orchestrated by power elites. They also identified higher education as one of those power elites and accused the "academic world [as] founded on a teacher-student relation analogous to the parent-child relation" that was "dividing student from life" and offering a "truncated" learning experience that signaled "a loss of personal attachment" (184).

Many educational reformers, from Jerry Farber to Peter Elbow, would likewise conclude that the unequal relationship between student and teacher indeed created a situation where the student-child never grows up, and where all knowledge and discourse are derived from the master. Real learning was actually a mirage under these conditions because the student was considered either incapable or not entitled to make meaning for himself. Students were essentially abstracted from their own learning. For many educational reformers who emerged out of the Sixties, the primary cause of this unfortunate educational experience was the uneven distribution of power between teacher and students. Whether categorized as a relationship between parent-child or slave-master, the outcome was the same. As Elbow noted in "The Definition of Teaching," by lording over their "personal fiefdom," teachers merely show-up-with-the-goods, disseminating language and knowledge as if learning simply required the slave-worker to unwrap so many pre-packaged boxes of information. By arguing for "personal voice," Elbow—along with Murray and Macrorie—set out to counteract traditional teacher-centered writing programs that trained students to learn Engfish and buy into a bill of goods that was marketed as the "'priest' model of discourse."

Throughout his career, Elbow would bind the idea of "personal voice" to a lessening of the teacher's authority. In a 1995 issue of College Composition and Communication, he debated the merits of academic discourse with David Bartholomae and maintained that when students "write 'up'" to the authority of the teacher, then the "teacher gets to define her own

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

understanding as right and the student's as wrong" (81). Questions about the student's right to her own voice comprise the guiding principle behind an "Expressivist" rhetorical strategy. As Todd Gitlin noted in The Sixties, "the expressive tendency was in revolt against all formal boundaries.... It trusted feeling and wanted to 'let it all hang out" (134-5). It was, he added, "in the full spirit of the time" to do your own thing, get in touch with your feelings, and to go with the flow, which "was to carry a romantic idea to its logical conclusion" (223). For Elbow and other expressivists, a student's right to her own voice and discovering her own truth carried the ideas of the Sixties to its logical conclusion inside the classroom. To a great extent, Elbow's recent opinion of allowing the student to define what is "right" for her could have served as useful advice for the C.O.'s he counseled back in the Sixties. Indeed, even in its current form, expressivism continues to reveal its ties to the politics of the Sixties and its goal of empowering students.

---

[1] Such pointed attacks, it seems, had little influence in changing the scope of schooling in America. Fourteen years after Silberman's scathing analysis, both John I Goodlad (A Place Called School) and Theodore R. Sizer (Horace's Compromise) visited a number of schools across the nation and reached the same conclusions: America's schools were preoccupied with rules, and the boring rituals had created a stifling climate for teachers and students alike.

[2] A discipline outside of English where this occurs is American History. For example, historians who sharpened their educational teeth during the Sixties would challenge much of the history of the American West presented before the seventies. "Old West" historians like Ray Allen Billington and Gerald D. Nash subscribed to the Frederick Jackson Turner thesis that Western expansion represented a distinct, defining moment in America's history. The opening of the frontier guided America towards a sense of national purpose based on rugged individualism. It built the nation's moral character, they argued. "New West" historians—those mostly educated in the Sixties and early seventies—instead believed that Western history should read as one more chapter in the much larger history of European conquest. The revisionists would also insist on paying closer attention to unexamined places and things, like the West's aridity, the terrible environmental consequences of the cattle culture, and the importance of corporate power, while demanding that formerly ignored groups of people be part of that history, like Mexicans, women, children, capitalists, Native Americans, Chinese, Wobblies, and African Americans, not just white, male settlers. For traditional, "Old West" historians, the historians who emerged out of the counterculture were ruining the "story." Writing in Creating the West, Gerald D. Nash argued that historians who came of age between 1890 and

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

1960 had considered Western history "as a positive and constructive force in American civilization," while the generation of historians weaned in the Sixties had created a "drastic change in mood" that reflected "a profound negativism and disenchantment with the period." This conflict, of course, is at the heart of the brewing Culture War. (Examples of "New West" studies include Patricia Nelson Limerick's The Legacy of Conquest, William G. Robbin's Colony and Empire: The Capitalist Transformation of the American West, Richard White's "It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own, and Donald Worster's Under Western Skies.

[3] For Macrorie, Engfish is not reserved for the upper grades. It starts early, and the cycle ends with what he considers to be the most extreme case of Engfish: the doctoral dissertation. "The grade school student is told by his teacher that he must learn Engfish because the high school teacher will expect mastery of it. The high school student is told by his teacher that he must learn it because the college professor will expect mastery of it. The college undergraduate is told by his professor that he must learn it so he can go to graduate school and write his Ph.D. thesis in it. Almost no one reads Ph.D. theses" (52). And once that student enters the educational system as an instructor, Macrorie maintained, he forces his students to repeat the process.

[4] Morgan's title may have been borrowed from Robert Graves's autobiography Goodbye to All That, which dealt with his tour of duty in World War I.

[5] Elbow's distinction is revealing. As Lester Faigley notes in Fragments of Rationality, "there are few explicit connections made between the women's movement and the emerging process movement," yet, he adds, "undoubtedly there was more mutual influence than one can find in the professional literature" (59). While this may be true, Elbow is mentioned several times in a foundational work in Feminist theory, Women's Ways of Knowing. In fact, Mary Belenky et al. refer to and quote Peter Elbow quite extensively in their study. They cite him as a teacher who fosters a learning climate in which women can excel, referring frequently to Elbow's "doubting" and "believing" game as a way for women to move from Separate to Connected knowing (104-122).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

CONCLUSION

For the past twenty-five years, some rhetoricians have linked expressivism to Romanticism to explain expressivism's misguided devotion to self-centered writing instruction. Much of expressivism's weakness, they maintain, resides in its similarities to an allegedly a-historical literary movement obsessed with language's aesthetic qualities. Through its ties to Romanticism, contemporary expressivism lacks historical and intellectual depth. But if Romanticism and expressivism emerged out of two of the most politically charged periods in Western history, as I have contended, why have so many rhetoricians categorized each as attempting to escape from history or trying to avoid thorny social issues, resulting in a solipsistic approach to discourse? In Chapter One I attempted to outline the history behind much of that criticism, and will conclude here my analysis of why some rhetoricians hold negative impressions of the two. Indeed, contemporary expressivism has been represented on both the "left" and the "right" as an unworkable rhetorical model. For critics on the left, expressivism fails to reveal the social implications behind language formation. For critics on the right, expressivism fails to engage students at an advanced intellectual level. Is expressivism such a failed pedagogy that it has no place in a writing curriculum? I don't think so. In fact, I will argue that expressivism *can* be successfully deployed in writing classrooms based on my experiences as a student and as a teacher.

For starters, it is necessary to understand that immediately following both the Romantic era and the Sixties, some key cultural critics presented interpretations that shaped the reception of the two movements. However, Sixties' reformers inhabited a cultural world vastly different from that of dissenters of the Romantic period. Unlike the Romantic era, the Sixties' culture was engaged in not just a war of words but also a war of media images. By the Sixties, America was dominated by a corporate economy, with a powerful, pervasive media. And this corporate media had a complex, contrapuntal relation to the protest cultures of that time: it denigrated dissident

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

ideas and exaggerated violence and extremism, while it also absorbed styles of rebellion as a marketing tool. Politically, the movements were a threat to the social order and were therefore cast in a negative light. But youthful radicalism became a marketing opportunity useful to advertising. On the one hand, what "sold" then (and continues to sell now) on the nightly news and in the print media was conflict, violence, controversy, flamboyance, and hyperbole—"if it bleeds it leads." The era's radicalism was over-sold to the American population as "extremism," so that the most outlandish activists, like Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin, were constructed by the corporate media as *the* representatives of Sixties radicalism. And if odious extremism wasn't available it was often manufactured by the press, or the government which fed the press, as I pointed out near the end of Chapter Four.

"Selling" the counterculture was a novel way of strengthening and expanding markets, the flip side of the negative images presented in the press. As it came to pass, while the mass media showed images of wayward youths during its nightly news broadcasts, it was simultaneously co-opting the themes of the reform movements and using them as a marketing tool, turning the Woodstock Generation into the Pepsi Generation, and the student rebellion into the Dodge Rebellion. The Sixties was adapted for commercial purposes, not unlike the way in which Romanticism had been reoriented to suit middle and upper class readers. Thus, both the Sixties and Romanticism were re-packaged for safe cultural consumption. And how these two disturbances were reconstituted and denatured, it seems, played a major role in the way expressivism has been defined.

In the case of the Romantic period, sometimes the Romantics themselves purged the politics out of their poetry, eliminating the very thing that some rhetoricians later attacked it for missing as they compared it to expressivism. Within a very short span of time, Romanticism was commonly associated more with "spiritualism" and "naturalism" than with politics or history. In Biographia Literaria, for example, Coleridge apologized for Wordsworth's misguided remarks on

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

using common language in the "Preface" to Lyrical Ballads, arguing that the vulgar who spoke in the poems were a figment of Wordsworth's fertile imagination rather than an accurate reflection of vulgar speech. Coleridge concurred with conservatives like Johnson and Lowth that vulgar speech was valueless, and for his friend to render the lower classes as wise and articulate offended Coleridge's increasingly conservative sensibilities. As such, he explained that Wordsworth's venture to imitate "the language of ordinary life" was clearly something "originating in Mr. Wordsworth," more a representation of Wordsworth's singular visionary talents as a poet rather than an accurate imitation of the way "the lower classes" spoke (315). On occasion, then, the Romantics were guilty of abstracting history out of their own Romanticism and raising up the straw man of private inspiration. Years later, as Chapter One noted, when Matthew Arnold and others were setting up a national literary canon, the inspirational aspect of Wordsworth would be celebrated and his "philosophy" would be downplayed. As Arnold observed, Wordsworth's great insights lead to some of the greatest descriptions of natural beauty. By the Victorian era, the laborious comparison that Wordsworth had outlined in the "Prefaces" between vulgar and leisure class language would be wiped almost completely from view.

