

**EDUCATING WOMEN:
THE PRECEPTRESS AND HER PEN, 1780-1820**

RUTH ALEXANDRA SYMES

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of D.Phil.

**University of York
Centre for Women's Studies**

1995

ABSTRACT

The period 1780-1820 saw changes in ideas about education, literature and the "nature" of women. These ideas were in themselves mutually interdependent. The writings of women in this period have recently been recovered and reanalysed by critics keen to theorise their "literary value." This thesis suggests that these works might be more profitably evaluated by a consideration of the pedagogical ideals underpinning their production. I trace the religious and philosophical ideas informing educational discourse and suggest that in this period, the figure of the preceptress, British, middle-class and rational, infiltrated the popular imagination as writer, reader and character.

The majority of female writer/educators in this thesis were working within a rationalist philosophy of experience dependent upon the world of Enlightenment and Dissent. My study considers a range of fictional and non-fictional material by women writers both well-known and obscure, including school textbooks, stories for children, works of advice, works of literary criticism, self-histories and novels of the period. I show the ways in which these works were connected through pedagogical discourse and consider how the development of particular genres in this period was shaped by the notion of educating womanhood. I show how, by reinstating pedagogy as an aspect of literary production and appreciation, women writers may obtain a fairer hearing.

CONTENTS

	page
Abstract	2
Contents	3
List of Appendices	7
Introduction: Educating Women, 1780-1820	10
1) The Preceptress and the Domestic Woman	17
2) Retrieving the Preceptress	20
a) Histories of Education	20
b) Women in Enlightenment Thought	24
c) Histories of the Family and Childhood	28
d) Histories of Feminist Politics	30
e) Religion and Enlightenment	32
f) Biographical Approaches	42
3) Defining the Preceptress	51
i) Issues of Class	51
ii) Issues of Nationality	59
4) Literary Criticism and Women's Education	64
5) Methodology	73
Chapter One: "The Wand of Reason": the Preceptress in Writing for Children	79
1) Women Writers and the Preceptress in Works for Children	83
2) "There Must be a Dame": Women Writing Textbooks	88

i) "Young Girls Don't Read Prefaces"	88
ii) "The Magic of Ryme": Books of Poetry	96
3) Fantasy, Reason and The Preceptress	100
i) Fairy Tales	104
ii) Fables	110
4) "Nature" and the Preceptress	114
5) Educating and Authorship in Works for Children: Some Conclusions	124
Chapter Two: The Absent Mrs Gregory: The Preceptress in Advice Literature	133
1) The History of Educational Advice: Some Considerations of Gender	135
i) "In the Eye of My Own Sex": Prescription and the Paternal Preceptor	142
ii) "Silken Fetters": The Maternal Model of Advice	146
a) "A Regular Plan"	147
b) "The Most Proper and Attractive of all Teachers"	151
2) The Woman Writer and the Possibilities of Prescription	156
3) Parodying Prescription: Maria Edgeworth's <u>Letters for Literary Ladies</u> (1795)	162
4) Prescription and the Novel of Education	173
Chapter Three: "A Judicious Person with Some Turn For Humour": The Preceptress as Literary Critic	178
1) Women, Literary Criticism and the Late Eighteenth-Century Context	181
2) "Strong Markings of the Female Mind": Clara Reeve: Literary Critic and	

Educationalist (1729-1807).	189
3) <u>The Progress of Romance</u> (1785): From Literary Criticism to Pedagogical Project	194
i) "To Talk of Romance": Some Notes on Form	204
ii) "The Regulation of Reason": Some Recommended Reading	208
4) Conclusion	210
Chapter Four: The Educative "I": The Preceptress as Self-Historian	213
1) "In Everything Follow My Example": Educational Discourse and Self-History: A Dialogue	217
2) The <u>Memoir</u> of Catharine Cappe (1812)	222
i) Unitarianism and Life-Writing	227
ii) Cappe's <u>Memoir</u> and Educational Discourse	233
a) "Another End in View"	234
b) Association and Autobiography	237
3) Conclusion	245
Chapter Five: "A More Perfect Plan": <u>Emma</u> and The Preceptress in Fiction	249
1) Educating Emma	255
2) Educating Women in <u>Emma</u>	261
i) Mrs Goddard's Academy	261
ii) Mrs Weston: "Poor Miss Taylor That Was"	263
iii) Emma: "Mrs Weston's Faithful Pupil"	270
iv) Jane Fairfax: "Brought up for Educating Others"	275
3) Jane Austen as Educating Author	279
4) Later Preceptresses in Fiction	282

Conclusion: "Having Made Education My More Particular Study"	284
Appendices	293
Bibliography	308

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Elizabeth Hamilton. Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education, 5th edition. Bath, R. Cruthwell, 1816. 12-21.

Appendix B: Charlotte Smith. "Preface" to Conversations Introducing Poetry on the Subjects of Natural History for The Use of Children and the Young. London, T. Nelson and Sons, 1804.

Appendix C: The Grasshopper

i) Cowley's Translation of Anacreon's The Grasshopper (translation made between 1638 and 1652). In J. F. Taafe, Abraham Cowley. New York: Twayne Publishers Inc., 1974. 45.

ii) Charlotte Smith's Version of The Grasshopper in Conversations Introducing Poetry: Chiefly on the Subjects of Natural History for the Use of Children and Young People. London, T. Nelson and Sons, 1804. 116-117.

Appendix D: Maria Edgeworth. "The Good French Governess" in Moral Tales for Young People. London: J. Johnson, 1801. 112-113.

Appendix E: Clara Reeve. "To my Friend Mrs X. On her Holding an Argument in Favour of the Natural Equality of Both of the Sexes." In Original Poems on Several Occasions. London: T. and J. W. Pasham, 1756. 4-11.

Appendix F: Clara Reeve. The Progress of Romance Through Times, Countries and Manners, with Remarks on the Good and Bad Effects of it on Them Respectively in A Course of Evening Conversations, 2nd vol.. Colchester: W. Keymer, 1785. 102-104.

Appendix G: Catharine Cappe. "Introduction" to Memoir of the Life of the Late Mrs Catharine Cappe Written by Herself. 2nd ed.. London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, Paternoster Row, 1823. 2-4.

My chief delight is to learn and to be with those who know how to teach. It is not often my lot to meet with living instructors, but there are plenty of the dead and I am satisfied.

Ellen Weeton, Nov. 15th 1809. The Journals of Ellen Weeton 1807-1822, ed. Edward Hall with a new introduction by J.J. Bagley (Newton Abbot: David and Charles Reprints, 1969).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the British Academy for funding my research and especially for allowing me to make several research trips to London and Cambridge. Thanks to the staff of Wigan Record Office, Leigh; Suffolk County Archives, Ipswich; York University Library; Leeds Brotherton Library; the British Library, Boston Spa; the John Rylands Library, Manchester; the British Library, London; the Borthwick Institute, York; and Cambridge University Library.

My chief thanks go to my two female mentors, Treva Broughton and Jane Rendall whose unfailing enthusiasm, interest and criticism of my work have been the mainstay of my time at York. Thanks to them also for showing me the borders between "literature" and "history" and for helping me in the attempt to cross them. Thanks also to all the staff and students of the Centre for Women's Studies at York who gave me the space and encouragement to teach, to learn, and to write. Thanks to the Women's History Research Group at York for many stimulating discussions over the years. Thanks also to the organisers of the Erasmus Student Exchange on both sides of the Channel who allowed me to participate in a fascinating course entitled *Fact and Fiction in a Feminist Perspective* held at the University of Utrecht in the summer of 1992.

Thanks to all those teachers from Warrington, Cambridge, and London who have encouraged my enthusiasm for literature. These were particularly: John Brown, John Nutter, Iain Wright, Julia Swindells and Yvonne Browne. Thanks also to all my fellow teachers in Warrington, London, Cambridge, Leeds and York whose line of work provides the inspiration for this thesis. I am grateful too to all my own students who have given me the opportunity to play the role of preceptress!

Thanks to old friends for their sound advice at times of stress, particularly Anne Sheinfield, Susan Harkness and Cathy Ward. Thanks to my parents for their support and particularly to my father and sister, Naomi, for their patient proofreading. Final and especial thanks to Zainul Sachak for the years of reassurance and belief: without him this project would never have been completed.

Introduction

Educating Women, 1780-1820

[To Miss C. Armitage, Upholland, Wigan, July 1823].

My heart ached to discover a very wrong system of education pursued for my child; but I must submit to it in silence. No father is fit to educate a daughter and Mary is only preparing for a sickly life, filled with vanity, pride and trifles -- and a premature death. Poor, poor Mary, thy lot and mine is very sad... [emphasis mine]

[To Mr Stock, Upholland, Wigan, July 1st 1823].

Do you not love my Mary? Why then deprive her of the comfort of a mother? If you sincerely loved her, you would study her comfort and satisfaction. When in your house, what comfort and satisfaction has she, capable of giving her proper instruction? -- none. Too ignorant are they, and of language and manners not for her to copy; and when she leaves school, she must come home to be the companion of servants. Do not educate her thus, I earnestly urge, but let her have the advantages of a mother's solicitude... [emphasis Weeton's]

Ellen Weeton, The Journals of Ellen Weeton, 1807-1825 ¹

In July 1823, the Lancashire governess and schoolteacher, Ellen Weeton, wrote passionately to her friend, Miss Armitage, and to her estranged husband, Aaron Stock, on the subject of the education of her daughter. Mary had been removed from Weeton's care by Stock and placed in a boarding school: in the holidays she lived with her father and his servants. The letters describing Weeton's enforced separation from her daughter are some of the most melodramatic in her Journal (1807-1825) and support Julia Swindell's view that Ellen Weeton "idealizes motherhood, with herself as the mother,

¹ Ellen Weeton, The Journals of Ellen Weeton, 1807-1825, ed. Edward Hall with a new introduction by J.J. Bagley, 2 vols. (Newton Abbot: David and Charles Reprints, 1969), 2:228-230. Weeton's journals were discovered on a bookstall on Wigan Market in 1925 by Edward Hall who first published them as Miss Weeton: Journal of a Governess (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936).

through the literary."² Swindells argues persuasively that writers such as Weeton have recourse to "literary" methods of expression at the moment at which they deal with the most intimate aspects of their lives as women.

Seen through the lens of contemporary feminist aesthetics, Weeton's loss of her daughter, and the fervent expressions of desire to which it gives rise, might well be regarded as fundamental to the literary value and interest of her writing. Certainly such passages recall the preoccupations and language of early nineteenth-century fiction. But Weeton's outburst also draws on the pedagogical discourse current at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries - a discourse perhaps even more familiar to Ellen Weeton than the conventions of the sentimental novel. The discourse of pedagogy, deployed by Weeton throughout the Journal, included, as a basic principle, the importance of mother/daughter relationships. Weeton's separation from her daughter thus constitutes, I would suggest, first and foremost, the contravention of a well-recognised educational ideal. That it makes for compelling reading and contributes to the "literary" value of her Journal should perhaps be seen as a secondary, though evidently an important, consideration. Indeed it is clear that Weeton was exploiting, to its full dramatic potential, the moral weight attached to notions of good pedagogy in countless works of autobiography, literary criticism, advice, and novels in the period 1780-1820. This is not to argue that pedagogical discourse was somehow exempt from considerations of literary style. Weeton's idea of pedagogy, for example, included both rational and sentimental elements and accordingly influenced her writing style. Her Journal reveals her as a participant in the developing field of teaching, but also as a

² Julia Swindells, Victorian Writing and Working Women: The Other Side of Silence (Oxford: Polity Press, 1985), 141-142.

writer at a moment when pedagogical ideas came to influence literary change. Rather than dismiss her passages on education as "slabs of didactics," as did her first editor, I suggest we must analyse Weeton's writings and the writings of many others like her in the light of contemporary pedagogical theory.

The passages above suggest one kind of connection between writing and educating in the period. Weeton's dramatic literary presence is generated in part from her play on the discrepancies between her own life and the life recommended by educational texts. Her recourse to the commonplaces of pedagogical discourse - its slights against fathers and against servants as instructors, for example - supports her dramatic intentions.³ This thesis will, however, offer further connections between the fields of education and of authorship. I establish and explore the importance of "educating women" to the history of writing in the period 1780-1820 and suggest that the middle-class woman writer/mentor intervened in some of the most pressing cultural debates of the age. In her use of educational themes and educational discourse to tell the story of her life, Weeton stands as a symbol for the principal argument of this thesis: that the period 1780-1820 saw the emergence of a new educational mode of writing, a mode that turned on the notion of rational British femininity.

Ellen Weeton's Journal is a rich source for the history of "educating women" in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. I coin this phrase to encapsulate the related roles of women as the objects of education and as educators themselves in this period.

³ As Chapter 2 will show, there was a vigorous late eighteenth-century debate about the role of fathers in the education of their daughters. Though some educational texts advocated greater responsibility for fathers, others pointed out that men were inappropriate instructors of young girls. Weeton's outburst that "no father is fit to educate a daughter" may therefore be seen as a heated expression of a commonly-held prejudice in this period.