In Mary Shelley's Posthumous Poems of her husband's work, she expunged most of the politics out of the poetry for a polite audience. Mary Shelley tried to tame Shelley's reputation for a growing middle class readership. His most politically controversial poems were suppressed from the edition. Instead, she incorporated a series of a-politically correct fragments, minor verse, and translations. The political Shelley was scrubbed clean. As Mary Shelley noted in the introduction, she was presenting a Shelley who wrote "pure poetry"—the poetry of "beauty," "sensation," and "spirituality." While the lower class admired Shelley's overt political pieces, the upper classes found them entirely too offensive. Shelley was therefore cleansed of any political overtones and remade into a poet who could meet the cultural standards of England's national literature, which was coming into existence in the early Victorian period to augment a flourishing

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

empire. Before long, a growing middle class and its expanding reading habits would experience mostly the "spiritual" Shelley and rarely confront the political Shelley, just as Wordsworth became the nation's naturalist poet rather than the poet who celebrated vulgar discourse while ridiculing Samuel Johnson. This trend continued right up to the present day. Byron, too, found a place in the canon once his brooding Byronic heroes were touted as prototypical of his work. Rarely, for example, do even contemporary anthologies include The Age of Bronze, which, as Chapter Three outlined, was highly critical of the nation's domestic and foreign policies. Moreover, as Noelle Bisseret argues in Education, Class, Language and Ideology, when the bourgeoisie came to power in Europe in the 1830's it co-opted the ideas of Romantic reformers in order to justify its dominance. While such radicals as Paine, Cobbett, Shelley and Wordsworth argued in favor of expanding the personal liberties of the lower classes, the new ruling middle class, Bisseret claims, used such declarations to "constantly proclaim that everybody was free and equal by law and that the destiny of man no longer depended on an established order but on individual capacities." The idea of individual merit, aptitude and responsibility, Bisseret states, proved that the middle class was fit to rule and that the proletariat was responsible for its own shortcomings. The bourgeoisie therefore developed an ideology that it borrowed from Romantic reformers in order "to justify the economic disparities that existed between it and the proletariat (as a class, the aristocracy practically vanished)" (11-12). It's not surprising, then, that many rhetoricians view Romanticism as a literary movement devoid of politics or history when so much cultural capital was expended to re-convert the Romantics into a band of aesthetic artists, while their rhetoric of inclusion was used by a rising industrial class to maintain its new-found power.

But this is nothing compared to the way in which "The Sixties" were reconstructed by Madison Avenue hucksters and the mass media. From the very beginning, advertisers latched onto the idea of selling products by connecting them to the youth movements. As early as 1965,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the Chrysler Corporation asked consumers to "Join the Dodge Rebellion" by buying the 66' Dodge Coronet. A person could now purchase both a car and a rebellious attitude, a far cry from ads that appeared in magazines five years earlier which typically showed a family driving down Main Street. From the start, the counterculture was for sale. As a result, people didn't have to get arrested for anti-war activities or have their heads bashed in during civil rights' demonstrations to identify themselves as part of the changing times. Radical "behavior" easily could be had by driving the right vehicle. It was, as the title of Thomas Frank's recent book on the subject indicates, The Conquest of Cool. In fact, as Frank argues, what dominated this new phase of marketing goods was a deliberate association between product identification and personal choice, a reflection of how selective consumption testified to a buyer's glorious individualism. According to Frank, "image-centered capitalism" became the new calling-card for business leaders. "What happened in the Sixties," Frank adds, "is that hip became central to the way American capitalism understood itself and explained itself to the public" (26). Gone were the days when advertisers celebrated the herd instinct. In the watershed year of 1968, for instance, General Motors advertised the cars in its upscale Oldsmobile division as 'youngmobiles,' calling attention to Life magazine readers (where the ad was featured) who were "getting young ideas." The slogan, set in bold type above the car's specs, declared that the vehicle was a sleek, new machine for the ages: "Call it different. Call it individualistic. Call it yours." The car promised buyers that they would be obtaining more than a vehicle: they'd be consuming a radical lifestyle. In case "youngmobiles" didn't satisfy a buyer's needs, GM offered the 68' Skylark. "Now we're talking your language," the ad announced, no doubt referring to the youthful language of the twenty-something couple standing beside the car. The ad promoted the idea that Buick was so hip to the scene that the car manufacturer "refused to limit" any buyer's "choices." Fifties conformity and "sameness" were out and unlimited choices were in. A product could be custom-designed to meet the very personal needs of any consumer. Identity politics was reconfigured and

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

quickly sold as a bill of goods. Doing your own thing or expressing your uniqueness could be achieved through "buying into" the product's ancillary image of radical chic. So, even before the bandstand had been dismantled at Woodstock, capitalists had already plugged into the potential marketing power of *The Sixties*. In fact, just as the "personal is political" became a notable alternative to mainstream political slogans, the "personal" became identified with selfish consumerism. What's more, *personal choice* was quickly absorbed for consumerism as a matter of choosing the right product. When Pepsi, for example, tried to offer itself as the counter-coke, it was advertised as "the choice of a new generation." The freedom to choose (the right product) was hailed in advertisements as a personal victory, set up against America's new-found personal limitlessness. In the age of Aquarius, advertisers proclaimed, anyone could choose to be whatever they wanted, including choosing to reveal radical behavior by buying outa'-sight products. It was no less a celebration of *choice* than choosing to fight for racial equality or choosing not to fight in Vietnam.

Unlimited choices, however, were rarely featured in ads prior to the mid-Sixties, and that includes television ads. As Mark Crispin Miller argues in "Deride and Conquer," television advertisements launched this promotional pitch more intensely than print ads, turning the screen into an endless "promise of eternal choices" (184). No wonder, then, that Tom Catono, James Berlin, and others have accused expressivists of celebrating a form of individualism that worships at the altar of commercial capitalism. After all, even before expressivism had gotten off the ground as a viable alternative to teacher-centered classrooms, personal choice—perhaps the most championed rhetorical advice offered by Donald Murray, Ken Macrorie, and Peter Elbow—became a primary advertising slogan for hundreds of products. Thus, for left-wing rhetoricians, perhaps expressivism seemed to be an extension of commercial capitalism's individualist appeal through a new marketing strategy. But this criticism may have been leveled after the fact, following a gargantuan advertising campaign that had co-opted the period's political slogans to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

create an enticing sales pitch. As Chapter Four argued, expressivism grew out of the era's *political* reform initiatives, whereby fostering a student's freedom of expression and her right to choose relevant topics in the classroom went hand-in-hand with other movements that sought to expand personal liberties and empower disenfranchised segments of the population. Thus, when some critics attack expressivism for being a by-product of capitalism, they may be examining it in the wake of clever marketing that confiscated the era's political ideas to sell automobiles and soft drinks, rather than as a by-product of the period's political concerns. In a sense, to charge that expressivism ultimately serves and reinforces capitalism by "identifying individual self expression with the consumption of some commodity," as James Berlin claimed in "Rhetoric and Ideology" (487), may be putting the cart before the horse.

From Left to Right: (Mis)Representing Expressivism

As rhetoricians on the left condemn expressivism for its so-called relationship to consumerism, critics on the right blame it for jettisoning essential academic standards required for rigorous intellectual development. In part, these critics contend, expressivism's abandonment of structure and discipline are the result of the counterculture's repudiation of authority at every level. In a sense, what went wrong in the Sixties is still wrong with many of our schools, as the conservative Manhattan Institute's Heather MacDonald argued in "The Flaw in Student-Centered Learning," an essay that appeared in the "Op-Ed" page of The New York Times on July 20, 1998. In the minds of many cultural conservatives, the Sixties had a disastrous effect on higher education (See Shor's Culture Wars on this). In The Troubled Crusade, for example, Diane Ravitch blamed the Sixties generation for undermining the integrity of higher education and ushering in an era of mediocrity. To conservative Ravitch, the "student ideologues" who tried to "tamper with the neutrality of the university" (221) did more damage to academic freedom than the anti-communists who purged the nation's schools during the McCarthy era. In Ravitich's opinion, Sixties radicals, with their politically correct objectives, virtually stifled all other voices.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

On the other hand, during the McCarthy era "freedom of dissent was never choked off" (112)—which must come as a relief to the number of professors who were dismissed from their posts for suspected "communist" affinities. Other cultural conservatives, like Alan Bloom, Saul Bellow, and William Bennett share Ravitich's view of the Sixties' impact on education. Although no critic of the era specifically blames expressivism for the decay, it is evident that innovative approaches like expressivism are identified as causing the crisis in education. As Shor noted in Culture Wars, cultural conservatives viewed student-based "experimental methods" from the Sixties leading to educational ruin everywhere (8), which meant that the nation required a "conservative restoration" to correct the damage. Indeed, soon a "restoration" began in the early 1970's, including a back-to-basics movement followed by calls for a return to "excellence" and "standards" which had been trampled by radical students. For Robert Bork, the sixties sent the nation Slouching Towards Gomorrah thanks to the decade's "revolutionary nihilism" (13). Even more recently, William F. Buckley blasted the Sixties generation for unraveling the nation's moral fabric. In an appearance on the McNeil News Hour (October 7, 1998), Buckley was asked why the country was not outraged by President Clinton's extramarital affair with Monica Lewinsky. He replied that the Sixties had "infected" the country with "selfish extremism," and that "twenty years ago we wouldn't have tolerated this behavior." Everywhere it seemed had "society strained and cracked" under the pressure of Sixties selfishness, Republican speechwriter Peggy Noonon argued in a volume of conservative writing (150). For many conservative critics and establishment apologists, the political storms of the Sixties had blighted standards across the nation.