Weeton's Journal, which records her own paltry education in her mother's school, her employment as schoolmistress, as governess first to a wealthy farmer in the Lake District and later to a manufacturer in Yorkshire, and finally as mother, is a rare piece of primary historical evidence on the underresearched subject of women's experiences of education. It is also evidence of the ways in which middle-class women were fusing their real or imagined roles as educators with their desire to write. Weeton is one of a number of preceptresses who picked up their pens and turned to literary production in this period. This thesis will suggest that, though they emanate from a number of different social backgrounds, including the gentry, the intellectual élite and the liberal middle-classes, these women were connected by their espousal of an enlightened view of pedagogy in which women played a central role.

In this thesis, I shall refer to the educating woman by a number of different names consistent with contemporary usage. Most commonly, I shall refer to her as "preceptress" or "mentor", though the terms "tutoress", "instructress", "mistress" and "governess" were also familiar in the period. Given the practical and ideological overlap between motherhood and education which I discuss later in this Introduction, the term "mother" will, in certain contexts, be called upon as a metonym for female educator.⁴

Ellen Weeton's life history points to the importance of women in the education of both

⁴ "Pedagogue" and "preceptor" appear in Dr Johnson's Dictionary with no feminine form, though "preceptress" does appear in the literature of the period. "Governess" is a more expansive term in the eighteenth century than it was to become in the nineteenth and refers to unpaid female educators in the home as well as those employed in the homes of others. For clarity's sake, however, I use governess in its later nineteenth-century sense throughout this thesis." "Instructress", "tutoress" and "governaut" also appear in the Dictionary. "Mentor" does not appear but was increasingly popular in the period. Dr Samuel Johnson, ed., A Dictionary of the English Language in which Words are Deduced from their Originals and Illustrated in their Different Significations by Examples from the Best Writers to which are Prefixed a History of the English Language and an English Grammar (London: W. Strahan, 1773).

lower-class and middle-class children in the early nineteenth-century period. A scholarly examination of her Journal suggests the need for a social history of such women. I have not, however, set out to write this neglected history; my materials, and my inclination, have led me in a different direction. As the result of research based on primary published texts, I have identified a set of issues which, in some ways, diverge from the concerns of social historians, but which will, I hope, throw light on them.⁵ Natalie Zemon Davis and Arlette Farge have affirmed the significance to women's history of the position of women in discourse and representation.⁶ I join them in focusing on the way in which women as educators and writers were represented in the period 1780-1820.

The pedagogue, in the shape of the Victorian governess, has been the subject of a number of feminist literary-critical and historical accounts, but there has been a tendency to consider her as having emerged spontaneously in the mid-nineteenth century and to attribute her appearance to the growth of mid-nineteenth-century industrial society.⁷

⁵ The questions asked by social historians might include the number and variety of different kinds of educational establishment for the education of girls with information on how they were attended, staffed and funded, and what exactly they taught. It might also involve an analysis of the economic situation of those families employing governesses, with some indication of the economic situation of governesses, their qualifications, their length of employment, how itinerant they were and what fate usually befell them at the end of their period of governing.

⁶ Natalie Zemon Davis and Arlette Farge, eds., "Women as Historical Actors," chap. in A History of Woman in the West, vol. 3, Renaissance and Enlightenment Paradoxes (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1993), 1-7, here 1-2. There is, of course, some danger here that my study of the educating woman might, itself, misrepresent the lives of women, since textual evidence is never a guarantee of what actually took place in the past. In the subject of women's education the gap between representation and "reality" may be particularly great for, as Martine Sonnet has recently commented, "in education, practice always lags prudently behind theory, and this truism is even truer when it comes to the education of women," Martine Sonnet, "A Daughter to Educate" in Ibid., eds. Natalie Zemon Davis and Arlette Farge, 101-131, 102. Nevertheless, I hope to provide some clues to the mentality of educating women through their representational strategies.

⁷ This chronology and approach is adopted by M. Jeanne Peterson, "The Victorian Governess: Status Incongruence in Family and Society," in Suffer and Be Still: Women in the Victorian Age, ed. Martha Vicinus (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972), 3-19; Bea Howe, A Galaxy of Governesses (London: Batsford Press, 1954); Katharine West, A Chapter of Governesses: A Study of the Governess in English Fiction, 1800-1949 (London: Cohen and West, 1949; Alice Renton, Tyrant or Victim? A History of the British Governess (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1991); Patricia Clarke, The

Weeton's autobiographical account attests, however, both to the real presence and to the representational dimension of a female mentor much earlier, at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries. Following Nancy Armstrong's suggestions about the rise of the domestic woman, I would suggest that the appearance of the "educating woman" was as much the result of changing cultural and literary ideas as of more recognisable socio-economic developments.⁸ My research will argue, therefore, that the figure of the preceptress may be as productively investigated through an examination of the intricacies of texts and language as through a study of employment patterns and statistics.

To analyse the educating woman, we must first understand the importance of education and its meanings in eighteenth-century society. The late eighteenth century, in particular, was an era preoccupied with ideas about education, both of the individual and of society as a whole.⁹ Education was seen to encompass what we now think of as social skills and manners and it implied something different from mere academic achievement. "Education", unlike "learning", was not seen as the prerogative of male academic establishments, but could be achieved equally well, if not better, within the confines of

Governesses: Letters from the Colonies, 1862-1882 (London: Hutchinson, 1985); Mary Poovey, "The Anathematised Race: The Governess and Jane Eyre," chap. in Uneven Developments: The Ideological Work of Gender in Mid-Victorian England (London: Virago Press, 1989) and Kathryn Hughes, The Victorian Governess (London: The Hambledon Press, 1993). Hughes suggests that whilst the aristocracy had been "using the services of the governess since medieval days, her employment by middle-class families dated back only to the end of the eighteenth century," 11. For a psychoanalytical examination of the nineteenth-century governess, see Shoshana Felman, "Turning the Screw of Interpretation," Yale French Studies 55:56 (1977): 94-207. A monograph devoted entirely to the eighteenth-century governess has yet to appear.

⁸ Nancy Armstrong, Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987). I return to Armstrong's work later in this Introduction.

⁹ Dr Johnson's Dictionary (1773) defines education as "the formation of manners in youth; the manner of breeding youth, nurture." See also Raymond Williams's Keywords (Glasgow: Croom Helm, 1976). Williams suggests that "education" came to refer to organised teaching and instruction from the seventeenth century onwards and was used more prolifically in the eighteenth century than before.

the domestic environment. As such, "education" was a term used of the upbringing of middle-class females as much as of that of their male counterparts, though the aims and methods of female and male education in this period remained distinct and separate.¹⁰ At the same time, "education," for young children and older females at least, might be conducted by women as well as, if not better than by men.

I use the term "education" throughout this thesis to acknowledge both the potentially socialising function of instruction and the curriculum of women's education.¹¹ Wider educational issues concerning the development of moral feeling and rational judgement discussed in the period are examined alongside the specific content of educational programmes. Jane McDermid has categorised the content of women's education in the late eighteenth century as follows: music and dancing; reading and reading aloud; writing; grammar; languages; arithmetic; geography; history; natural history; an outline of the sciences, including botany and chemistry; mythology; polite literature including plays; drawing and embroidery and the rudiments of taste.¹² Though Ellen Weeton, for one, neither studied nor taught all of these subjects, it is evident that the educational regimen of many middle-class women could be vigorous and wide-ranging. Many of the subjects listed above were taught with an eye to their suitability for a female audience

¹⁰ It is not the primary object of this thesis to make a gendered comparison of the education afforded to males and females in the period 1780-1820, though the differences between male and female education are alluded to at intervals. The different methods and expectations of education for the two sexes are a common feature of advice literature. Female education is often discussed through its similarities and contrasts with male education. On the education of males in this period, see George C. Brauer, The Education of a Gentleman: Theories of Gentlemanly Education in England, 1660-1775 (New York: Bookman Associates, 1959). See also Introduction, 2)i)a).

¹¹ Jane McDermid comments that the educational writings of women were "concerned not simply with the discrete subjects to be included in a young lady's education. Rather they were preoccupied with education in the widest sense for the improvement of the female mind and character," "Conservative Feminism and Female Education in the Eighteenth Century," History of Education 18:4 (1989): 309-322, here 316.

¹² Ibid., 316.

and I shall examine some of them in more detail in the course of this thesis. Certain subjects were, moreover, deemed particularly appropriate for dissemination by female teachers.

In this introduction, I ask how the figure of the preceptress compares with or complicates more familiar representations of the domestic woman of the period and suggest ways in which the ideology of pedagogy may have interacted with the ideology of domesticity. I note the scarcity of historical work on women's education in this era and compare this with the vast and largely untapped primary resources on the subject. I ask with which intellectual contexts women writers on education were associated. In particular, I examine the influence of religion and of "enlightened" educational ideas on the emergence of the preceptress. I also point to the national construction of the preceptress and her philosophical connotations.

My analysis of female education and the female educator leads into my more recognizably "literary" analysis. The "enlightened" preceptress was a figure within educational writing and a model to be emulated by the reader. It is the argument of this thesis that she was also one of the personae adopted by the writing woman at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. But did pedagogy simply provide a convenient screen for the otherwise unacceptable literary ambition of women? Or did the connection between pedagogy and authorship run deeper? With what preoccupations and to what ends did the preceptress pick up her pen?

*

1) The Preceptress and the Domestic Woman

Historians have argued that a new conception of domestic middle-class womanhood emerged in the late eighteenth century. This figure has been theorised in different ways. It has been suggested, for example, that religious discourse moved, over the course of the eighteenth century, from a portrayal of woman as fickle seductress, to a view of woman as the repository of piety and morality.¹³ Davidoff and Hall, investigating this late eighteenth-century evangelical ideal of womanhood, have argued that the domestic woman arose as an attempt at self-definition, on the part of the middle-classes, against the values of both plebeian and aristocratic culture between 1780 and 1850.¹⁴ Nancy Armstrong, who forges similar connections between gender and class, has emphasised the importance of written discourse, and particularly of literature, to the rise of the domestic woman, and has suggested that her emergence as a cultural representation took place earlier in the eighteenth century (from the 1740s onwards).¹⁵ The tasks defining Armstrong's domestic woman included household management, planning of entertainment, concern for the sick and the regulation of servants.¹⁶ "Supervision of children" is mentioned by Armstrong, but the role of women as pedagogues receives scant attention. In contrast with Davidoff and Hall, and Armstrong, other historians have

¹³ Sean Gill, Women and the Church of England: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present (London: S.P.C.K., 1994), "The eighteenth century saw a significant change in the way in which women were portrayed in religious discourse. The traditional emphasis on woman as Eve the temptress, a threat rather than an aid to piety and morality, gave way to a new representation of women as the repositories and sustainers of religious values in a way that was not true of men", 26.

¹⁴ Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle-Class, 1780-1850 (London: Hutchinson Education, 1987). I look more closely at Davidoff and Hall's conceptions of class formation later in this introduction. Their view is supported by the research of M. LeGates, "The Cult of Womanhood in Eighteenth-Century England," Eighteenth-Century Studies 10 (1976-1977): 21-39.

¹⁵ Nancy Armstrong, Desire and Domestic Fiction, 62.

¹⁶ Where Armstrong does look specifically at pedagogy, she discusses the later mid-nineteenth century model and again the concerns are economic and sexual.

suggested that the representation of woman as domestic was not new to the eighteenth century and have argued for a continuum in women's experience over the centuries.¹⁷

My study engages with the debates about the rise of the domestic woman to the extent that it investigates the construction of models of femininity in the literature of the period 1780-1820. I emphasise the importance of pedagogy to these models. Whatever and whenever the origins of domestic ideology, my research suggests that between 1780 and 1820, education was a pronounced if not a dominant feature of the social and cultural construction of domestic femininity.

The coincidence I am highlighting between the "domestic" woman and the "preceptress" might be construed in different ways.¹⁸ It could be that the qualities expected of the preceptress merely matched, focused and accentuated certain qualities already present in representations of the domestic woman, thus strengthening her appeal. It might equally be argued, however, that the demands of pedagogy conflicted with the ideal of domesticity and brought about a fragmentation of the model of domestic middle-class femininity in ways that would later in the nineteenth century have a powerful impact on debates about sexual-politics.

¹⁷ Davidoff and Hall's assumption that women's lives, and hence women's history, became domesticated towards the end of the eighteenth century is challenged most successfully by Amanda Vickery, "Historiographical Review: Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History," *The Historical Journal* 36:2 (1993): 383-414. See also Judith Bennett, "History that Stands Still: Women's Work in the European Past," *Feminist Studies* 14:2 (1988): 269-283. She claims a continuity of women's experience in the past and challenges the notion of a golden age for women in the eighteenth century before the rise of capitalism.

¹⁸ The relationship between the domestic woman and the learned woman is different from the distinction I am making here. For an analysis of several key women intellectuals in the period, see J. R. Brink, ed., Female Scholars: A Tradition of Learned Women Before 1800 (Montreal: Eden Press Women's Publications, 1980).