This was at the heart of the Newsweek cover essay, "Why Johnny Can't Write" (1975), which warned its readers of an existing "literacy crisis." The article pointed to dropping Scholastic Aptitude Test scores as an indication of declining standards, "and it singled out 'The Students' Right' statement as an example of what was wrong in our schools" (Faigley, Fragments

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

62). As Chapter Five examined, one of the primary reforms offered in the statement was to embrace the process approach and offer more student-centered learning. Although expressivism itself was not singled out, Newsweek might as well have been attacking the student-centered foundation principles of expressivist pedagogy. Despite the media's persistent critique of Sixties educational reforms, some conservatives believe student-centered classrooms were never put to rest. According to a recent essay in The New York Times, student-centered classrooms unfortunately remain the most prevalent form of instruction, undermining serious learning. As MacDonald wrote in the Times, "student-centered classrooms lack a fixed curriculum," and promote mindless chaos. To add visual insight into the article's claims, a cartoon appearing across the top of the essay shows a teacher dressed in a clown suit. As he tosses a book through the door, a student doses him with a water pistol. Apparently, authority, tradition, and learning are drowned whenever students have rights. In the article, MacDonald charges that the problems with "such a classroom" are that "the teacher is not supposed to teach, since teaching is considered too hierarchical and authoritarian," promoting instead "the student's own interests," a statement that essentially attacks the fundamental goals of an expressivist classroom. In MacDonald's estimation, this hapless pedagogy "has been the dominant educational model over the last several decades." However, this complaint about the dominance of student-centered classrooms is not restricted to conservatives. Some rhetoricians on the left believe that it holds a widespread grip on writing instruction as well. According to James Berlin, "Expressionistic rhetoric continues to thrive in high schools and at a number of colleges and universities," largely because "the ruling elites in business, industry, and government are those most likely to nod in assent to the ideology inscribed in expressionistic rhetoric" ("Rhetoric and Ideology," 487).

However, some studies cast doubt on the excessive impact of expressivism, or student-centered classrooms, in the face of traditional contemporary instruction. For instance, in A Place Called Schools (1984), John Goodlad's comprehensive study of elementary and secondary

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

education, Goodlad discovered that in over the 1,000 classrooms "studied in depth," the curricula was characterized by one striking feature: the teacher's dominance. "The teacher," Goodlad writes, "is the central figure in determining the activities," and in most cases the "domination of the teacher is obvious in the conduct of instruction." The students, meanwhile, "generally engage in a rather narrow range of classroom activities" (123-4). What emerged from the study, according to Goodlad, was the surprising level of student willingness to accept their passive roles in the classroom: "Large percentages expressed liking for the dominating classroom activity of listening to their teachers. Students apparently adjusted to the passivity of the classroom environment as they progressed upward through the school years" (113). Essentially, Goodlad's massive study of schooling in America reinforced what Jerry Farber stated seventeen years earlier in "The Student as Nigger" when he argued that students were "victims of repression," and over time "they *want* to be told what to do" (28). Teacher-centered classrooms were turning out "clever robots" then, and, in Goodlad's estimation, very little had changed. That same year, Ted Sizer described the situation as a "compromise" between educators and students as a way of "getting by" with as little controversy as possible. In Horace's Compromise (1984), Sizer provided a powerful indictment of assembly-line educational routine, where students are "passed through" a system that "rewards...docility." Well-intentioned teachers, Sizer points out, want to "give" students so-called essential information, but they also relish the power that stems from their own "expertise." As a result, "too much giving breeds docility, and the docility of students' minds is a widespread reality in American high schools" (34). And as far as writing instruction goes, Arthur Applebee and others found little evidence in the early 1980's that the process approach was dominating the scene. Applebee reported in Writing in the Secondary School that teaching writing as a process is not compatible with using writing for evaluation because it may be too cumbersome to exist in a drills-and-skills pedagogy.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The situation in America's colleges seems the same. Back in 1974, Applebee claimed in Tradition and Reform in the Teaching of English that "recitation and lecture dominated" (211) English instruction, and that most teachers embraced the Arnoldian dictum that "good taste" could be conveyed to students through studying "great literature," including using the literary text as a model for writing instruction. By emphasizing great literature, Applebee maintained, "teachers are therefore less sensitive to contemporary culture" (251). Although the benefits of studying literature in a composition course is a subject of debate within the field (see Erika Lindemann's and Gary Tate's debate on this in the March, 1993 College English), many composition instructors who stray from traditional literary instruction are often chastised for doing so, as Ira Shor found out when his book Critical Teaching and Everyday Life (1980) was attacked for its unconventional stance ("Our Apartheid" 97). In a more recent example, when Linda Brodkey proposed that students enrolled in her Freshman Composition course at the University of Texas write about important public debates on racial, sexual, and ethnic diversity, she was slammed by conservative faculty and administrators, as well as the mainstream press, for sabotaging "traditional" values. The Texas chapter of the National Association of Scholars accused Brodkey of championing multicultural education at the expense of core cultural values that transcended race, sex, and class. In his weekly column, George F. Will condemned the course, while in the New York Times, Richard Bernstein complained that the newfangled multicultural program obviously had to drop "literary classics" from its curriculum—even though literary classics had not been taught in that composition course (English 306) in decades. Nevertheless, under great pressure from within and from without the university, Brodkey was forced to abandon her plan (Faigley, Fragments 75-76). While dozens of educators in the late Sixties and early seventies had called for an end to "Engfish" and the dominant use of "great works" to guide student writers, the conservative restoration immediately nipped those ideas in the bud, and influential establishment apologists, like George Will, continue to beat back school

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

reforms, claiming they undermine significant Western values. It's hard to imagine that student-centered classrooms, or non-traditional writing strategies could even get a toe-hold in many of our schools considering the "great assault on equality and cultural democracy launched after the activist 1960s against public education" (Shor, "Our Apartheid," 100).

Perhaps *theoretically* expressivism or student-centered instruction dominates the pages of educational journals, or the panels at conferences, but in *practice* it barely exists at all. More likely, as Sharon Crowley argued, "Current-traditional Rhetoric maintains its hold on writing instruction because it is fully consonant with academic assumptions about the appropriate hierarchy of authority" ("Around 1971" 34). In "A Personal Essay," Crowley maintains that most composition instructors enforce a skill-and-drill pedagogy, and, despite the charge made by the "Students' Rights" statement against the futility of textbook writing instruction, workbooks maintained their hold in a typical composition course. According to Crowley, "repressive formalism" tends to guide most composition instruction. My own diverse experiences in the educational community can testify to Crowley's assumptions.

At the high school I attended as a student in the seventies, I never once sat in a student-centered classroom nor was I ever exposed to freewriting or asked to consider the advantages of writing as a process rather than as a product. As an undergraduate and graduate student, in the early eighties and early nineties, respectively, the majority of my instructors lectured, or they dominated seminars by first telling the students what they thought of the subject, typically followed by a "discussion" that further demonstrated the professors' mastery of the topics. Tellingly, an exception to this pattern was the handful of Composition and Rhetoric courses that I have taken in the CUNY doctoral program. While this may seem to contradict what I wrote in Chapter Five regarding the substantial influence of the counterculture on English Studies, that influence largely altered the *subjects taught* rather *than the way they were taught.* For example, as a student at Boston University (1978-1982) I was enrolled in an Eighteenth-Century literature

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

course taught by one of the nation's leading Marxist scholars. Although the professor included a number of non-traditional texts, and had abandoned the New Critical approach to texts—the most common form of inquiry at the department—the instructor still practiced teacher-centered pedagogy. Meanwhile, graduate courses, which generally offered non-traditional subjects or reading material as well, were typically run by instructors who lectured or controlled the flow of information.

I have been teaching for fifteen years at a number of locations, yet have rarely seen departments that favor student-centered learning. At the department level at these campuses, it is unusual to find anyone familiar with expressivism, let alone any of the key figures in Composition Studies. Further, I was a high school English teacher for five years (1986-1991) in Massachusetts and New Jersey, and I never once encountered any teacher who followed a student-centered pedagogy, or practiced an expressivist writing curriculum. Although Janet Emig long ago pointed out the failures of traditional writing instruction in her monograph The Composing Process of Twelfth Graders (1971), high school English teachers I encountered taught the five-paragraph model, and grammar instruction was typically used *against* the students to spotlight their ineptitude—what Ken Macrorie described in Uptaught as a way to demonstrate the teacher's "advantage over the unwashed, the careless, and the lazy" (71). After talking to dozens of high school English teachers about writing instruction, I found that not one had ever heard of Ken Macrorie or Peter Elbow, which seems to contradict Berlin's claim that expressivism "continues to thrive in high schools." I myself never saw it.

The situation at the college level is the same. For one thing, most composition teachers are graduate students in English Literature, or part-time hires—typically school teachers, artists, or writers. As a group, few of them apparently have any knowledge of Peter Elbow or Donald Murray—or any rhetorician, for that matter. On average, the graduate students teach writing the same way they were taught: expository essays based on works of literature. After all, most

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

English graduate departments do not require students to enroll in a Composition and Rhetoric course. Besides, as Chapter One pointed out, composition is viewed as the weak-link in departments of English, and the students pick up on this negative impression, so even when composition instruction is offered, they shy away from it. For the most part, graduate students consider teaching composition as a necessary evil, a way to break into the field with a teaching credential or earn some much-needed cash to pay for graduate school. But once their apprenticeship is over, they longingly anticipate a tenured position where they can begin teaching their literary "specialty." If they again teach composition, it is only because their departments force them to.

I have been a collegiate adjunct instructor for eight years, and, like most adjuncts, I have taught at a number of colleges (at last count, ten). The majority of my fellow adjuncts, who are mostly English literature majors, typically instruct their students to write "traditional" academic essays; that is, their approach mirrors the academic discourse model championed by Bartholomae and others. For those who are teaching developmental writing, they mostly provide grammar instruction, while plugging the five-paragraph model. The same is generally true of most tenured staff, most of whom are English Literature teachers by profession. They, too, tend to require students to write literary analyses, and they are as unfamiliar with expressivism as any adjunct. If "expressionistic rhetoric continues to thrive in high schools and at a number of colleges and universities," as Berlin contended, and if the "student-centered classroom has been the dominant educational model over the last several decades," as MacDonald recently maintained, then it must be occurring clandestinely, for it's been hidden from my view. Expressivism, which advocates student-centered writing instruction, does not dominate school curricula. But it should.

And here's why: expressivism answers Foucault's question of "where to begin?" (in "The Discourse on Language"). Foucault argued that "institutions...solemnise beginnings" as a way of demonstrating to all speakers that "discourse" exists "within an established order of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

things" (216). Nowhere is this more clearly the case than inside the academy, Foucault claimed, where there dwells a "'fellowship of discourse,' whose function is to preserve or to reproduce discourse...in order that it should circulate within a closed community, according to strict regulations, without those in possession being dispossessed by this very distribution" (225). Inside the classroom, which represents one of the smaller sites of institutional power, the instructor typically establishes control over almost all aspects of discursive activity at the *beginning* of the semester and at the *beginning* of each class. On day one, standard classroom procedures usually dictate that the professor distributes a syllabus, which often includes detailed accounts of all subsequent sessions. Texts are frequently assigned, as well as tests given on specific dates. Very often, essays must follow a certain format—typed, double-spaced, five pages in length. I know of several instructors who assign a "higher education" vocabulary book, and the students must include twenty or thirty words from this source in their essays, underlining each word so as to prove they've met the instructor's criteria. More often than not, the essays must be "objectively" written, which means that the nominative case cannot be used. Phony scientific "objectivity," as Elbow argued, has eliminated the student-subject. Traditionally, the instructor deconstructs the texts or topics by pointing out the relevant areas worthy of scrutiny, and the students regurgitate the teacher's ideas in their essay—if they expect to receive a good grade. In most classrooms, teachers indeed preserve and reproduce discourse at every level.

Expressivism acts in opposition to this model by *beginning* with the students' own words. For Murray, Macrorie, and Elbow, the student selects her own topic in a composition course, not the teacher. As Macrorie stated in Uptaught, he begins each class by asking the students to freewrite, subverting a major portion of the teacher's dominance, although the teacher's role can never be completely neutral since she is "assigning" freewriting in the first place. Nevertheless, by beginning each session with the students' own writing, discourse has begun to open up; it is no longer the rigidly regulated activity that Foucault found so disturbing.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

(In fact, I would argue, freewriting should be incorporated across-the curriculum into *every* class, not just in composition courses.) I agree with Elbow's claim (made in the CCC "Debate" with Bartholomae) that students all too often distrust their own experience and predictably fall back on the expert. Freewriting allows students to appeal to their own authority. Foucault maintained that writing in the "educational system," like any closed system, turns discourse into a "ritual" that "fixes" the speaker. Language becomes bound by institutional forces, imposed by the "doctrinal group" that maintains power (227). (Perhaps this explains why so many students enrolled in a Freshman Composition course expect to undergo an unpleasant experience?) Each course offers that fixed set of rituals Foucault described as empowering the "doctrinal group" (the teachers) and disempowering all others (the students), the same set of circumstances Elbow outlined in his 1968 College English article, "The Definition of Teaching." In that essay, Elbow believed that all teachers assume the role of "priest," adding that they "have the mantle, the training, and the initiation" (193) to produce a fixed curriculum that virtually abstracts the student from the learning process. In contrast, Elbow suggested that question-asking supplant that approach. In fact, freewriting could be woven into that strategy if the teacher began each class with one basic question, and then had the students freewrite their responses, essentially creating a forum to involve all students. This may be the most effective way to enable students to take part in their own education, to become "meaning-makers," as many educational reformers from the Sixties advocated.

Expressivism's End: Student-Centered Writing

Consider the teacher-centered graduate seminars I discussed above. Typically, students silently sit around a table and listen to the professor, who at times may end up talking the whole two hours. Although the students have spent time reading and preparing for class, they are silenced because the professor is institutionally *entitled* to occupy the entire session—the teacher is the "legislator," as Murray claimed. But what if the instructor instead began each class by

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

posing a question related to the topic and having them freewrite their response? The students could then share their writing. The instructor could facilitate discussion by asking more questions based on the *students'* written responses. Wouldn't this simple writing-workshop format offer a more lively two hours than one person speaking? What's more, in this way, students and teacher could interact more because the class would revolve around multiple opinions. Not only would the class be more democratic if the teacher-centered strategy was blunted, but more learning would take place because writing is heuristic, a means to discover knowledge, far more effective than merely listening. After all, several studies have shown that most listeners retain less than twenty percent of the information transmitted during a lecture. Also, perhaps more students would emerge from their intellectual exile in class, what Ira Shor described in Empowering Education as "Siberia," an imposed dissociation students experience as they defensively distance themselves from the teacher's power. To put students at the center rather than driving them to the margins, then, an instructor in a course on "Shakespeare's Comedies," for instance, could write the word(s) "Shakespeare" or even "comedy" on the blackboard *on the first day* and ask the students to freewrite on what the word/s mean to them? Again, it could be posed as a question—"What is comedy?" for instance. In a class of ten or twelve graduate students, every one of them, I'm sure, already has an opinion about the meaning of "Shakespeare" or "comedy." This approach could work at any level and with any subject matter. Why can't a high school science teacher write the word "biology" on the board on the first day and have the students "define" it? Or "Western Civilization," or "Geometry?"

But I don't think this student-centered method diminishes intellectual development, as conservative critics like Heather MacDonald contend. On the contrary, it could facilitate it by generating patterns of critical attention and inquiry from the start. Nor does it force students to turn inward at the expense of recognizing how society and history shape personal meaning or discourse, as many critics of expressivism contend. Or, as I agree with Elbow's assertion that

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

freewriting actually can facilitate an awareness of how the writer is culturally constructed and socially situated. While he believes the practice provides a "micro-utopian space" for writers, it is not a space that automatically forces the writer completely inward:

> ...freewriting [does not] pretend to reveal one's pure natural essential self or escape the effects of culture and the past. Far from it. People who use freewriting tend to notice immediately that it shows more nakedly than other kinds of writing all the junk that culture and the past have stuffed into our heads. Nothing is better than freewriting at showing us how we are constructed and situated. Another way of saying this is that freewriting is the opposite of an attempt to preserve the idea of a self-generated autonomous author. ("Being a Writer" 89).

A further way of saying this is that an expressivist pedagogy pushes students toward a social awareness from *within* their own subjectivity by asking them to account for their own textual creations. When students are made aware of their own social construction from within, their own experiences will mean more to them and can become the vehicle for a deeper understanding of the overall construction of society. This notion reiterates the mantra of reform movements from the Sixties, "the personal is political."

Finally, then, perhaps the frequent criticism of Romanticism and expressivism in Composition Studies for being solipsistic or a-historical occurs because both asserted the importance of the individual in social environments that often ignored or suppressed autonomy and individuality. Whether it involved church and state, a white, male-dominated culture, or a teacher-centered classroom, advocating a bottom-up politics of the "personal" can be radical in opposition to top-down control by power elites. But expressivists understand that the self is not a separate entity, not better off severed from the larger world as a way of attaining rhetorical nirvana. Instead, as someone who considers himself working as an expressivist instructor, I believe in honoring the lived experiences of students, who must often discover, reflect, and even

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

imagine their personal voices to come to know who they are, what they believe, and why occurs this way. Beginning with them-selves, students first should be viewed as *subjects* who are constantly negotiating with language and its material conditions, not as *objects* who are solely molded by society, or who need to be filled like so many empty buckets. Students should be seen as the shapers *and* the shaped, those who use language to shape their world and those who have been shaped by the social forces of language. In sum, an expressivist classroom recognizes the *individual* as a socially constructed being.

Ultimately, the overriding question that any instructor should ask is "where to begin?" For expressivism, that means starting with the students' own personal experiences and their own words. More often than not, it was the starting point for many radical reform movements of the Sixties, like feminism. The politics of the personal was the starting point for Romantic writers as well, who frequently critiqued their own society and reflected upon the history occurring around them. Expressivist rhetoric, as it arises out of Romanticism and the Sixties, therefore can be visionary and full of possibility, urging students to see and understand themselves and others as agents interacting *with* and *in* a larger discourse community.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Works Cited or Consulted

Aarsleff, Hans, and Burchfield, Robert. The OED and the State of the Language. Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1988.