The close connections between pedagogy and authorship suggest further possibilities. The autonomy of the preceptress formed a bridge for women writers between the self-effacing expressions advocated by the ideal of domesticity and the authority necessary for narration. Recent critics of late eighteenth-century literature have identified the middle-class woman as a figure central to women's writing in this period; she is implied, for instance, in Mary Poovey's portrayal of the "Proper Lady", in Nancy Armstrong's middle-class "Domestic Woman", and in Gary Kelly's politically charged "certain figure of 'woman'."¹⁹ The pedagogical qualities of this writing woman, however, have been less thoroughly investigated. This thesis will postulate a number of different connections and contradictions between domesticity and pedagogy, two of the fields over which middle-class women presided.

2) Retrieving the Preceptress

Retrieving the preceptress from the archives is no straightforward business, but a number of scholarly approaches have a bearing on her history. As I show below, these include histories of education, the study of women in Enlightenment thought, histories of the family and childhood, the history of feminist politics and histories of religious change. These areas were, of course, interconnected.

a) Histories of Education

Women as teachers and pupils in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have been relatively neglected by historians of British education. Standard histories of education

¹⁹ Mary Poovey, The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer: Ideology as Style in the Works of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley and Jane Austen (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); Nancy Armstrong, Desire and Domestic Fiction; and Gary Kelly, Women, Writing and Revolution, 1790-1827 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 4.

such as those by Brian Simon (1960), John Lawson and Harold Silver (1973), and Michael Sanderson (1983), devote minimal space to the education of middle-class girls, concentrating instead on the issue of state education for all, or on the development of the universities and endowed schools for boys.²⁰ Such works typically ignore the issue of gender within education and concentrate on class as the defining and organising principle of social change.

Felicity Hunt's work on the schooling of girls in the mid and late Victorian period challenges earlier histories which, she argues, subsume girls' education within boys'.²¹ Hunt dismisses all previous "straightforward and whiggish" accounts of the history of education, including those which have dealt solely with the teaching of girls.²² These, she argues, have obscured the developing history of gender relations within education. Hunt's research, together with that by Sara Delamont (1978), Carol Dyhouse (1981), Joan Burstyn (1984) and June Purvis (1991), has both uncovered the history of late nineteenth-century women's education and supplied it with a new agenda. This includes the gendering of the curriculum; the notion of education as "women's work" and the effects of this on the economy; the professionalisation of teaching; the sexualisation of the Victorian governess; state education for working-class girls and the struggle for

²⁰ John Lawson and Harold Silver, A Social History of Education in England (London: Methuen, 1973); Michael Sanderson, Education, Economic Change and Society in England, 1780-1870 (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1983); and Brian Simon, Studies in the History of Education, 1780-1870 (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1960).

²¹ Felicity Hunt, ed., Lessons for Life: The Schooling of Girls and Women, 1850-1950 (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987).

²² Hunt is referring to such works as Alice Zimmern, The Renaissance of Girls' Education: A Record of Fifty Years' Progress (London: A.D. Innes, 1898); Margaret J. Tuke, A History of Bedford College For Women, 1849-1937 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939); and Josephine Kamm, Hope Deferred: Girls' Education in English History (London: Methuen, 1965).

women's admittance into higher education.²³ Such themes, though, are largely inappropriate to a study of women's role as educators in the period before the mid-nineteenth century. How women of the middling classes taught and were taught in the period 1780-1820 remains a grey area, underresearched by social historians and historians of education alike. This lack of research is understandable, since without any formal state education and few private schools for middle-class women until the mid-nineteenth century (or indeed any formal training for female teachers), most women were educated in the home environment and there is, therefore, little primary documentary evidence available of the day-to-day practice of women's education in the period.²⁴

A few specific studies have been made. Jane McDermid, for example, has usefully considered the ways in which women's role was being reformulated in the texts of, what she calls, "conservative feminists."²⁵ P.J. Miller has considered the schooling of middle-class girls and the possibilities for social advancement through education and Mitzi Myers has studied the literary efforts of the Georgian pedagogue in ways that

²³ Sara Delamont and Lorna Duffin, eds., The Nineteenth-Century Woman: Her Cultural and Physical World (London: Croom Helm, 1978); Carol Dyhouse, Girls Growing Up in Late Victorian and Edwardian England (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981); Joan N. Burstyn, Victorian Education and The Ideal of Womanhood (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1984); and June Purvis, A History of Women's Education in England (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1991). On the training of teachers in the mid-nineteenth century, see Frances Widdowson, Going Up Into The Next Class: Elementary Teaching and the Progress of the Middle-Class Girl, 1870-1914 (London: Hutchinson, 1983).

²⁴ Davidoff and Hall's examination of the teaching activities of women in Birmingham and Essex in the period 1780-1850 provides a rare and welcome insight into the kinds of women who became schoolmistresses in the period, but the work of middle-class women educators in the home remains largely uncharted, Family Fortunes, 293-9. Davidoff and Hall's use of the 1851 census returns to provide statistical information about women's role as schoolmistresses is evidence of pedagogy at a later stage in the process of industrialisation and may, therefore, be misleading as an index of the history of women educators in the earlier period.

²⁵ Jane McDermid, "Conservative Feminism and Female Education in the Eighteenth Century," History of Education.

coincide with my own interests.²⁶ I shall draw on these studies at intervals in this thesis.

With a few exceptions, then, little historical work has been undertaken specifically on the subject of the home-based education of women in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Britain. But, despite the scant secondary literature dealing directly with the issue, the importance of women's education as a topic for debate in the late eighteenth century should not be underestimated: primary prescriptive works exist in abundance.²⁷ The Eighteenth-Century Short Title Catalogue, for instance, makes it possible to detect an enormous upsurge in the amount of printed material on educational themes written for, by and about women in Britain in the period 1780-1820. Of the 1,872 texts published during the eighteenth century and categorised by the keyword "instruction" for example, 894 were written after 1775. Of the 1,343 texts categorised by the keyword "education", almost half were written after 1780. There were 63 works containing the keyword "preceptor" between 1700 and 1780, and 117 in the much shorter period 1780-1820. Likewise a calculation for the terms "governess", "teacher" and "mentor" shows similar increases.²⁸ These figures show a significant acceleration

²⁶ P. J. Miller, "Women's Education, 'Self-Improvement' and Social Mobility: a Late Eighteenth-Century Debate," British Journal of Educational Studies 20 (1972): 302-314. Mitzi Myers's work includes: "Impeccable Governesses, Rational Dames and Moral Mothers: Mary Wollstonecraft and the Female Tradition in Georgian Children's Books," Annual of the Modern Language Association, Division on Children's Literature and The Children's Literature Association (London: Yale University Press, 1986), 31-59; "A Taste for Truth and Realities: Advice to Mothers on Books for Girls," Children's Literature Association Quarterly 12:3 (Fall 1987): 118-124; "'Servants as they are now Educated': Women Writers and Georgian Pedagogy," Essays in Literature 16 (1989): 51-69; and "Pedagogy as Self-Expression in Mary Wollstonecraft: Exorcising the Past: Finding a Voice," in The Private Self: Theory and Practice of Women's Autobiographical Writing, ed. Shari Benstock (London: Routledge, 1988), 173-210.

²⁷ Samia I. Spencer commented in 1984 that, "A thorough bibliography reveals that, in spite of continued interest in this topic, there is a paucity of critical material and not a single full-length volume devoted to it," "Women and Education," in French Women and the Age of Enlightenment, ed. Samia I. Spencer (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 83-96, here 83.

²⁸ In the eighty-year period to 1780, the terms "governess", "teacher" and "mentor" appear 30, 150 and 13 times respectively. In the twenty-year period 1780 to 1800, these figures rise to 31, 118, and 24.

in writing on education in the last two decades of the eighteenth century. It is unfortunately impossible to count works in the catalogue according to the gender of their writers, but the number of women writers does appear to increase substantially in samplings from the last two decades of the century.²⁹ Such statistical trends confirm that the period 1780 to 1800 was one of intense activity in thinking about education and in practical changes to the kinds of education experienced by middle-class children and females in particular.

b) Women in Enlightenment Thought

Histories of Enlightenment thought have shown the philosophical ambiguity around the subject of "woman" in this period in ways that are illuminating to women's history as educators. Unfortunately, most of this work has been by French historians. Histories of British women's role in the Enlightenment are scarce. The Enlightenment's pursuit of "reason" and its focus on the power of the individual led to a vigorous reassessment of many widely accepted norms, including those defining the role of women. The desire to advance social utility meant that gender roles and relations, especially the public role

²⁹ S.H. Atkins's A Select Checklist of Printed Material on Education Published in England to 1800 (Hull: University of Hull Institute of Education, 1970) is a useful resource but has some limitations. The texts represented are expressly works of instruction and educational theory and, as a result, the enormous amount of educational material in more literary genres, much of it written by women, is missing. Similarly Judith Phillips Stanton's "Statistical Profile of Women Writing in English from 1600-1800," in Eighteenth-Century Women and The Arts, eds. Frederick M. Keener and Susan E. Lorsch's (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988) misrepresents the amount of educational writing by women. Of her 913 women writers, she suggests that 16 were educational theorists. The educational content of Stanton's other categories, which include autobiography, children's books, grammars and works of domestic improvement, is ignored. Stanton's statistics were obtained from an analysis of eighteenth-century British books held in the British Library and Oxford and Cambridge University Libraries. Martine Sonnet's recent statistical account of educational writing in France in the eighteenth century supports my findings. Martine Sonnet, "A Daughter to Educate" in A History of Woman in the West, vol. 3, Renaissance and Enlightenment Paradoxes, eds. Natalie Zemon Davis and Arlette Farge. Cheryl Turner's statistical analysis of women novelists shows a significant increase in the last decades of the eighteenth century, Living by the Pen: Women Writers in the Eighteenth Century (London: Routledge, 1994). This increase would seem to correspond with their greater activity as educational writers. For a brief but illuminating bibliography of educational texts for women in this period, see Barbara Schnorrenberg, "Education for Women in the Eighteenth Century," Women and Literature 4 (1976): 49-55.

of the male bourgeois citizen and the domestic role of his female counterpart, were actively theorised.³⁰ By the end of the eighteenth century, intellectual thought on both sides of the channel affirmed that the social mission of woman was motherhood and that women should inhabit the domestic sphere. Though conservative by modern standards, these ideas, as Elizabeth Fox-Genovese has commented, amounted to a "revolution" for women.³¹ Pivotal to the construction of middle-class female domesticity in both France and Britain was the matter of women's education and the notion of the woman as educator. Though Enlightenment theorists varied in their approaches to how women should be educated, most, as I shall show, agreed that women, as mothers, were the most appropriate educators of young children. The common expectation that women would educate their own young seemed to many to support the argument for improving the education of women.

Though the debates on the education of women in Catholic France were strongly geared towards the uses and abuses of convent education, they were to influence British educationalists in a number of ways and are therefore worth enumerating here. Discussions of female education in France in the late eighteenth century drew on

³⁰ Elizabeth Fox-Genovese gives a comprehensive account of women's position as the subjects and objects of Enlightenment debate (primarily in France) in "Women and the Enlightenment," in Becoming Visible: Women in European History, eds. Renate Bridenthal, Claudia Koonz, and Susan Stuard (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987), 251-278. See also Jean H. Bloch, "Women and the Reform of the Nation," in Woman and Society in Eighteenth-Century France: Essays in Honour of J. S. Spink, eds. Eva Jacobs and others (London: The Athlone Press, 1979), 3-18; Elizabeth J. Gardner, "The Philosophes and Women: Sensationalism and Sentiment," in ibid., eds. Eva Jacobs and others, 19-28; Arthur Wilson, "'Treated Like Imbecile Children' (Diderot): The Enlightenment and The Status of Women," in Woman in the Eighteenth Century and other Essays, eds. Paul Fritz and Richard Morton (Toronto: Samuel Stevens Hakkert, 1976), 89-104; David Williams, "The Politics of Feminism in the French Enlightenment," chap. in The Varied Pattern: Studies in the Eighteenth Century, eds. Peter Hughes and David Williams (Toronto: A. M. Hakkert Ltd, 1971), 333-351; and Sylvana Tomaselli, "The Enlightenment Debate on Women" History Workshop Journal 19 (1985): 101-124 and "Reflections on the History of the Science of Woman," History of Science 29 (1991): 185-205.

³¹ Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, "Women and the Enlightenment," in Becoming Visible, eds. Renate Bridenthal, Claudia Koonz and Susan Stuard.

Archbishop Fénelon's L'Éducation des Filles (written in 1685 and first published in 1687) and on accounts of the school for young noblewomen founded in 1686 by Madame de Maintenon, Maison Royale de Saint Louis à Saint Cyr.³² Both these contributions to the debate on women's education had proposed a new identity for women as "devoted mother and knowledgeable homemaker," though ideals of educated domesticity were not seriously adopted in the earlier eighteenth century.