- - - . The Study of Language in England, 1780-1860. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1967.

- - - . The Early English Trade Unions. London: Batchworth Press, 1949.

Abrams, M.H. "On Political Readings of *Lyrical Ballads*." Romantic Revolutions: Criticism and Theory. Eds. Kenneth R. Johnston, et al. Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1990.

- - - . "The Romantic Period." The Norton Anthology of English Literature. Eds. M.H. Abrams, et al. New York: W.W. Norton & Company. 1986.

- - - . Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1973.

- - - . The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition. New York: Oxford UP, 1953.

Adamson, John William. English Education, 1789-1902. London: Cambridge UP, 1930.

Aisenberg, Nadya and Mona Harrington. Women of Academe: Outsiders in the Sacred Grove. Amherst, MA: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1988.

Albert, Judith C., and Steward E. Albert, eds. The Sixties Papers: Documents of a Rebellious Decade. New York: Praeger, 1984.

Altick, Richard. The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957.

Arc, Jonathan, Wlad Godzich, Wallace Martin, eds. The Yale Critics: Deconstruction in America. Minneapolis: Universityof Minnesota Press, 1983.

Arnold, Matthew. "Preface." Poems of Wordsworth. London: Macmillan, 1879.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Aronowitz, Stanley. "When the New Left Was New." The Sixties Without Apology. Eds. Sohnya Sayres, Andus Stephanson, Stanley Aronowitz, and Fredric Jameson. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

Aronowitz, Stanley and Henry A. Giroux. Postmodern Education: Politics, Culture, and Social Criticism. Minneapolis, MN: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1991.

Ashton-Jones, Evelyn, and Dene Kay Thomas. "Compostion, Collaboration, and Women's Ways of Knowing: A Conversation with Mary Belenky." Journal of Advanced Composition 10 (1995): 275-292.

Aspinall, Arthur. Politics and the Press, c. 1780-1850. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946.

- - - . "The Circulation of Newspapers in the Early Nineteenth Century." Review of English Studies 22 (1946): 29-43.

Bakhtin, Mikhail. Rabelais and His World. 1964. Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1984.

- - - . The Dialogic Imagination. 1981. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1990.

Barrell, John. English Literature in History, 1730-1790: An Equal, Wide Survey. London: Hutchinson, 1983.

Bartholomae, David. "Writing With Teachers: A Conversation with Peter Elbow." College Composition and Communication 46.1 (1995): 62-79.

- - - . "Interchanges: Response." College Composition and Communication 46.1 (1995): 84-87.

- - - . "Inventing the University." Journal of Basic Writing 5 (1986): 4-23.

Bartholomae, David and Anthony Petrosky. Introduction. Ways of Reading. Boston: Bedford Books, 1990.

Belanoff, Pat and Peter Elbow. A Community of Writers: A Workshop Course in Writing. New York: Random, 1989.

Berke, Joseph, ed. Counter Culture. London: Peter Owen, 1969.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Berlin, James. "Rhetoric, Poetic, and Culture: Contested Boundaries in English Studies." The Politics of Writing Instruction: Postsecondary. Eds. Richard Bullock and John Trimbur. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers, 1991.

- - - . "Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class." College English 50 (1988): 477-494.

- - - . Rhetoric and Reality: Writing Instruction in American Colleges, 1900-1985. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois UP, 1987.

Bernstein, Basil. Class, Codes, and Control. London: London: Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1973.

Berthoff, Anne E. "Paulo Freire's Liberation Pedagogy." Language Arts. (1990): 362-378.

- - - . Reclaiming the Imagination: Philosophic Perspectives for Writers and Teachers of Writing. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1984.

- - - . The Making of Meaning: Metaphors, Models, and Maxims for Writing Teachers. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1981.

Bialostosky, Don H., and Lawrence D. Needham, eds. Rhetorical Traditions and British Romantic Literature. Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1995.

Birrell, T.A. "The Political Register: Cobbett and English Literature." English Studies 45 (1964): 214-20.

Bisseret, Noelle. Education, Class Language and Ideology. London: Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1979.

Bitzer, Lloyd F. Introduction. The Philosophy of Rhetoric. By George Campbell. Carbondale & Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois UP, 1988.

Bizzell, Patricia. "Composing Processes: An Overview." The Teaching of Writing: Eighty-fifth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education. Eds. Anthony R. Petrosky and David Bartholomae. Chicago: National Society for the Study of Education, 1986. 49-70.

Blair, Hugh. Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres. New York: Evert Duyckinck, 1817.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Blake, N.F. A History of the English Language. New York: New York UP, 1996.

Blake, William. The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake. New York: Anchor Books, 1988.

Bloom, Alan. The Closing of the American Mind. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987.

Bloom, Harold. The Western Canon. New York: Riverhead Books, 1994.

- - - . The Visionary Company: A Reading of English Romantic Poetry. 1971. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1991.

Bloom, Lynn Z., et al. eds. Composition in the Twenty-First Century: Crisis and Change. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois UP, 1996.

Blum, John Morton. Years of Discord: American Politics and Society, 1961-1974. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1991.

Bonnstein, Diane D. Readings in the Theory of Grammar from the 17th to the 20th Century. Cambridge, MA: Winthrop, 1976.

Booth, Wayne C. Modern Dogma and the Rhetoric of Assent. Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame UP, 1974.

Boswell, James. Life of Johnson. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934.

Boulton, James T. The Language of Politics in the Age of Wilkes and Burke. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963.

Bowles, Samuel and Herbert Gintis. Schooling in Capitalist America: Education and the Contradictions of Economic Life. New York: Basic Books, 1976.

Branch, Taylor. Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954-63. New York: Simon and Schuster,1988.

Brannon, Lil, and C.H. Knoblauch. Critical Teaching and the Idea of Literacy. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers, 1993.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

- - - . "On Students' Rights to Their Own Texts: A Model of Teacher Response." College Composition and Communication 33 (1982): 157-166.

Briggs, John Channing. "Edifying Violence: Peter Elbow and the Pedagogical Paradox." Journal of Advanced Composition 15 (1995): 83-102.

Britton, James. Language and Learning. London: The Penguin Press, 1970.

Bruffee, Kenneth A. "Collaborative Learning: Some Practical Models." College English 34 (1973): 634-643.

- - - . "The Way Out." College English 33 (1972) 457-470.

Buchannan, James. An Essay Towards Establishing a Standard Grammar. Philadelphia: Stymer & Cist, 1780.

Burke, Edmund. Reflections on the Revolution in France. 1790. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1993.

Burnett, James (Lord Monboddo). Of the Origin and Progress of Language. 6 vols. Edinburgh: Bell and Bradfute, 1787.

Burns, Stewart. Social Movements of the 1960's: Searching for Democracy. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1990.

Byron, Lord. Complete Poetical Works. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1970.

- - - . Don Juan. 1824. New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1973.

- - - . The Complete Miscellaneous Prose. Ed. Andrew Nicholson. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.

Calvert, Greg, and Carol Neiman. A Disrupted History: The New Left and the New Capitalism. New York: Random House, 1971.

Cameron, Kenneth Neil. Young Shelley: Genesis of a Radical. London: Gollancz, 1951.

Campbell, George. The Philosophy of Rhetoric (1776). Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois UP, 1988.

Cannon, Lou. Reagan. New York: Viking, 1972.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Carden, Maren Lockwood. The New Feminist Movement. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1974.

Carson, Clayborne. In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960's. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1981.

Catano, James V. "The Rhetoric of Masculinity: Origins, Institutions, and the Myth of the Self-Made Man." College English 52 (1990): 421-436.

Caute, David. The Year of the Barricades: A Journey Through 1968. New York: Harper & Row, 1988.

Chalmers, David. And the Crooked Places Made Straight: The Struggle for Social Change in the 1960's. Baltimore: John Hopkins UP, 1991.

Chandler, James K. "Representative Men, Spirits of the Age, and Other Romantic Types." Romantic Revolutions: Criticism and Theory. Eds. Kenneth R. Johnston, et al. Bloomington, IL: Indiana UP, 1990.

- - - . Wordsworth's Second Nature: A Study of the Poetry and Politics. The University of Chicago Press, 1984.

Chard, Leslie F. Dissenting Republican: Wordsworth's Early Life and Thought in Their Political Context. The Hague: Mouton, 1972.

Christensen, Linda. "Teaching Standard English: Whose Standard?" English Journal 79 (1990): 36-40.

Chomsky, Noam. "The Cold War and the University." The Cold War and the University. New York: The New Press, 1991. 171-194.

Clark, Harry Hayden. "Thomas Paine's Theories of Rhetoric." Transactions, Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters 28 (1933): 307-339.

Clecak, Peter. America's Quest for the Ideal Self: Dissent and Fulfillment in the 60s and 70s. New York: Oxford UP, 1983.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Cmeil, Kenneth. "The Politics of Civility." The Sixties: From Memory to History. Ed. David Farber. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994. 263-290.

Cobbett, William. A Grammar of the English Language in a Series of Letters. New York: Clayton & Kingland, 1818.

- - - . The Opinions of William Cobbett. Ed. G.D.H. Cole. London: The Cobbett Publishing Co., 1944.

Cohen, David K. and Marvin Lazerson. "Education and the Corporate Order." Socialist Revolution 2 (1972): 47-72.

Cohen, Murray. Sensible Words: Linguistic Practice in England, 1640-1785. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1977.

Colburn, David R. and Geroge E. Pozzetta. "Race, Ethnicity, and the Evolution of Political Legitimacy." The Sixties: From Memory to History. Ed. David Farber. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994. 119-148.

Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. Selected Poems and Prose. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1985.

Cone, Carl B. The English Jacobins. New York: Scribner's, 1968.

Conway, Moncure. The Life of Thomas Paine. 2 vols. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1892.

Cooper, Joanne E. "Telling Our Own Stories: The Reading and Writing of Journals or Diaries." Stories Lives Tell: Narrative and Dialogue in Education. Eds. Carol Witherell and Nel Noddings. New York: Teachers College Press, 1991.

Curme, George O. A Grammar of the English Language. New York: D.C. Heath & Co., 1931.

DeBenedetti, Charles. An American Ordeal: The Anti-War Movement of the Vietnam War. New York: Syracuse UP, 1990.

Deckard, Barbara Sinclair. The Women's Movement: Political, Socioeconomic, and Psychological Issues. New York: Harper & Row, 1983.

DeMan, Paul. The Rhetoric of Romanticism. New York: Columbia UP, 1984.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Deemer, Charles. "English Composition as a Happening." College English 29 (1967): 121-126.

Derrida, Jacques. Of Grammatology. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1976.

Dewey, John. Experience and Education. 1938. New York: Collier Books, 1963.

- - - . Democracy and Education. 1916. New York: The Free Press, 1997.

Dickstein, Morris. Gates of Eden: American Culture in the Sixties. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1977.

Dippo, Don, and Steven A. Gelb. "Making the Personal Political: Problems of Privilege and Power in Post-secondary Teaching." Journal of Education 173.3 (1991): 81-95.

Dixon, Kathleen. "Gendering the 'Personal.'" College Composition and Communication 46.2 (1995): 255-275.

Downey, Charlotte. Introduction. A Short Introduction to English Grammar. By Robert (Bishop) Lowth. Delmar, NY: Scholars Facsimiles & Reprints, 1979.

Donald, James. "How Illiteracy Became a Problem (And Literacy Stopped Being One)." Journal of Education 165 (1983): 35-52.

Drake, Nathan. "Essays Illustrative of the 'Rambler,' 'Adventurer,' and 'Idler.' Johnson: The The Critical Heritage. Ed. James T. Boulton. London: Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1971. 342-348.

Eagleton, Terry. Literary Theory: An Introduction. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1983.

Echols, Alice. "Women's Liberation and Sixties Radicalism." The Sixties: From Memory to History. Ed. David Farber. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994. 149-174.

Eisenstein, Elizabeth L. The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early Modern Europe. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1979.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Elbow, Peter. "Being a Writer vs. Being an Academic: A Conflict in Goals." College Composition and Communication 46.1 (1995): 72-83.

- - - . "Interchanges: Response." College Composition and Communication 46.1 (1995): 87-92.

- - - ."The War between Reading and Writing—And How to End It." Rhetoric Review 12 (1993): 5-24.

- - - ."Reflections on Academic Discourse: How It Relates to Freshmen and Colleagues." College English 53 (1991): 135-155.

- - - . Embracing Contraries: Explorations in Learning and Teaching. New York: Oxford UP, 1986.

- - - . Writing with Power: Techniques for Mastering the Writing Process. New York: Oxford UP, 1981.

- - - . Writing Without Teachers. London: Oxford UP, 1973.

- - - . "Reply." College English 30 (1968): 591-595.

- - - . "The Definition of Teaching." College English 30 (1968): 187-201.

- - - . "A Method for Teaching Writing." College English 30 (1968): 115-123.

- - - . "Who Is a Conscientious Objector?" Christian Century 85 (1968): 989-993.

Emig, Janet. The Web of Meaning: Essays on Writing, Teaching, and Thinking. Eds. Dixie Goswami and Maureen Butler. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1983.

Erdman, David V. Blake: Prophet Against Empire. 1977. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1991.

Evans, Sara. Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979.

Eynon, Bret. "Community in Motion: The Free Speech Movement, Civil Rights, and the Roots of the New Left." Oral History Review 32 (Spring, 1988): 39-69.

Faigley, Lester. Fragments of Rationality: Postmodernity and the Subject of Composition.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992.

- - - . "Competing Theories." College English (Oct., 1986): 527-532.

Farber, David. Introduction. The Sixties: From Memory to History. Ed. David Farber. Chapel Hill, NC: The Univiversity of North Carolina Press, 1994. 1-10.

Farber, Jerry. The Student As Nigger. New York: Pocket Books, 1970.

Ferber, Michael and Staughton Lynd. The Resistance. Boston: Beacon, 1971.

Fennessy, R.R. Burke, Paine, and the Rights of Man. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1963.

Fishman, Stephen M. and Lucille Parkinson McCarthy. "Community in the Expressivist Classroom: Juggling Liberal and Communitarian Visions." College English 56 (1994) 62-81.

Fishman, Stephen M. and Lucille Parkinson McCarthy. "Is Expressivism Dead? Reconsidering Its Romantic Roots and Its Relation to Social Constructionism." College English 54 (1992): 647-661.

Flax, Jane. Disputed Subjects: Essays on Psychoanalysis, Politics, and Philosophy. New York: Routledge, 1993.

Flower, Linda. Problem Solving Strategies for Writers. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981.

Foner, Eric. "Introduction." Rights of Man. By Thomas Paine. New York: Penguin Books, 1985.

Formigari, L. "Language and Society in the Late Eighteenth Century." Journal of the History of Ideas 35 (1974): 275-93.

Foucault, Michel. "What Is An Author?" Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1977.

- - - . "The Discourse on Language." The Archaeology of Knowledge & the Discourse on Language. New York: Pantheon Books, 1972.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

- - - . The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences. 1970. New York: Vintage, 1994.

Fox, Thomas. The Social Uses of Writing. Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1990.

Frank, Thomas. The Conquest of Cool. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997.

Fraser, Ronald, et al., eds. 1968: A Student Generation in Revolt. London: Chatto & Windus, 1988.

Fraistat, Neil. "Shelley Left and Right: The Rhetorics of Early Textual Editions." Shelley: Poet and Legislator of the World. Eds. Betty T. Bennett and Stuart Curran. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1996.

Freidan, Betty. It Changed My Life: Writing on the Women's Movement. New York: Random House, 1975.

Freire, Paulo. Pedagogy of the Oppressed. 1970. New York: Continuum, 1993.

Frye, Northrop. Fearful Symmetry: A Study of William Blake. 1969. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1974.

- - - . A Study of English Romanticism. New York: Random House, 1968

Gannett, Cinthia. "The Stories of Our Lives Become Our Lives: Journals, Diaries, and Academic Discourse." Feminine Principles and Women's Experience in American Composition and Rhetoric. Eds. Louise Wetherbee Phelps and Janet Emig. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995.

Garber, Frederick. Self, Text, and Romantic Irony: The Example of Byron. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1988.

Gardiner, Ellen. "Peter Elbow's Rhetoric of Reading." Rhetoric Review 13 (1995): 321-330.

Gendlin, Eugene T. "The Discovery of Felt Meaning." Language and Meaning.

Gilbert, Sandra M. "Shadows of Futurity: The Literary Imagination, the MLA, and the Twenty-First Century." PMLA. 112 (1997): 370-379.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Gilligan, Carol. In a Different Voice. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1982.

Gilyard, Keith. Voices of the Self: A Study of Language Competence. Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1991.

Giroux, Henry, and Peter McLaren. "Teacher Education and the Politics of Engagement: The Case for Democratic Schooling." Harvard Education Review (1986): 213-238.

- - - . Theory and Resistance in Education. South Hadley, MA: Bergin, 1983.

Gitlin, Todd. The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage. New York: Bantam, 1987.

- - - . "The Underground Press and Its Cave-In." The Campaign Against the Underground Press. Ed. Geoffrey Ripps. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1981.

- - - . The Whole World is Watching: Mass Media in the Making & Unmaking of the New Left. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1980.

Godwin, William. Enquiry Concerning Political Justice. 1792. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1971.

Gradin, Sherrie L. Romancing Rhetorics. Portsmough, NH: Boynton/Cook Heinemann, 1995.

Graff, Gerald. Professing Literacy: An Institutional History. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.

Graff, Harvey J. The Labyrinths of Literacy: Reflections on Literacy Past and Present. Pittsburgh, PA: Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, 1995.

Greenbaum, Leonard and Rudolf B. Schmerl. Course X: A Left Field Guide to Freshman English. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1970.

Greer, Colin. "The Ethnic Question." The Sixties Without Apology. Eds. Sohnya Sayres, Andus Stephanson, Stanley Aronowitz, and Fredric Jameson. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

- - - . The Great School Legend. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1972.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Grumet, Madeleine R. "The Politics of Personal Knowledge." Stories Lives Tell: Narrative and Dialogue in Education. Eds. Carol Witherell and Nel Noddings. New York: Teachers College Press, 1991.

Guillory, John. "The Ideology of Canon Formation." Critical Inquiry 10 (1983): 173-98.

Haber, Robert A. "From Protest to Radicalism: An Appraisal of the Student Movement." The New Student Left. Boston: Dorsey, 1966. 41-9.

Hairston, Maxine. "Diversity, Ideology, and Teaching Writing." College Composition and Communication 43 (1992): 179-193.

Hampton, Henry, Steve Fayer, and Sarah Flynn. Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement, From the 1950's Through the 1960's. New York: Bantam Books, 1990.

Harris, James. Hermes: Or, A Philosophical Inquiry Concerning Universal Grammar. London: F. Wingrave, 1794.

Hartman, Geoffrey. The Unmediated Vision. New Haven: Yale UP, 1954.