In succeeding years, the position of women was debated by the French philosophes, Voltaire (1694-1778), Montesquieu (1689-1755), Diderot (1713-1784) and Rousseau (1712-1778). Perhaps the most popular and contentious of these was Rousseau, whose Émile (1762) caused controversy in its depiction of Sophie, the perfect wife.³³ Numerous "minor" writers, including Madame Félicité Stéphanie Comtesse de Genlis (1746-1830), Madame de Miremont (1735-1811), Madame d'Épinay (1776-1783) and Madame le Prince de Beaumont (1711-1780) wrote educational texts which were, to some extent, responses to Rousseau, and though many took issue with aspects of his views on the education of women, few contradicted his emphasis on their subordinate domestic role.³⁴ In the period after the Revolution, particularly, the ideal of the

³² Abbé Salignac de la Mothe Fénelon, L'Éducation des filles (Paris: n.p., 1687). On women's education in eighteenth-century France, see Martine Sonnet, "A Daughter to Educate," in A History of Women in the West, vol 3, Renaissance and Enlightenment Paradoxes, eds. Natalie Zemon Davis and Arlette Farge, 101-131; and Samia I. Spencer, "Women and Education," chap. in French Women and the Age of Enlightenment.

³³ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Émile ou de L'Éducation, 4 tom. (Amsterdam: n.p., 1762) trans. as Emilius and Sophia: or a New System of Education (London: R. Griffiths and others, 1762). Rousseau's views on women have commonly been interpreted as misogynist. On this debate see Joel Schwarz, The Sexual Politics of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1984); Victor Wexler, "'Made for Men's Delight': Rousseau as Antifeminist," American Historical Review, 81 (1976): 266-291; Gita May, "Rousseau's Anti-feminism Reconsidered," in French Women and the Age of Enlightenment, ed. Samia I. Spencer, 309-317; and Ruth Graham, "Rousseau's Sexism Revolutionized" in Woman in the Eighteenth Century and other Essays, eds. Paul Fritz and Richard Morton, 127-140.

³⁴ For an indication of the varying views of women writers on the ideas of Rousseau, see Jean H. Bloch, "Woman and the Reform of the Nation," in Woman and Society in Eighteenth-Century France, eds. Eva Jacobs and others, 15-16. On the writings of Madame de Miremont, Madame de Genlis, Madame

bourgeois domestic mother and educator was consolidated and became widely accepted.³⁵

Between 1780-1820, a vigorous interchange of French and English ideas on the education of women took place. Several key French works for children were widely read in translation in Britain in the latter half of the eighteenth century. De Genlis's most famous educational writings, produced whilst she was governess to the family of the Duc de Chartres, are the linked works, Adèle et Théodore ou lettres sur l'éducation (1782) and Les Veillées du château (1784).³⁶ The first was an epistolary novel which explained de Genlis's educational vision; and the second a series of moral tales designed to show how her method worked. This combination of fictional tale and pedagogical exposition provided a model for British writers of educational works for children. Though the females who populate de Genlis's fiction are involved in the education of upper-class and royal children, and though their view of society, with its sharp distinctions between rich and poor, is different from that revealed by educators of the British middle-class tradition, there are nevertheless important connections to be made

D'Épinay and Madame le Prince de Beaumont see "Women and Education," chap. in French Women and the Age of Enlightenment, ed. Samia I. Spencer.

³⁵ Elizabeth Fox-Genovese supports this chronology by suggesting that ideas of domesticity, mother's nursing, maternal education and marriage for affection were without "a clear social foundation" and were probably "implemented piecemeal" before the French Revolution, "Introduction" to French Women and the Age of Enlightenment, ed. Samia I. Spencer. 1-29, here 15-16.

³⁶ The most important of de Genlis's works as far as the English tradition is concerned are as follows: Leçons d'une gouvernante à ses élèves: ou, fragmens d'un journal, qui a été fait pour l'éducation des enfans de monsieur d'Orléans, 2 tom. (Paris: n.p., 1791) trans. as Lessons of a Governess to her Pupils, 3 vols. (London: G.G.J. and J. Robinson, 1792); Théâtre à l'usage des jeunes personnes, 4 tom. (Dublin: Luc White, 1781) trans. as Theatre of Education (London: T. Cadell and P. Elmsly, 1781); Les Veillées du château: ou, cours de morales à l'usage des enfans, 3 tom. (Paris: n.p., 1784) trans. as Tales of the Castle: or, Stories of Instruction and Delight, 4 vols. (Dublin: Price and others, 1785); and Adèle et Théodore: ou, lettres sur l'éducation contenant tous les principes relatifs aux trois différens plans d'éducation des princes, des jeunes personnes et des hommes, 3 tom. (Paris, n.p., 1782) trans. as Adelaide and Theodore: or, Letters on Education Containing all the Principles Relative to Three Different Plans of Education, 3 vols. (London: C. Bathurst and T. Cadell, 1783).

between the two genres.³⁷

The exchange of French and English educational ideas flourished, not least because English governesses were hired in France and French ones in England.³⁸ Madame le Prince de Beaumont, for example, worked as a governess to a number of English families between 1742 and 1762. Her works Le Magasin des enfans (1756) and L'Éducation complète ou abrégée (1803) were popular in England, as was Madame d'Épinay's Conversations d'Émilie (1726-1783).³⁹ English writers were also interested in French schools for girls. In her Plans for Education (1791), Clara Reeve was to recommend the founding of schools such as Madame de Maintenon's at St Cyr.⁴⁰ Clearly then French women writers provided precedents for a female pedagogical voice which was imitated and developed by their British counterparts. Indeed it seems likely that women writers on education in Britain in the late eighteenth century drew on a French debate that was both philosophical and popular, and that was already deeply divided - though not always systematically - along gender lines.

c) Histories of the Family and Childhood

In addition to histories of French Enlightenment thought, histories of the family, childhood and motherhood provide evidence of women's role as pedagogues. While

³⁷ For a fuller examination of the educational works of Madame de Genlis and their implications for "educating heroinism," Ellen Moers, Literary Women (London: The Women's Press, 1977), 224-225.

³⁸ Samia Spencer comments that Madame de Genlis hired an English governess, Miss Bridget, to help her, "Women and Education," chap. in French Women and the Age of Enlightenment, 91.

³⁹ Madame Jeanne Marie le Prince de Beaumont, Le Magasin des Enfants (London: J. Haberkorn, 1756); L'Éducation complète ou abrégé de l'histoire universelle mêlée de géographie et de chronologie, 4 tom. (Paris: Billois, 1803) and Madame d'Épinay, Les Conversations d'Émilie (Paris et Liège: Plombeux, 1784).

⁴⁰ Clara Reeve, Plans for Education with Remarks on the System of Other Writers: in a Series of Letters between Mrs Darnford and her Friends (London: T. Hookham and J. Carpenter, 1792).

Lawrence Stone has suggested that the late eighteenth century saw a reconstitution of the family with a strengthening of patriarchal authority, recent research supports the idea that the pedagogical duties of mothers became more important towards the end of the eighteenth century in America, France and Britain.⁴¹ Ruth H. Bloch, for example, describes a shift in the position of middle-class mothers within the family economy in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century America.⁴² She suggests that the sharing out of domestic and business responsibilities amongst fathers, mothers and servants that had typified the early eighteenth century was being replaced by a separation of home and work life. With the increasing physical removal of the father to the place of work, the role of the mother came to focus on the domestic environment and hence, inevitably, on the upbringing of very young children. Attributes which had previously been thought to render women less capable than men, such as a greater sensibility, were reformulated as virtues in a world in which women were less directly engaged in economic production and more involved in "education." Mary P. Ryan has likewise argued for the importance of the changing history of the family in early nineteenth-century America, suggesting that "the idea of fatherhood itself seemed to wither away in this period" and that "motherlove was the linchpin in a new method of socialising children."⁴³

These findings in American history are borne out by research into British history for the

⁴¹ Lawrence Stone, The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800 (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979), 151-218. The concept of a changing history of motherhood has posed a problem for feminist historians, who, on the one hand, may be politically committed to demonstrating the continuity of women's oppression on the grounds of reproduction and who are yet struggling, from the same political imperative, to provide women with a meaningful and changing history. See Judith Bennett, "History that Stands Still: Women's Work in the European Past," Feminist Studies.

⁴² Ruth H. Bloch, "American Feminine Ideals in Transition: The Rise of the Moral Mother, 1785-1815," Feminist Studies 4:2 (June 1978): 101-126.

⁴³ Mary P. Ryan, Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida Country, New York, 1790-1865 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 232.

same period. Davidoff and Hall suggest that a notion of "professional motherhood" was clearly articulated in the 1830s and 1840s but that discursive shifts had been made earlier.⁴⁴ Certainly, a greater number of children were surviving into late infancy in this period; new legislation meant that infanticide and child abandonment were more severely punished, and a growing middle-class consciousness contributed to the suspicion that servants, particularly female servants, and especially wet-nurses, might be responsible for corrupting the minds of young children.⁴⁵ Scholars tend to agree that a new importance was attributed to the child as the eighteenth century drew to a close.⁴⁶ This emphasis on the child fed into and, in turn, was reinforced by the rise of the literary preceptress in the same period.

d) Histories of Feminist Politics

The rise of the woman educator may also be traced in histories of women's political and feminist consciousness for this period. Gary Kelly's Women, Writing and Revolution 1790-1827 suggests that women's supervision of the domestic education of their children was considered an integral part of "the ideological and cultural reproduction that is the basis of the state."⁴⁷ Kelly shows how the involvement of women writers in debates on education often acted as a rehearsal for their intervention in political discourse. The

⁴⁴ Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, Family Fortunes, 175.

⁴⁵ Bogna W. Lorence has identified an enormous number of changes in advice about child-rearing in Britain in the middle of the eighteenth century, "Parents and Children in Eighteenth-Century Europe," History of Childhood Quarterly: The Journal of Psychohistory 2:1 (Summer 1974): 1-30. Paul Langford attests to both the increased interest in the welfare of children from the 1760s onwards and to the improved survival rates for children of upper and middle-class families, A Polite and Commercial People: England, 1727-1783 (London: Guild Publishing, 1989).

⁴⁶ J. H. Plumb, "The New World of Children in Eighteenth-Century England," Past and Present 67 (May 1975): 64-93; Ivy Pinchbeck and Margaret Hewitt, Children in English Society from Tudor Times to the Eighteenth Century (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969); and Rosamund Bayne Powell, The English Child in the Eighteenth Century (London: John Murray, 1939). See also my Chapter 1.

⁴⁷ Gary Kelly, Women, Writing and Revolution 1790-1827.

capacity to reason, for example, was integral to arguments about the education of middle-class females as well as to late eighteenth-century political debates about citizenship and democracy.⁴⁸ In the 1790s, these different areas of public concern thus employed a common language and were intimately connected.

Vivien Jones's recent anthology of writings by and about women in the eighteenth century likewise recognises education as "the issue on which feminists began to challenge assumptions about women's natural inferiority, offering telling critiques of the conduct book construction of femininity."⁴⁹ Jane Rendall's work on "educating hearts and minds", which forms part of a larger project to trace the origins of modern feminism, goes much further in its identification of the importance of women's education to the growth of their political consciousness.⁵⁰ Arguments for the rights of women do not feature prominently in my thesis, though the rational mentor figure evidently provided a representation of womanhood that could be used to further women's claims to citizenship. In Chapter 3, I touch on connections between women's political and educational history by suggesting that Mary Wollstonecraft's political manifesto, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, may be partly contextualised within educational debates on women's reading in the period 1780-1820.⁵¹

From a number of related histories, then, and from the few secondary and numerous

⁴⁸ On feminist ideas in the eighteenth century, see Katharine M. Rogers, Feminism in Eighteenth-Century England (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1982).

⁴⁹ Vivien Jones, Women in the Eighteenth Century: Constructions of Femininity (London: Routledge, 1990), 98.

⁵⁰ Jane Rendall, The Origins of Modern Feminism: Women in Britain, France and The United States, 1780-1860 (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1985).

⁵¹ Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (London: J. Johnson, 1792).

primary sources available, it is possible to trace a growing interest in education by and for women in late eighteenth-century Britain and to discern the preceptress as the key focus of this interest. To understand the interchange between French and British educational ideas and between political and educational themes, it is important to explore the contexts from which such interchanges issued. This involves identifying the milieux most receptive to and most involved in new and enlightened ideas on education.

e) Religion and Enlightenment

In the late eighteenth century a number of specific religious and social groupings focused on women's abilities as educators. The viewpoints represented by these groups and two approaches to education in particular - the "evangelical" and "enlightened" - require examination. As I shall show, the evangelical and enlightened preceptresses shared certain characteristics and aims, though they were sometimes figured as distinct from one another in educational writings. In this section, I begin by examining evangelical ideas about education with a view to highlighting what was general and what was distinctive about that "enlightened" educational discourse I discern in the cluster of writings reviewed in this thesis.