Hassler, Donald M. "Comment and Rebuttal: On Peter Elbow's 'A Method for Teaching Writing.'" College English 30 (1968): 591.

Hazlitt, William. "The Spirit of the Age." The Complete Works of William Hazlitt. Vol. 11. Ed. D.P. Howe. New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1967.

- - - . New and Improved Grammar. London: M.J. Godwin, 1810.

Heineman, Kenneth J. Campus Wars: The Peace Movement at American State Universities in the Vietnam War Era. New York: New York UP, 1993.

Hegel, G.W.F. The Philosophy of Fine Art. London: G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., 1920.

Heller, Thomas C. and David E. Wellbury, eds. Reconstructing Individualism: Autonomy, Individuality, and the Self in Western Thought.

Herndon, James. The Way It Spozed to Be. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Hirsch, E.D. Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987.

Hobsbawm, E.J. The Age of Revolution, 1789-1848. New York: New American Library, 1962.

Holmes, Richard. Shelley: The Pursuit. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1975.

Horowitz, Irving Louis and William H. Friedland. The Knowledge Factory: Student Power and Academic Politics in America. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois UP, 1972.

Hunter, Ian. Culture and Government: The Emergence of Literary Education. London: Macmillan, 1988.

Hone, William. The Political House That Jack Built. London: Printed by William Hone, 1819.

Illich, Ivan D. Deschooling Society. New York: Harper & Row, 1970.

Izenberg, Gerald N. Impossible Individuality: Romanticism, Revolution and the Origins of Modern Selfhood, 1787-1802. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1992.

Jacobus, Mary. Tradition and Experiement in Wordsworth's 'Lyrical Ballads' (1798). Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976.

Jay, Paul. Being in the Text: Self Representation from Wordsworth to Roland Barthes. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1984.

Jencks, Christopher. Inequality: A Reassessment of the Effect of Family and Schooling in America. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1972.

Johnson, Samuel. "Preface." A Dictionary of the English Language (1755). London: Henry G. Bohn, 1860.

- - - . The Plan of A Dictionary (1747). Menston, England: The Scholar Press, Limited, 1970.

Johnston, Kenneth R. The Hidden Wordsworth: Poet, Lover, Rebel, Spy. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1998.

- - - . "Introduction: The Spell of Wordsworth." Romantic Revolutions: Criticism and Theory. Eds. Kenneth R. Johnston, et al. Bloomington, IL: Indiana UP,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

1990.

- - - . Wordsworth and *The Recluse*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1984.

Jones, Hugh. Accidence to the English Tongue (1724). London: J. Clarke, 1926.

Jones, Vivien. "Women Writing Revolution: Narratives of History and Sexuality in Mary Wollstonecraft and Henlen Maria Williams." Beyond Romanticism: New Approaches to Texts and Contexts, 1780-1832. Ed. Stephen Colby.

Joseph, Peter. Good Times: An Oral History of America in the 1960's. New York: Charterhouse, 1972.

Kazin, Alfred. "Introduction." The Portable Blake. New York: Penguin Books, 1986.

Kelly, Gary. Women, Writing, and Revolution: 1790-1827. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.

Kent, C.B. Roylance. The English Radicals: An Historical Sketch. London: Longman's, Green, and Co., 1899.

Kernan, Alvin. Printing, Technology, Letters, and Samuel Johnson. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1987.

Kinneavy, James. A Theory of Discourse. New York: Prentice Hall, 1971.

Kirsch, Gesa E. and Joy S. Ritchie. "Beyond the Personal: Theorizing a Politics of Location in Composition Research." College Composition and Communication 46.1 (1995): 7-29.

Knoblauch, C.H. "Rhetorical Constructions: Dialogue and Commitment." College English. 50 (1988): 125-140.

Knoblauch, C.H. and Lil Brannon. Rhetorical Traditions and the Teaching of Writing. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1984.

Kohl, Herbert. The Open Classroom: A Practical Guide to a New Way of Teaching. New York: Vintage, 1969.

Kozol, Jonathan. Death at an Early Age. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1967.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Laqueur, Thomas Walter. Religion and Respectability: Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture, 1780-1850. New Haven: Yale UP, 1976.

Lazere, Donald. "Entertainment as Social Control." American Media and Mass Culture. Ed. Donald Lazere. Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, 1987.

Leamer, Laurence. The Paper Revolutionaries: The Rise of the Underground Press. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1972.

LeFevre, Karen Burke. Invention as a Social Act. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois UP, 1987.

Leith, Dick. A Social History of English. London: Routledge, 1997.

Levinson, Marjorie., ed. et. al. Rethinking Historicism: Critical Readings in Romantic History. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, Inc., 1989.

- - - . Wordsworth's Great Period Poems. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986.

Lewontin, R.C. "The Cold War and the Transformation of the Academy." The Cold War and the University. Ed. Noam Chomsky. New York: The New Press, 1997. 1-34.

Lincoln, Anthony. Some Political and Social Ideas of English Dissent, 1763-1800. New York: Octagon Books, 1971.

Lipset, Seymour Martin and Sheldon S. Wolin. The Berkeley Student Revolt: Facts and Interpretations. Anchor Books: Garden City, NY, 1965.

Lowth, Robert (Bishop). A Short Introduction to English Grammar (1787). Delmar, NY: Scholars Facsimiles & Reprints, 1979.

Lutz, Joan M. "When the Teacher Stops Teaching—An Experiment with Freshman English." College English 33 (1970): 50-57.

Lyons, John O. The Invention of the Self: The Hinge of Consciousness in the Eighteenth Century. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois UP, 1978.

MacDonald, Heather. "The Flaw in Student-Centered Learning." New York Times 20 July 1998: A15.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Mackenzie, Angus. "Sabotaging the Dissident Press." Columbia Journalism Review (1981): 20-24.

Macrorie, Ken. Uptaught. New York: Hayden Book Co., 1970.

- - - . "To Be Read." English Journal 57 (1968): 686-692.

MacKinnon, Catherine A. "Feminism, Marxism, Method, and the State: An Agenda for Theory." Feminist Theory: A Critique of Ideology. Eds. Nannerl O. Keohane, et al. Sussex, England: The Harvester Press, 1982.

Marx, Karl. Capital: Vol. I (1867). New York: International Publishers, 1992.

Matthiessen, Peter. In the Spirit of Crazy Horse. New York: Viking, 1980.

Mayo, Robert. "The Contemporaneity of The Lyrical Ballads. PMLA LXIX (1954): 486-522.

McAdam, Doug. Freedom Summer. New York: Oxford UP, 1988.

McCue, Daniel L. "The Pamphleteer Pitt's Government Couldn't Silence." Eighteenth-Century Life 5 (1978): 38-49.

McGann, Jerome. The Poetics of Sensibility: A Revolution in Literary Style. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.

- - - . The Romantic Ideology: A Critical Investigation. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983.

McKeon, Michael. The Origins of the English Novel, 1600-1740. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1988.

McCleelan, Grant S., Ed. American Youth in a Changing Culture. New York: H.W. Wilson, 1972.

Meech, Sanford. "Early Application of Latin Grammar to English." PMLA 50 (1935): 1012-1032.

Meixenhelder, Susan. "Redefining 'Powerful' Writing: Toward a Feminist Theory of Composition." Journal of Thought 20 (Fall, 1985): 184-195.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Mellor, Anne K., ed. Romanticism and Feminism. Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1988.

Miller, Douglas T. and Marion Nowak. The Fifties: The Way We Really Were. New York: Doubleday & Co., 1977.

Miller, James. "Democracy Is in the Streets: From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987.

Miller, Mark Crispin. "Deride and Conquer." Watching Television. Ed. Todd Gitlin. New York: Pantheon Books, 1986.

Miller, Susan. "The Femininization of Composition Studies." The Politics of Writing Instruction: Postsecondary. Eds. Richard Bullock and John Trimbur. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers, 1991.

Miller, Susan. Textual Carnivals: The Politics of Composition. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois UP, 1991.

- - - . Rescuing the Subject: A Critical Introduction to Rhetoric and the Writer. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1989.

Millet, Kate. Sexual Politics. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1970.

Montgomery, David. Introduction. The Cold War and the University. Ed. Noam Chomsky, et. al. New York: The New Press, 1997. xi-xxxvii.

Morris, Aldon D. The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change. New York: The Free Press, 1984.

Morrison, Joan, and Robert K. Morrison. From Camelot to Kent State: The Sixties Experience in the Words of Those Who Lived It. New York: Times Books, 1987.

Murray, Donald M. Write to Learn. New York: Holt, 1984.

- - - . Learning by Teaching: Selected Articles on Writing and Teaching. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1982.

- - - . "Teach Writing as a Process not Product." The Leaflet Nov., 1972. 11-14.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

- - - . "Finding Your Own Voice: Teaching Composition in an Age of Dissent." College Composition and Communication (1969): 118-123.

Nares, Robert. Elements of Orthoepy. London: Printed for T. Payne & Son, 1784.

Nasaw, David. Schooled to Order. New York: Oxford UP, 1979.

Neal, Maureen. "Social Constructionism and Expressionism: Contradictions and Connections." Freshman English News (1993): 42-49.

Neuburg, Victor E. Popular Education in Eighteenth-Century England. London: Woburn Press, 1971.

Obst, Lynda Rosen, ed. The Sixties: The Decade Remembered Now by the People Who Lived Them. New York: Random House, 1977.

Ohmann, Richard. "English and the Cold War." The Cold War and the University. New York: The New Press, 1997. 73-106.

- - - . The Politics of Letters. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan UP, 1987.

- - - . English in America: A Radical View of the Profession. New York: Oxford UP, 1979.

Paine, Thomas. Collected Writings. New York: Library of America, 1995.

Parrish, Stephen. Introduction. High Romantic Argument: Essays for M.H. Abrams. Ed. Lawrence Lipking. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1981.

Paulson, Ronald. Representations of Revolution. New Haven: Yale UP, 1983.

Peck, Abe. Uncovering the Sixties: The Life and Times of the Underground Press. New York: Pantheon, 1985.

Peckham, Morse. The Birth of Romanticism. Greenwood, FL: Penkevill, 1986.

Pendleton, Gayle Trusdel. "The English Pamphlet Literature of the Age of the French Revolution, 'Anatomized.'" Eighteenth-Century Life 5 (1978): 29-37.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Perl, Sondra. "A Writer's Way of Knowing: Guidelines for Composing." Presence of Mind: Writing and the Domain Beyond the Cognitive. Eds. Alice Brand and Richard Graves. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1994. 77-87.

- - - . "Composing Texts, Composing Lives." Harvard Educational Review 64 (1994): 427-449.

- - - . "Understanding Composing." College Composition and Communication 31 (1980): 363-369.

Place, Francis. The Autobiography of Francis Place. Ed. Mary Thrale. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1972

Plant, Marjorie. The English Book Trade: An Economic History of the Making and Sale of Books.

Postman, Neil and Charles Weingartner. Teaching As a Subversive Activity. New York: Delacorte Press, 1969.

Powell, Arthur G., et al. The Shopping Mall High School: Winners and Losers in the Educational Marketplace. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1985.

Pratt, Mary Louise. "Arts of the Contact Zone." Profession '91. New York: Modern Language Association, 1991. 33-40.

Priestley, Joseph. Rudiments of Grammar. London: J & F Kivington, 1772.

- - - . History of the Corruption of Christianity (1771). Keane, NH: J. & J. W Prentiss, 1838.

Ravitch, Diane. The Troubled Crusade: American Education, 1945-1980. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1983.

Remak, Henry H. "European Romanticism and Contemporary American Counterculture." Romanticism and Culture. Ed. H.W. Matalene. Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1984. 71-95.

Report of the President's Commission on Campus Unrest. Washington, D.C.: 1970.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Ripps, Geoffrey. The Campaign Against the Underground Press. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1981.

Ritchie, Joy S. "Confronting the 'Essential' Problem: Reconnecting Feminist Theory and Pedagogy." Journal of Advanced Composition 10 (1995): 249-273.

Rivers, Isabel, ed. Books and Their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982.

Roberts, Paul. Modern Grammar. New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World Inc., 1967.

Nicholas, Roe. The Politics of Nature: Wordsworth and Some Contemporaries. Hong Kong: MacMillan, 1992.

- - - . Wordsworth and Coleridge: The Radical Years. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988.

Rose, Mike. Lives on the Boundary: The Struggles and Achievements of America's Underprepared. New York: Free Press, 1989.

- - - . "The Language of Exclusion: Writing Instruction at the University." College English (1985): 341-359.

Rosso, G.A., and Daniel P. Watkins, eds. English Romantic Writers and Contemporary Historical Methods. Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 1990.

Rouse, John. "The Politics of Composition." College English 41 (1979): 1-21.

Rubenstein, Geraldine Pittman. "Review: *Writing Without Teachers*." Harvard Educational Review 44 (1974): 468-471.

Rude, George. Revolutionary Europe, 1783-1815. 1964. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1975.

Ruoff, Gene. "Wordsworth on Language: Toward a Radical Poetics for English Romanticism." Wordsworth Circle (1972): 204-211.

Russell, David R. "Romantics on Writing: Liberal Culture and the Abolition of Composition Courses." Rhetoric Review (1988): 132-148.

Sale, Kirkpatrick. SDS. New York: Random House, 1973.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Sayres, Sohnya, et al. The Sixties Without Apology. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

Scholes, Robert. The Rise and Fall of English. New Haven: Yale UP, 1998.

- - - . Textual Power. New Haven: Yale UP, 1985.

Scutt, Jocelynne A. "The Personal is Political." Radically Speaking: Feminism Reclaimed. Eds. Diane Belle and Renate Klein. Melbourne, Australia: Spinifex Press, 1996.

Schwantes, Carlos Arnaldo. The Pacific Northwest. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1996.

Selincourt, Ernest de, ed. The Early Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth (1787-1805). Oxford: Oxford UP, 1935.

Shaaban, Bouthina. "Shelley and the Chartists." Shelley: Poet and Legislator of the World. Eds. Betty T. Bennett and Stuart Curran. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1996.

Shelley, Percy Bysshe. Shelley's Prose: or, The Trumpet of a Prophesy. Albuquerque, NM: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1966.

- - - . The Complete Poetical Works of Shelley. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1901.

Shor, Ira. "Our Apartheid: Writing Instruction & Inequality." Journal of Basic Writing 16 (1997): 91-104.

- - - . When Students Have Power. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.

- - - . Empowering Education: Critical Teaching for Social Change. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992.

- - - . Culture Wars: School and Society in the Conservative Restoration, 1969-1984. Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986.

- - - . Critical Teaching and Everyday Life. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980.

Silberman, Charles E. Crisis in the Classroom. New York: Random House, 1970.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Simon, Brian. Studies in the History of Education,1780-1870. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1960.

Slevin, James F. "Depoliticizing and Politicizing Composition Studies." The Politics of Writing Instruction: Postsecondary. Eds. Richard Bullock and John Trimbur. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers, 1991.

Smith, Olivia. The Politics of Language, 1791-1819. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984.

Snell, K.D.M. Annals of the Laboring Poor: Social Change and Agrarian England, 1600-1900. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1985.

Soliday, Mary. "Translating Self and Difference Through Literacy Narratives." College English 56 (1994): 511-526.

Spence, Thomas. The Political Works of Thomas Spence. Newcastle Upon Tyme: Avero, 1982.

Spring, Joel H. Education and the Rise of the Corporate State. Boston: Beacon Press, 1971.

Stallybrass, Peter and Allon White. The Politics and Poetics of Transgression. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1986.

Stone, Lawrence. "Literacy and Education in England, 1640-1900." Past and Present 42 (1969): 69-139.

Thompson, E.P. The Romantics: England in a Revolutionary Age. New York: The New Press, 1997.

- - - . Witness Against the Beast: William Blake and the Moral Law. New York: The New Press, 1993.

- - - . The Making of the English Working Class. New York: Vintage Books, 1966.

Todd, F.M. Politics and the Poet: A Study of Wordsworth. London: Methuen & Co., 1957.

Tooke, John Horne. Epea Pteroenta or, The Diversions of Purley (1805). London: Willaim Tegg & Co., 1857.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Visionary Daughters of Albion: A Bicentenary Celebration of Mary Wollstonecraft and Mary Shelley. The New York Public Library. May 3 - Sept. 13, 1997.

Volney, C.F. The Ruins of Empires. Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1991.

Waldo, Mark L. "Romantic Rhetoric for the Modern Student: The Psycho-rhetorical Approach to Wordsworth and Coleridge." Rhetoric Review (1985): 64-79.

Wardle, David. English Popular Education: 1780-1975. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1976.

Webb, R.K. The British Working Class Reader: 1790-1848, Literacy and Social Tension. London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1955.

White, Richard. "It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own": A New History of the American West. Norman, OK: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1991.

Whitfield, Stephen J. The Culture of the Cold War. Baltimore: The John Hopkins UP, 1991.

Wickwar, W.H. The Struggle for the Freedom of the Press, 1819-1822. London: G. Allen & Unwin Ltd., 192.

Williams, Raymond. Marxism and Literature. New York: Oxford UP, 1977

- - - . Keywords. New York: Oxford UP, 1976.

- - - . The Long Revolution. London: Chatto & Windus, 1961.

- - - . Culture and Society, 1780-1950. 1958. New York: Columbia UP, 1983.

Witherell, Carol. "The Self in Narrative: A Journey Into Paradox." Stories Lives Tell: Narrative and Dialogue in Education. Eds. Carol Witherell and Nel Noddings. New York: Teachers College Press, 1991.

Wohlforth, Tim. "The Sixties in America." New Left Review 178 (1989): 105-123.

Wollstonecraft, Mary. "The French Revolution." 1794. The Works of Mary Wollstonecraft. Vol. 6. New York: New York UP, 1986.

- - - . A Vindication of the Rights of Woman. 1792. Ontario: Broadview Literary Texts, 1997.

- - - . A Vindication of the Rights of Men. 1790. Ontario: Broadview Literary Texts, 1997.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

- - - . "Thoughts on the Education of Daughters." 1787. The Works of Mary Wollstonecraft. Vol. 4. New York: New York UP, 1986.

Wordsworth, Jonathan. "Introduction." The Poems of Helen Maria Williams, 1786. Oxford: Woodstock Books, 1994.

Wordsworth, William. Selected Poems and Prefaces. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965.

- - - . Selected Poems. New York: Penguin Books, 1994.

- - - . The Prelude, 1805. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1979.

- - - . The Prose Works of William Wordsworth. Vol. I. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974.

Wuscher, Herman. Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity in Wordsworth, 1791-1800. Stockholm: Uppsala, 1980.

Zinn, Howard. "The Politics of History in the Era of the Cold War: Repression and Resistance." The Cold War and the University. Ed. Noam Chomsky, et. al. New York: The New Press, 1997.

- - - . A People's History of the United States. New York: HarperCollins, 1980.

- - -. SNCC: The New Abolitionists. Boston: Beacon, 1965.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.