From the 1730s onwards, evangelicals both within and outside the Church of England had focused on education as an important source of the religious rejuvenation of society.⁵² The premises of evangelical education were fairly straightforward. Children

⁵² The evangelical interest in education is discussed by Paul Sangster, Pity My Simplicity: The Evangelical Revival and the Religious Education of Children, 1738-1800 (Buckinghamshire: The Epworth Press, 1963); A. H. Body, John Wesley and Education (London: The Epworth Press 1936); A. E. Dobbs, Education and Social Movements (London: Longman, 1919); Nicholas Hans, New Trends in Education in the Eighteenth Century (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1950); T. B. Shepherd, Methodism and the Literature of the Eighteenth Century (London: The Epworth Press, 1940); and Doreen Rosman, Evangelicals and Culture (London: Croom Helm, 1984).

were born in original sin and it was the task of parents to educate their children in the direction of salvation. The prime object of education was the saving of souls and this might be achieved by a number of educational methods: through prayers, the singing of hymns, the frequent reading of the Bible, and the recital of catechisms. Mother-educators were expected to subdue or break the will of children: a project considered imperative before a good religious education could properly begin. Though, in some respects, evangelicalism subordinated women to men, it was also responsible, as Jane Rendall has shown, for exalting the position of women and equating feminine qualities with ideal devotional qualities.⁵³ Certainly many evangelical women of the middling classes asserted a degree of independence by helping to instigate and run the Sunday School Movement and to establish many charity schools.⁵⁴ In evangelical thinking, pedagogy went hand-in-hand with notions of appropriate femininity.

In accordance with their fervent desire to redeem young people, a number of prominent evangelicals wrote treatises on educational subjects. Some of these, including Thomas Gisborne's An Enquiry into the Duties of the Female Sex (1798) and Hannah More's Strictures on Female Education (1799), addressed the vexed question of a suitable education for women.⁵⁵ Others, including John Janeway (1636-1674), John Wright

⁵³ On the influence of evangelicalism on the status of women see Jane Rendall, The Origins of Modern Feminism, 73-107. See also Gail Malmgreen, ed. Religion in the Lives of English Women, 1760-1930 (London: Croom Helm, 1986). On the paradoxical position of women in Anglicanism, see Sean Gill, Women and The Church of England, 30-31.

⁵⁴ M. G. Jones, The Charity School Movement in the Eighteenth Century (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938) and Thomas Laqueur, Religion and Respectability: Sunday Schools and Working-Class Culture, 1780-1850 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976).

⁵⁵ Thomas Gisborne, An Enquiry into the Duties of the Female Sex (1797), 8th ed. (London: T. Cadell and W. Davis in the Strand, 1808); and Hannah More, Strictures on Female Education with a View of the Principles and Conduct Prevalent Among Women of Rank and Fortune, 2 vols. (London: T. Cadell Jr. and W. Davis, 1799).

(1770-1844) and John Wesley (1703-91) wrote books for children.⁵⁶ Towards the end of the eighteenth century, a number of women writers including More (1745-1833) and Mrs Trimmer (1741-1810) wrote evangelical tracts for children, many of which were used in such schools.⁵⁷

The evangelical view of children's education was an appealing one but it came under attack during the late eighteenth century for its emotionalism and excessive spirituality and for its lack of system. Paul Sangster has pointed out that evangelicals were more likely to react against than to emulate the important philosophical educational theories of the eighteenth century.⁵⁸ Critics of evangelicalism disagreed with its emphasis on the original sin of children and its interest in rewards in heaven rather than the betterment of life on earth. Partly in response to the extravagance of evangelical education, and partly because its own emphasis on "usefulness" appealed to the other kinds of religious groups in Britain at this time, a more "enlightened", "rationalist," or "liberal" approach to education came to develop from the 1760s onwards. This view of education, as I discuss below, encompassed both the rational ideas of the Enlightenment and a notion of moral sensibility. It was espoused by an identifiable group of men and

⁵⁶ John Janeway, A Token for Children: Being an Exact Account of the Conversion, Holy and Exemplary Lives and Joyful Deaths of Several Young Children (Boston in New England: John Phillips, 1728); John Wesley, ed. An Extract from Miss Mary Gilbert's Journal, (Chester: J. Harrie, 1768); J Wright, Spiritual Songs for Children: or, Poems on Several Subjects and Occasions (London: Joseph Marshall, 1727).

⁵⁷ Hannah More, Cheap Repository Tracts (London: Joseph Marshall, 1795-1798). On Hannah More's contribution to the debates on women and education, see Mitzi Myers, "Hannah More's Tracts for the Times: Social Fiction and Female Ideology," in Fetter'd or Free: British Women Novelists, 1670-1815, eds. Mary Anne Schofield and Cecilia Macheski (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1986), 264-284. Mrs Sarah Trimmer's popular works included: The History of the Robins: or, Fabulous Histories Designed for the Instruction of Children Respecting Their Treatment of Animals (London: T. Longman, G.G.J. and J. Robinson, 1788) and Scripture Lessons Designed to Accompany a Series of Prints from the Old Testament (London: J. Marshall, 1797).

⁵⁸ Paul Sangster, Pity My Simplicity, 25. Sangster devotes little attention to non-evangelical educationalists though he recognises their influence.

women who subscribed, to a greater or lesser extent, to the theological views and political liberalism associated with rational dissent in England, or who were associated in one way or another with the moderate Presbyterianism of the Scottish Universities.⁵⁹ A number of liberal Anglicans also supported a more rational and moral view of education.

In England, a number of men had advocated enlightened educational ideas from the 1760s onwards. In 1766, the Lunar Society met regularly in Birmingham to discuss technological ideas and related educational issues.⁶⁰ The society included the poet and doctor, Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802), the liberal Richard Lovell Edgeworth (1744-1817), the Unitarian polemicist, Joseph Priestley (1733-1804), and the eccentric educationalist, Thomas Day (1748-89). The enlightened ideas discussed by the Lunar Society flourished in provincial towns across the country. Brian Simon describes a contingent of middle-class men who were absorbed in the creation of new industrial processes, in developing civic life, in scientific enquiry, in art and in literature. Many of the key figures among this group were educated in the dissenting academies established in the provincial manufacturing towns of Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, York, Leeds and Warrington. Though these colleges appealed to a wide range of nonconformists, a

⁵⁹ I follow John Seed's definition of rational dissent, "Gentlemen Dissenters: The Social and Political Meanings of Rational Dissent in the 1770s and 1780s," The Historical Journal 28:2 (1985): 299-325, here 300, n.11, "I use rational dissent, as did contemporaries, to designate those dissenting congregations, usually presbyterian in origin, which were in the process of becoming Unitarian but which embraced an internal diversity of theological opinion." Seed points out that rational dissent was unrepresentative of dissent as a whole in the 1770s and 1780s both in terms of the social position of its members and in terms of its moral ethos, 323.

⁶⁰ For a concise summary of the activities of these rational educationalists, see Brian Simon, Studies in the History of Education, 1780-1870, 17-71. Simon gives the date for the establishment of the Lunar Society as 1766, though he suggests it may have begun slightly earlier. See also Robert Edwin Schofield, The Lunar Society of Birmingham: A Social History of Provincial Science and Industry in Eighteenth-Century England (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963) and Joseph Priestley, Autobiography of Joseph Priestley: Memoirs Written by Himself: An Account of Further Discoveries in Air, ed. Jack Lindsay (London: Adams and Dart, 1970).

significant number of those attending were Unitarians.⁶¹ From the 1770s onwards, there existed a number of centres in London for the dissemination of political and religious dissent, including Hackney College, Newington Green and, in 1773, the first Unitarian chapel in Essex Street. Meanwhile, the rationalist approach to education also flourished in the moral and intellectual climate of the Scottish Enlightenment, especially at the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh.⁶²

In the dissenting academies, and particularly at Warrington, teachers and students such as Dr Thomas Percival (1740-1818), Gilbert Wakefield (1756-1801), Joseph Priestley (1733-1804) and John Aikin (1747-1822) held similar liberal opinions on a number of religious, political, civil and educational matters.⁶³ Crucially, these rationalists believed that education was the key to improvements in society. Specifically, they opposed the "narrow" classical curriculum of the contemporary grammar and public schools as well as of Oxford and Cambridge, and substituted a more practical and technological education which they regarded as fitted to a newly industrialised society.⁶⁴ Enlightened thinkers suggested broadening the male curriculum to include history, geography, science

⁶¹ For the background to Unitarianism in this period, see Chapter 4, 224.

⁶² For the Scottish moral theorists and their interest in education, see John Dwyer, Virtuous Discourse: Sensibility and Community in Late Eighteenth-Century Scotland (Edinburgh: John Donald Publications, 1987).

⁶³ On the academy at Warrington, see P. O'Brien, Warrington Academy, 1757-1786, its Predecessors and Successors (Wigan: Owl Books, 1989); and H. McLachlan, English Education Under the Test Acts (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1931). See also John Seed, "Theologies of Power: Unitarianism and the Social Relations of Religious Discourse, 1800-1850" in Class, Power and Social Structure in British Nineteenth-Century Towns, ed. R. J. Morris (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1986) and John Seed, "The Role of Unitarianism in the Formation of Liberal Culture: A Social History," (Ph.D. diss.: University of Hull, 1984). See also James E. Bradley, Religion, Revolution and English Radicalism: NonConformity in Eighteenth-Century Politics and Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

⁶⁴ See J. D. Browning, ed., Education in the Eighteenth Century, with an introduction by Annette Bridgman (New York: Garland Publishing Incorporated, 1979). Richard Thompson, Classics or Charity?: The Dilemma of the Eighteenth-Century Grammar School (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1971) comments on the generally perceived "decay" in the grammar schools in this period.

and modern languages. There was also a greater emphasis than hitherto on the moral well-being of the child and a fear of the potentially corruptive influence of schools. The enlightened view of education significantly influenced the teaching of boys in the last decades of the eighteenth century and appealed simultaneously to sections of the gentry, the intellectual élite and to the middling classes.

The enlightened educationalists adopted certain secular educational theories about the operation of the mind. Rather than considering children as the unfortunate vessels of original sin, they held with Locke that the mind of a child was a "tabula rasa" which could be perfected by adaptations made to the learning environment.⁶⁵ Locke had put forward a psychological theory for the workings of the mind which he called the association of ideas.⁶⁶ The theory of association was to infiltrate intellectual thinking in the eighteenth century in a number of fields but it had particular resonances for the history of education.⁶⁷ In a chapter attached to the fourth edition of his Essay on Human Understanding published in 1700, Locke described association as "a combination of ideas" and implied that good associations based on reason were fundamental to the

⁶⁵ Locke's ideas contradicted Descartes's belief in "innate knowledge" and in the importance of free will. "Association" advanced the idea that man was born with no innate knowledge and had to experience to learn. This view suggested that man's free will was less important than the influences of his environment. Locke continued to maintain a belief in the mind/body split of Cartesian philosophy. It was David Hartley who suggested a close relationship between the corporeal and the mental. See 38

⁶⁶ John Locke, Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690), ed. John W. Yolton (London: J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd, 1965). For an explanation of the development of the theory of association through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see Robert M. Young, "The Association of Ideas," in Dictionary of the History of Ideas: Studies of Selected Pivotal Ideas, ed. Phillip Wiener (New York: Scribner's, 1968) 1:111-118.

⁶⁷ The relationship of the theory of association both to educational practice and to eighteenth-century ideas of progress in general is described by David Spadafora, "Medicine of the Mind," chap. in The Idea of Progress in Eighteenth-Century Britain (London: Yale University Press, 1990), 135-178. Martin Kallich examines how association came to structure aesthetic theories of the period in The Association of Ideas and Critical Theory in Eighteenth-Century England: A History of a Psychological Method in English Criticism (The Hague: Mouton, 1970).

proper acquisition of knowledge. He accentuated the dangers of bad associations which, he explained, were ideas which had become combined simply through chance or custom:

There is another connexion of ideas owing wholly to chance or custom; ideas, that in themselves are not at all of kin, come to be so united in men's minds that it is very hard to separate them, they always keep in company, and the one no sooner at any time comes into the understanding but its associate appears with it; and if they are more than two which are thus united, the whole gang, which are always inseparable, show themselves together.⁶⁸

This theory was developed and expanded by David Hartley in his Observations on Man (1749).⁶⁹ According to Hartley, as Basil Willey noted, association explained "not only the mechanism of all our mental processes, but also the evolution of our moral characters from childhood to manhood, and the development of our moral sense out of simple sensation."⁷⁰

Hartley asserted a connection between corporeal sensation and mental changes. Just as the lower functions such as the sensations of smell and taste, were ascribable to physical factors, the higher mental faculties, such as the capacity for intellectual ideas and moral sense, originated as vibrations in the nervous system. Hartley's "vibrations" were the basis of the eighteenth-century cult of sensibility in which physical and mental states of

⁶⁸ John Locke, Essay on Human Understanding, 40.

⁶⁹ David Hartley, Observations on Man, his Frame, his Duty and His Expectations (1749) (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1967). On Hartley's associationist ideas, see Robert M. Young, "David Hartley," in Dictionary of Scientific Biography, ed. C. C. Gillespie (New York: Scribner's, 1970-1975) 3: 250-256 and Barbara Bowen Oberg, "David Hartley and the Association of Ideas," Journal of the History of Ideas 37 (July-Sept 1976): 441-453.

⁷⁰ Basil Willey, The Eighteenth-Century Background: Studies in the Idea of Nature in the Thought of the Period (London: Chatto and Windus, 1940), 132.

being were linked.⁷¹

The extent to which the theory of association was understood as a paradigm for learning differed among the better-known educational philosophers. There was a crucial division, for example, between those who followed Hartley and John Gay in the belief that all ideas were the product of associations of ideas, and those, mainly Scots, who adopted the view of Francis Hutcheson that man was born with an innate moral sense.⁷² Questions about the source and operations of moral ideas were at the centre of educational debate from the 1740s onwards and rationalist educational treatises consequently included ideas about "moral feeling" alongside discussions of reason. Educationalists were quick to see the potential of association for pedagogy. Teachers were required repeatedly to present objects and ideas to their charges and to ensure that such objects and ideas were consistently associated with the sensations of "pleasure" or "pain." Providing that minds were in a healthy state of association, they could learn anything from basic physical sensations to complex moral ideas.⁷³

Such ideas were promulgated particularly by a number of students and teachers at the

⁷¹ Karl M. Figlio has described the increasing relation of the corporeal and the mental in eighteenth-century thought in "Theories of Perception and the Physiology of the Mind in the Late Eighteenth Century," History of Science 13 (1975): 177-212. I consider the relationship between sensibility and gender and its implications for educational discourse below, 56.

⁷² Francis Hutcheson, An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections with Illustrations on the Moral Sense (1725) in British Moralists: Being Selections from Writers Principally of the Eighteenth Century, 2 vols., ed. L.A. Selby-Bigge, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897), 1:431-446 and John Gay, "Preliminary Dissertation Concerning the Fundamental Principle of Virtue and Morality," (1731) in Ibid., ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, 2:267-285.

⁷³ In The Eighteenth-Century Background, Basil Willey describes Hartley's views of the moral sense thus, "Moral sense is not inborn, but acquired through the association of pleasurable sensations with certain objects. We can, of course, associate pleasure with the wrong objects, but the world was in fact designed by Providence as a system of benevolence, so that ideally or under a proper educational regimen, we should grow up properly," 271.

Scottish universities. The distinctive Scottish approach to knowledge focused on a scientific study of the mind, empirical investigation of its operations and analysis of the manner of socialisation.⁷⁴ Essentially replacing a classical political view of mankind with a sociological view, this approach included an important reassessment of the processes and significance of education. The process by which the mind came to acquire knowledge and beliefs about the world and particularly to understand ideas about "virtue" and "propriety" came to be known as a "moral education" and included a notion of the improvability and perfectibility of mankind. The mind was perceived as pliable and hence susceptible to the influences of its external environment, including the activities of parents and other educators.⁷⁵ The rational and moral approach to knowledge, the philosophy of the mind, empirical investigation and analysis of the processes of socialisation were subjects consistently taught in both the Scottish universities and in the dissenting academies in England in this period.⁷⁶ In the last twenty years of the eighteenth century, the ideas of Hartley were widely read in dissenting circles, partly as a result of Joseph Priestley's popularisation of Hartley in 1775.⁷⁷ There was some interest too in the implications of such a philosophy for education from within the liberal wing of Anglicanism, particularly among those who

⁷⁴ See Nicholas Phillipson, "The Scottish Enlightenment," chap. in The Enlightenment in National Context, ed. Roy Porter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 19-40. Those rationalist thinkers educated at the Scots universities came under the influence of the philosopher, Dugald Stewart, whose Outlines of Moral Philosophy for the Use of Students in the University of Edinburgh (London: William Creech and T. Cadell, 1743) was a key work in the debates on moral philosophy in the Scottish Enlightenment and dealt with the theory of association in some detail.

⁷⁵ David Spadafora, The Idea of Progress in Eighteenth-Century Britain, 149, and 176-177.

⁷⁶ On the influence of "Scotch knowledge" on English society in this period, see Anand C. Chitnis, The Scottish Enlightenment and Early Victorian English Society (London: Croom Helm, 1986).

⁷⁷ Joseph Priestley, ed., Hartley's Theory of the Human Mind (London: n.p., 1775). On Priestley's educational views and associationist philosophy, see Ruth Watts, "Joseph Priestley and Education," Enlightenment and Dissent 2 (1983): 84-100. The increased popular interest in association at the end of the eighteenth century is described by Martin Kallich in The Association of Ideas and Critical Theory in Eighteenth-Century England, 217.

eschewed the fervour and "enthusiasm" of evangelicalism.

I have suggested that such ideas had a direct influence on changes in boys' education in the last decades of the eighteenth century. The new principles, including the broadening of the curriculum and the emphasis on moral feeling, may also be interpreted as a "feminisation" of formal education, since they embodied principles which, I shall show, were concurrently informing the education of girls.⁷⁸ The acknowledged applicability of enlightened ideas to female education is illustrated by the fact that several male educationalists from this tradition wrote works directed at the education of the very young of both sexes within the home and occasionally at older girls.⁷⁹ Such works, together with those by the women writers I discuss below, came to embrace a far-reaching and incisive critique of the contemporary education of females and to forward detailed programmes for its improvement.

Many women educationalists were broadly sympathetic to the radical or liberal political and religious views espoused by the male writers I have mentioned above. For some, as I shall show, the "rational view" was a matter of theological conviction; for others it was more a matter of social or political orientation: a belief that the world might be improved by a rigorous moral and domestic education for women. Just as evangelicalism stressed the importance of women in the education of their children, rational religion and

⁷⁸ The interest among the Scottish intellectual élite in male education in this period (in works of advice and in the periodical press) is detailed by John Dwyer, "The Construction of Adolescence in Late Eighteenth-Century Scotland," chap. in Virtuous Discourse, 72-94.

⁷⁹ See for example Thomas Day, Sandford and Merton: A Work Intended for the Use of Children (London: J. Stockdale, 1783-1789); Maria and Richard Lovell Edgeworth, Practical Education (London: J. Johnson, 1798); Dr Thomas Percival, A Father's Instructions to his Children: Consisting of Tales, Fables and Reflections Designed to Promote the Love of Virtue, A Taste for Knowledge and An Early Acquaintance with the Works of Nature, 2 vols. (London: J. Johnson, 1776); and Erasmus Darwin, Plan for the Content of Female Education in Boarding Schools (London: J. Johnson, 1797). I consider some of these books in Chapter 1.

the political views associated with it contributed to a favourable reassessment of the position of women in culture. Gary Kelly has shown how rational dissent may have been particularly congenial to intellectual women.⁸⁰ The rhetoric of political and religious toleration advanced by enlightened thinkers often included an appeal for the fairer treatment of women. Such an appeal, though it might scarcely be called "feminist", affirmed the educability of women, the benefits to be achieved by marrying rational wives and the key role of women as educators in families and schools.⁸¹

f) Biographical Approaches

Though by no means all women writers on education were well-versed in the rationalist philosophies propounded by the theologians, educationalists and scientists of the age, I will demonstrate that many such women nevertheless had significant access to rational views. Scattered geographically (though, as I will argue, still constituting a recognisable network), many of them had connections with the provincial seats of dissent, the dissenting communities of London, or the moderate Presbyterian circles around the Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow. As women, these writers were, of course, excluded from any of the dissenting colleges in England and from the Scottish Universities. As will be seen, however, they were associated with intellectual dissenting circles in a number of other ways: through birth, circumstance, correspondence and conversation, through their own reading, and through acquaintance with the liberal publisher Joseph Johnson (1738-1809).

⁸⁰ Gary Kelly's work has investigated the writings of several women linked to this rational tradition; see his Revolutionary Feminism: The Mind and Career of Mary Wollstonecraft (New York: St Martin's Press, 1992). In Women, Writing and Revolution, 1790-1827, Kelly looks at the writings of three women within this tradition: Helen Maria Williams, Mary Hays and Elizabeth Hamilton.

⁸¹ Claire Tomalin, for example, has noted the compatibility of Mary Wollstonecraft's views on the relationship between the sexes with her sympathy with dissent, The Life and Death of Mary Wollstonecraft (1974) (London: Penguin, 1992), 35.

Some women educationalists were the relatives of students and tutors at the English dissenting academies. Anna Laetitia Barbauld (1743-1825), for example, was the daughter of Dr Aikin, a prominent nonconformist minister who became one of the teachers at the newly-established academy in Warrington in 1757.⁸² The atmosphere of political liberalism in which she grew up is evident in her later writings, in which she appeals for the abolition of slavery and for freedom of public worship. The far less well-known Catharine Cappe (1745-1821), meanwhile, was connected to the dissenting community in Yorkshire. Born an Anglican, she seceded from the Church in 1775 and joined Joseph Priestley's Unitarian chapel in Millhill, Leeds. Cappe was a close friend of the Unitarian minister Theophilus Lindsey and his wife Hannah. In 1773, she supported the Lindseys' move to London where they started the first Unitarian chapel in Essex Street. Cappe later married the Unitarian minister Newcombe Cappe, and devoted her time to transcribing his sermons. She was also involved in founding the academy in York for dissenting ministers in 1803. Cappe's husband had read and criticised Hartley with a view to republishing his works, and it is evident from Cappe's Memoir that she knew and understood Hartley's theory of association.⁸³

Whilst Barbauld and Cappe were committed to the theological tenets of rational religion,

⁸² See Janet Todd, ed., A Dictionary of British and American Women Writers, 1660-1800 (London: Methuen, 1987), 36-38. Biographical works on Mrs Barbauld include: Lucy Aikin, The Works of Anna Laetitia Barbauld with a Memoir by Lucy Aikin (Boston: David Reed, 1826); Clara Lucas Balfour, A Sketch of Mrs Barbauld (London: W. and F. G. Cash, 1854); Jerome Murch, Mrs Barbauld and her Contemporaries: Sketches of Some Eminent Literary and Scientific Englishwomen (London: n. p., 1877); Anne Isabelle Thackeray, A Book of Sibyls: Mrs Barbauld, Miss Edgeworth, Miss Opie, Miss Austen (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1883); Grace A. Oliver, Tales, Poems and Essays by Anna Laetitia Barbauld with a Biographical Sketch (Boston: Robert Bros., 1884); Anna Laetitia Le Breton, Memoirs of Mrs Barbauld Including Letters and Notices of her Family and Friends (London: n.p., 1874) and Betsy Rodgers, Georgian Chronicle: Mrs Barbauld and her Family (London: Methuen, 1958).

⁸³ Cappe's husband had made notes on Hartley's Observations on Man, as she records in her preface to Reverend Newcombe Cappe, Discourses Chiefly on Devotional Subjects: to which are Prefixed Memoirs of his Life by Catharine Cappe (York: T. Wilson and R. Spence, 1805), lxxiv.

other female educationalists remained within the Anglican church but, to a greater or lesser degree, came to share some of the liberal political and religious views of the rational dissenters. The support for political and social equality registered in Charlotte Smith's novels, for example, has been attributed to the influence of the novels of revolutionary writers including Thomas Holcroft (1745-1809), Robert Bage (1720-1801), William Godwin (1756-1836), Mrs Inchbald (1753-1821) and Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-97).⁸⁴ The less well-documented but prolific author Clara Reeve (1729-1807) was also an Anglican with progressive political views.⁸⁵ Though her novels and works of education steer clear of political issues for the most part, her emphasis on reason and moral judgement as a means to an improved social order, and her enthusiastic portrayal of the middle-class heroine, are consistent with enlightened beliefs.⁸⁶

These beliefs appealed to intellectual women in other parts of Britain. Elizabeth Hamilton (1758-1816), who spent the greater part of her life in Edinburgh, was strongly influenced by the writings of the Scottish Enlightenment. In a recent analysis of her educational work, Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education (1801), Gary Kelly points out Hamilton's reworking of the moral and educational ideas of rationalist philosophers such as Dugald Stewart and Thomas Reid (1710-1796), as well as of Joseph Priestley (1733-1804).⁸⁷ Hamilton's work shows familiarity with enlightened

⁸⁴ Florence May Anna Hilbish, Charlotte Smith: Poet and Novelist, 1749-1806 (London: The Mitre Press, 1941), 510-520.

⁸⁵ See my biographical background to Reeve in Chapter 3, 189 .

⁸⁶ Janet Todd, ed., A Dictionary of British and American Women Writers, 1660-1800, 266-268.

⁸⁷ Elizabeth Hamilton, Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education, 2nd ed. (Bath: R. Cruthwell, 1801). Gary Kelly describes Hamilton's life and career in its "anti-feminist" and "pro-feminist" phases in, Women, Writing and Revolution, 1790-1827, 126-161 and 265-304, here 265. For the life-history of Elizabeth Hamilton see Elizabeth Benger, Memoirs of the Late Mrs Elizabeth Hamilton with a Selection from her Correspondence and other Unpublished Writings, 2nd ed. (London: Longman, Hall, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1819).

educational ideas and, like Catharine Cappe, her writings emphasise the practical application of the theory of association. Though resident in Ireland, the prolific educational writer Maria Edgeworth kept in close contact with the ideas of the enlightened circles through correspondence with and visits from the friends of her father, Richard Lovell Edgeworth (including members of the Lunar Society).⁸⁸ The Edgeworths were generally considered to be of liberal sympathies and to support the Revolution in France.

Though they rarely wrote straightforwardly on explicitly political themes, the writers named above seem to have shared certain liberal sympathies. Mary Wollstonecraft, on the other hand, was more forthright in her political affiliations. Her association with dissenting circles began in 1784 when she moved to Newington Green to open a school for girls with her two sisters.⁸⁹ Here, living and working amongst a community of dissenters, she developed an intellectual friendship with the minister and polemicist, Richard Price.⁹⁰ Wollstonecraft, though she remained an Anglican, visited Price's

⁸⁸ Maria Edgeworth (1768-1849). For a full-length biography of Edgeworth see Marilyn Butler, Maria Edgeworth: A Literary Biography (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972). See also Janet Todd A Dictionary of British and American Women Writers, 1660-1800, 110-112.

⁸⁹ For biographical information on Mary Wollstonecraft see, Claire Tomalin, The Life and Death of Mary Wollstonecraft, 30-35; Gary Kelly, Revolutionary Feminism; and Ralph M. Wardle, Mary Wollstonecraft: The Collected Letters (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979). For a résumé of Wollstonecraft's writing, see Harriet Devine Jump, Mary Wollstonecraft: Writer (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1994) and Moira Ferguson, "Introduction" to Mary Wollstonecraft: The Female Reader (1797): A Facsimile Reproduction (New York: Scholars' Facsimile and Reprints, Delnor, 1980). On Mary Wollstonecraft's views of women's role see Barbara Taylor, "Mary Wollstonecraft and the Wild Wish of Early Feminism," History Workshop Journal 33 (1992): 197-219.

⁹⁰ Gary Kelly attributes Wollstonecraft's gradual move towards liberal ideas to her friendship in this period with Hannah Burgh, the wife of Dr James Burgh, dissenting academy lecturer and moral and educational writer. Another prominent dissenter and friend, Richard Price, wrote Review of the Principal Questions and Difficulties in Morals (London: n.p., 1758) - a text which, it is believed, influenced Wollstonecraft greatly. Gary Kelly, Revolutionary Feminism, 27-28.

chapel as frequently as she visited church.⁹¹ Later, in accordance with her revolutionary sympathies, she went to Paris to witness the aftermath of the Revolution. She married the radical William Godwin in 1797.

Whilst Mary Wollstonecraft's political sympathies are widely known, those of her younger contemporary, Jane Austen, are less clear. From her lack of evangelical fervour, from the secular tone of her writing, and from her satirical treatment of clergymen, however, it would seem that her religious beliefs tended towards the liberal wing of Anglicanism.⁹² As we shall see, Austen's novels owe a clear debt to the educational traditions uncovered in this thesis; her heroines are distinguishable by their sense of principle and duty and their government of the passions with reason (as opposed, perhaps, to faith). It is reasonable therefore to consider her alongside the rationalist group that I have identified.

What emerges from this patterning, as this thesis will show, is a shared, or at least overlapping set of educational ideals among a group of women whose religious

⁹¹ Later she stopped attending all religious establishments although there is little evidence to support Godwin's view that she became an atheist, see William Godwin, Memoirs of the Author of the Rights of Woman (London: J. Johnson, 1798). This has recently been reprinted as Richard Holmes, ed., Mary Wollstonecraft, A Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark, and William Godwin, Memoirs of the Author of the Rights of Woman (London: Penguin, 1987), 215-216 and n.16.

⁹² Jane Austen's religious views have been vigorously debated. The discussion has centred predominantly on her late work, Mansfield Park: A Novel, 3 vols. (London: T. Egerton, 1814). D. Monaghan sums up the debate in "Mansfield Park and Evangelicalism: A Reassessment," Nineteenth-Century Fiction 33 (1978-1979): 215-223, here 211n. Monaghan argues that though Austen had read and did share some of the opinions of Thomas Gisborne and Hannah More, "at a very fundamental level, the religious and social views expressed in Mansfield Park are completely incompatible with those of the evangelicals". He is joined in this view by Robert A. Colby who argues that Austen was attracted to evangelical ethics but repelled by the emotionalism of the movement, "Mansfield Park: Fanny Price and the Christian Heroine," chap. in Fiction with a Purpose: Major and Minor Nineteenth-Century Novelists (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967), 66-104. Oliver MacDonagh also sees Austen as a representative of liberal Anglican views, Jane Austen: Real and Imagined Worlds (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991). Lord David Cecil usefully describes Jane Austen's religious background as staunchly Anglican rather than evangelical in A Portrait of Jane Austen (London: Constable, 1978). See my Chapter 5, 250.

affiliations ranged from the rational dissent of Unitarianism and the Scottish Enlightenment to the liberal or broad church wing of Anglicanism. Though they were widely scattered across Britain it is possible to consider them together not merely because of their similar ideological predilections, but also because many met, knew, visited and corresponded with each other. Anna Laetitia Barbauld, Mary Wollstonecraft, Maria Edgeworth, Mary Hays (1760-1843) and Elizabeth Inchbald (1753-1821), had in common their publisher Joseph Johnson in St Paul's Churchyard, London.⁹³ Through the publication of the works of writers of nonconformist tendencies, as well as more extreme radical and revolutionary tracts, Johnson supported many liberal causes including religious toleration, the abolition of slavery and the rights of women.⁹⁴ He had also published some of the male rational writers on education including Erasmus Darwin and Richard Lovell Edgeworth. Between 1780 and 1789, Johnson opened up the rooms above his shop and held evenings of discussion for his writers. In these rooms, liberal and radical views were aired and many friendships amongst women writers, such as that between Anna Laetitia Barbauld and Mary Wollstonecraft, were forged.⁹⁵

In the absence of shared educational institutions, the friendship and correspondence networks between these women writers were a crucial means of validating educational

⁹³ For an account of the life and work of Joseph Johnson, see Gerald P. Tyson, Joseph Johnson: A Liberal Publisher (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1942). For Wollstonecraft's participation in these soirées, see Claire Tomalin, The Life and Death of Mary Wollstonecraft. Mary Hays and Elizabeth Inchbald may be considered to be writing within the same rational tradition as the writers covered in this thesis. A materialist analysis of women writers in this period is provided by Jan Fergus and Janice Farrar Thaddeus in "Women, Publishers and Money, 1790-1820," Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture 17 (1987): 191-207.

⁹⁴ On Johnson's early publication of books sympathetic to the rights of women, see Gerald P. Tyson, Joseph Johnson, 51. A second important liberal bookseller and publisher in the period, and one who, it might be noticed, frequently published the works in this thesis was Thomas Cadell. Cadell was a trustee of the Unitarian chapel in Essex Street, London.

⁹⁵ On the circle of writers published and, indeed, inspired by Joseph Johnson, see Gerald P. Tyson, Joseph Johnson, 58-91.

ideas. Maria Edgeworth, for instance, wrote to Mrs Inchbald and Elizabeth Hamilton, and Hamilton, Cappe and Lucy Aikin (1781-1764) (Barbauld's niece and herself an educationalist) visited each other.⁹⁶ Writers also recommended each other's works in reviews and within their own texts. There was, therefore, a circle of influence with which writers and readers would have been familiar. Within this circle, Edgeworth and Hamilton received frequent accolades whilst others carved out more modest spaces for themselves.

As I shall show, associationist ideas, and the argument about the origin of moral ideas which accompanied them, were familiar to many such enlightened women writers on education. The term "association" was adopted by pedagogical writers to explain the processes by which children learnt. In A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, Mary Wollstonecraft, for example, demonstrated her familiarity with the term, and with the "pernicious" effects of erroneous associations on the educational maturation of women.⁹⁷ Other women writers on education suggested that philosophical ideas were within the grasp of ordinary mothers who could use them to improve their own pedagogical programmes. In Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education (1801), Elizabeth Hamilton explained the principle of association for the benefit of mothers:

A mother who pays the least attention to what passes in the minds of her children, will perceive that the sight of a cup which has been appropriated to the bitter draughts of the apothecary, produces instant symptoms of aversion, and that the box which holds the favourite comfit is no sooner produced than the eye sparkles with delight. She knows that these opposite effects are produced by the opposite ideas of pain and pleasure; and when told that the principle which connects with the cup the idea of what is nauseous and, with the box, the idea of what is palatable, is termed association, she becomes mistress of the subject at a glance.

⁹⁶ The friendship network between Cappe, Hamilton and Aikin can be traced in Eliza Fenwick, ed., The Autobiography of Mrs Fletcher with Letters and Other Family Memorials (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1875).

⁹⁷ Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, 219-226.

[emphasis mine] ⁹⁸

Association could be used to familiarize children with the most basic of sensory experiences, but it was also a more versatile educational tool. In Chapter 1, for example, I show how children were taught to read through the process of associating pictures with letters, and that more complex moral lessons were taught in the same way.

Most of the women who wrote on education had first-hand experience of teaching in schools or homes. Anna Laetitia Barbauld, for example, taught in her husband's school in Palmgrave, Suffolk and later in Hampstead where she took a few female students into her house. Catharine Cappe was an early founder of Sunday Schools. Later she sat on the board of a Spinning School for girls and a charity school in York and was highly involved in their day-to-day affairs. Wollstonecraft worked as a governess in Ireland and later opened a school for girls. Other writers wrote for children in their charge. Though she had no children of her own, Anna Barbauld adopted one of her nephews, Charles Rochefort Barbauld, and wrote some of her early books for him. Charlotte Smith had twelve children and numerous grandchildren, whilst Maria Edgeworth based her works on her teaching of her numerous siblings. This practical experience of pedagogy was to influence the writings of women in ways that were not so easily available to their male counterparts.

*

The writers above shared an enlightened view of the world. I have described enlightened and evangelical views of education in this period as traditions which developed in divergent ways. Whilst the rationalists venerated reason, independent judgement, and

⁹⁸ Elizabeth Hamilton, Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education (1801), 5th ed. (Bath: R. Cruthwell, 1816), 4. Hamilton's explanation of association is reproduced at length in appendix A.

moral sensibility, the evangelicals suspected that an overemphasis on reason brought about spiritual deadness and turned from reason to emotion. Whilst rationalists typically looked to secular authors for inspiration, evangelicals were more likely to open their Bible. But the two traditions did not develop in isolation and indeed shared certain features.⁹⁹ This overlap is apparent in the importance to both theological camps of women as educators; of the practical aspects of educational methodology; and of educational projects such as the running of charity and Sunday schools. Both evangelicals and rationalists eschewed the "cult of feeling" which they believed had trivialised women's education, and both shared some aspects of educational practice such as the emphasis on natural theology.¹⁰⁰ The similarities between the aims of the evangelical and rationalist educationalists is evidenced by the fact that women writers within the evangelical tradition, including the acclaimed Hannah More, and those sympathetic to evangelicalism, such as Mrs Trimmer, were read and admired by writers of the rational tradition. The concerns of enlightened women writers on education have been perhaps less well-documented than those of the evangelicals. I will argue, however, that with their intellectual clarity and secular grounding, writings by this group of enlightened women constituted an important phase in the history of middle-class women's educational and literary endeavour.

⁹⁹ In Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1780s (London: Unwin Ltd, 1979), D. W. Bebbington has emphasised the similarities between evangelical and rational views generally, particularly in their shared inheritance of Locke, 51-72. Sean Gill has warned against considering the evangelical and rational views of education as entirely different. He shows, for example, how Hannah More and Mary Wollstonecraft shared an interest in an improved rational education for women and how both were suspicious of many aspects of the late eighteenth-century cult of sensibility and feeling, Women and the Church of England, 46. This view is shared by Jane MacDermid, "Conservative Feminism and Female Education in the Eighteenth Century", History of Education, 311.

¹⁰⁰ D.W. Bebbington attests to the evangelical interest in natural theology, Evangelicalism in Modern Britain, 59.

3) Defining the Preceptress

i) Issues of Class

Recognisable for her rational predisposition in matters of religion, the preceptress may also be traced to certain kinds of social or "class" groupings. There is general agreement among historians that the end of the eighteenth century saw a consolidation of the middle band of society into the group now described as the middle class.¹⁰¹ In this section, I begin by showing how certain models of class formation are inappropriate for the study of women as educators. A variety of methods of analysing class have, however, proved useful to my study, and these may be loosely described as cultural, literary and psychological models. The women educators examined in this thesis and most of those they educated came from the ranks of the gentry, the intellectual élite of rationalist circles and the new middle classes. I shall argue that, to some extent, educational discourse was instrumental in forging connections between these three groups.

Feminist historians have pointed to the limitations of traditional models of class mobility in accounting for women's class status in the past. Ellen Weeton's class position, for example, is difficult to categorise. As a schoolmistress and therefore a working woman, she found herself ostracised from the leisured lives of the middle-class women among her neighbours. At the same time, she was distanced by her literacy from the lower-class

¹⁰¹ P.J. Corfield, in a study of the use of the terminology of class in the eighteenth century, dates the first modern usage of the term "class" to the end of the eighteenth century and suggests that it was at this point that a vigorous debate about the number and nature of social classes began. Corfield traces to the latter years of the century a growing belief in a tripartite definition of class (as opposed to one of five or seven levels), "Class by Name and Number in Eighteenth-Century Britain," *History* 72:234 (Feb. 1987): 38-61. Paul Langford also emphasises the importance of the rise of the middle class in the eighteenth century, *A Polite and Commercial People*, 59-122.

parents of her pupils. It was a predicament that was to be emphasised even more sharply when she became a governess to wealthy families in the Lake District and in Yorkshire.¹⁰²

If eighteenth-century women are to be classed according to their fathers' occupations or their husbands' occupations, as traditional notions of class suggest, what classification might we bestow upon those women educators who, like Weeton, were single, without parental support, and had to teach or write for a living.¹⁰³ To categorise educating women in the same way that one might class schoolmasters or visiting masters in the period is inappropriate, since in an economy where leisure rather than occupation denoted higher class status for women, paid teaching automatically downgraded women whose rank, judged by other criteria, might have been higher. Meanwhile, the unpaid pedagogy carried out by mothers in the home in this period is difficult to assess as an occupation. Clearly, taxonomies of class which depend on male-orientated economic models are inappropriate to a study of women and particularly to "educating women" in the past.

Pioneering the notion that gender and class are mutually-informing categories of social analysis, feminist historians Leonore Davidoff and Catharine Hall have put forward a helpful theory for defining women's relationship to developing class hierarchies in the

¹⁰² In Julia Swindells's Victorian Writing and Working Women, Ellen Weeton is classified as a working woman and her humble class origins are stressed (though Swindells herself problematises class in relation to gender), 179.

¹⁰³ On the problems of defining the class status of the nineteenth-century governess, see M. Jeanne Peterson, "The Victorian Governess," in Suffer and Be Still, ed. Martha Vicinus. As I have indicated, the class status of the eighteenth-century governess remains to be systematically investigated. Literary-critical accounts of women writers in this period have tended to be unhelpful in respect of class issues. Dale Spender's Mothers of the Novel: 100 Great Women Writers Before Jane Austen (London: Pandora, 1986), for example, reduces class to the issue of literacy.

period 1780-1850.¹⁰⁴ Family Fortunes, their study of the middle-classes in Birmingham and Essex, suggests that any analysis of class which does not take gender into account is fundamentally misconceived and that the notion of "proper" feminine activity within certain bands of the population was as integral to the development of class identity as the economic and cultural activities of men. Davidoff and Hall's work, with its emphasis on culture as much as on economic production, has enabled the experience of middle-class women to be written back into history and allowed them to be seen as active participants in the formation of middle-class ideology.

My research on the representation of the female mentor supports, in a number of respects, Davidoff and Hall's basic premise that gender divisions played a part in the shaping of the middle classes in this period. I have already stated that the majority of women educators examined in this thesis were drawn from rationalist dissenting groups. These groups tended to comprise individuals from an intellectual élite who were connected with the academies as well as those drawn from the middle classes. The writings of women like Catharine Cappe and Anna Barbauld reveal an acknowledgement of the special activities, interests and talents of women in the field of pedagogy which is integral to their sense of middle-class belonging. As Chapter 1 will show, the kinds of information imparted by preceptresses in the fields of science and literature were informed by an ideal standard, which explicitly sought to differentiate children from their aristocratic or vulgar counterparts. They were charged, for example, with inculcating particular ideals of behaviour, dress and speech in their pupils.¹⁰⁵ Using

¹⁰⁴ Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, Family Fortunes.

¹⁰⁵ Ellen Weeton evidently kept a series of Saturday notebooks which recorded the day-to-day activity of her lessons with the Armitage family in Yorkshire. This was considered of little interest by her editor, Edward Hall, and does not appear in the published editions of the text.

Davidoff and Hall's model of class as at least partly ascribable to culture, we can see that the kinds of knowledge ideally supposed to be imparted by women educators help us to define their status as middle-class. By extension, it is possible that educating women actively contributed towards what it meant to be "middle-class" in the last decades of the eighteenth and early decades of the nineteenth centuries. Though many female educators constructed themselves as middle-class, my study reveals that the image of the female pedagogue also appealed to women of the gentry, including Lady Eleanor Fenn and Jane Austen. Though these women may not have participated in practical pedagogical projects, their writing styles were nevertheless influenced by the "voice" of female pedagogy. Again, a sense of class-belonging - in this case of a belonging to an ideal of leisured life distinguished from the "dissipation" of the aristocracy but also from the middle-class commercial environment - is shaped by an awareness of specific gender roles for women.

The fact that women from gentrified backgrounds as well as from the middle classes were contributing to the portrayal of a pedagogical role for women within the domestic environment suggests that the two groups shared certain pedagogical ideals. It is possible, therefore, that the notion of "separate spheres" for male and female activity may not originate as exclusively in middle-class practice and middle-class discourse as Davidoff and Hall have suggested.¹⁰⁶ As Amanda Vickery has argued with reference to other kinds of sources, gender divisions and ideals of feminine domesticity may also be found within the practices and discourses characterising the lives of the gentry in this

¹⁰⁶ Pedagogy disrupts Davidoff and Hall's metaphor of "separate spheres" for male and female activity in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Female schoolteachers, governesses and writers on education combined the imperatives of a domestic discourse on education, with paid teaching in the public world. Female pedagogy in the period 1780-1820 therefore both fulfilled the middle-class ideal of a separate domestic sphere for women whilst at the same time transgressing its limitations.

period.¹⁰⁷ The constant defamation of the manners of the upper classes in educational texts may thus obscure what is actually a desire to imitate the clear demarcation of male and female behaviour within those classes. Rather than formulating new middle-class codes of behaviour, educational texts may, in some senses, have popularised the manners thought to characterise women of the gentry. By establishing similarities between works by women of the gentry classes and from the bourgeoisie, my thesis suggests that the model of behaviour perpetuated by women writers on education may have been both a legacy of older ideals of gentility and an active formulation of new middle-class values.

The enormous amount of educational material written in this period also begs a question about the extent to which texts, as opposed to more recognisably material factors such as access to the means of production, are implicated in the construction of particular class identities in the past. Nancy Armstrong has made a strong case for the power of writing as a determinant of class and gender relations in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Citing the publication of Richardson's Pamela (1749) as an exemplary moment in the crystallisation of modern ideas about gender, a moment at which gender first came to supersede other themes of identity such as status and family name, she suggests that:

This transformation could not be established by an individual act of writing. It took more than a century and countless authors, pedagogues, novelists and journalists, most of whom remain nameless. It took a massive effort to reinfect an entire field of social information within a gendered framework.¹⁰⁸

In her examination of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth- century conduct books, Armstrong postulates that the idea of the "middle-class woman" was created in writing

¹⁰⁷ Amanda Vickery, "Historiographical Review: Golden Age to Separate Spheres?" The Historical Journal.

¹⁰⁸ Nancy Armstrong, "Literature as Women's History," Genre 19 (Winter 1986): 347-369, here 361.

before it existed in "reality". Like the domestic woman, the preceptress featured prolifically in published discourse in the late eighteenth century and my study will suggest that educational texts themselves were implicated in the production of class values in the period.

Cultural and literary models of class definition are helpful to the study of women educators in the past. Equally illuminating are more psychological definitions of class. Female educators saw themselves as connected by qualities of mind which differentiated them from the lower classes and the aristocracy.¹⁰⁹ In terms of the late eighteenth century, the key terminology, as I have already indicated, centred around the notion of "reason". In educational texts for middle-class males, the educational subject was expected to acquire such reasoning powers as might facilitate his admission into public life. As Gary Kelly has remarked, however, women in this period "tended to be associated with what reason criticised"; women had a "freer rein" in "the domains of 'fancy' and 'imagination', in 'light', 'ornamental' and domestically 'useful' discourses."¹¹⁰ Paradoxically, although women in general were associated with the terminology of irrationality and sensibility, in educational discourse the female pedagogue was described through a language of reason similar to that applied to the middle-class male.¹¹¹ In the enlightened traditions that I have delineated, female educators were expected to display a domestic version of the Enlightenment ideals of

¹⁰⁹ Research into this psychological model of class development has been advanced by Peter Earle in a recent study of the middle classes in the earlier eighteenth century, The Making of The English Middle Class: Business, Society and Family Life in London, 1660-1730 (London: Methuen, 1989). Paul Langford also suggests that moral credentials, industry and politeness were more important than considerations of wealth in the formation of the middle-class ideal, A Polite and Commercial People, 61.

¹¹⁰ Gary Kelly, Women, Writing and Revolution, 1790-1827, 7.

¹¹¹ On the gendered implications of the language of sensibility, see G. J. Barker-Benfield, The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain (London: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

good sense, "virtue", "propriety" and "understanding". These mental characteristics were measured against the supposed silliness of aristocratic women and the irrationality of lower-class women, as well as against the sexuality of both these other groups.¹¹² The "restraint and rationality" of the female pedagogue meant that, in educational texts of the period, she was frequently pitted against the sentimentality of late eighteenth-century fiction, the superstition of the gothic imagination and the emotional qualities of the emergent Romantic movement (each of which was in its own way interpreted, by many, as a feminine discourse in the period). The cultural representation of women educators as "reasonable" was carried over into their self-representations. Ellen Weeton, for example, was keen to align herself with reason. After hearing of ghosts in the neighbourhood, she concedes:

I am not entirely free from some little fear... but there are few, perhaps none, who in my situation would feel so little fear as I do. And the noises I sometimes hear and cannot account for, I charge to the effects of a strong imagination; and the terror those imaginary sounds create, is generally dissipated in half an hour. Sounds can do me no more injury if I choose to exert my reason; and I always strive to do so, and generally succeed. [emphasis mine]¹¹³

It is this same "exertion of reason", generalised and magnified, that Mary Wollstonecraft champions in her battle with female sensibility in Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792).¹¹⁴

The particular mental qualities of educating women tended to be formulated in terms of the theory of association. The operations of association were conditioned by both gender

¹¹² As Sean Gill points out, "The new emphasis on female virtue did not, in fact, obliterate the older image of the sexually rampant woman; instead it was projected on to the fallen woman whose existence in the form of organised prostitution was, in one sense the guarantor of bourgeois family values and property rights," Women and the Church of England, 28.

¹¹³ Ellen Weeton, The Journals of Ellen Weeton, 1807-1825, 1: 46-47.

¹¹⁴ Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman.

and class. In general, the sharper sensibilities of women were thought to make them more susceptible than men to external impressions on the senses. The effect of objects and sensations on the female brain was consequently seen as an example of the mental "passivity" that associative theories of knowledge seemed to assume. More particularly, women were considered to be less able than men to associate sensory impressions and ideas in rational ways.¹¹⁵ Poorer women came in for the greatest censure. Locke had ridiculed the associative powers of servant girls and older women of the lower classes, suggesting that they might make associations through imagination rather than reason and thus contaminate the infant mind. Throughout the century, this view of lower-class women prevailed.¹¹⁶ Ellen Weeton's anxieties that her daughter might come home "to be the companion of servants" may thus be other than simple snobbery, and may partly be based on the psychological reasoning of educational discourse.

By the end of the century the roguish maids and servants had met their match in the rational middle-class mentor figures who populated educational texts of all kinds. Good association came to be seen as the provenance of women - governesses, or, better still, mothers - whose undivided attention could be devoted to harnessing the powers of association within a child. By the end of the eighteenth century, the class differences between nursery maids and educators came to be formulated in terms of their respective associative powers as much as through descriptions of their economic status.

My reading of the rational female mentor leads me to propose that the cultural and

¹¹⁵ On the greater susceptibility of women and their weaker physiologies, see G. J. Barker-Benfield, The Culture of Sensibility, 23-36.

¹¹⁶ Locke, Essay Concerning Human Understanding, xvii.

literary models of class formation developed by Davidoff and Hall, Armstrong and others, may need to be nuanced in terms of contemporary psychological definitions of class. If, as I suggest, the class identity of women as educators was regarded, if only by an influential minority, as a function of their differential powers of association, we are confronted with what amounts to a gendered philosophical model of class identification which needs to be considered alongside other methodologies for defining class in this period.

ii) Issues of Nationality

Suppositions evident in educational texts about the appropriate social class of educators were accompanied by assumptions about nationality. Linda Colley has noted that the last quarter of the eighteenth century and the first quarter of the nineteenth century was the era in which women "first had to come to terms with the demands and meanings of Britishness."¹¹⁷ The emergent ideal of the British woman was intimately bound up with notions of domesticity and pedagogy. Queen Charlotte, who was regularly portrayed with her thirteen children in this period, often posed with an advice work on childrearing in her hands.¹¹⁸ The "Britishness" of the woman educator was commonly believed to contribute to her ability to associate and to reason.

This patriotic adulation of the British mother/educator should be set against a complex attitude towards the French. On the one hand, British women educators, especially those from nonconformist backgrounds, recognised that French authors were among the most appealing educationalists of the age. As I have suggested, many British writers for

¹¹⁷ Linda Colley, Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837 (London: Yale University Press, 1992), 287.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 287.

children took their model from French women educationalists such as Madame le Prince de Beaumont and Madame de Genlis. As well as respecting certain French educational writers, the British hired French governesses and considered the French language to be an important "accomplishment" in the education of middle-class girls. Alongside a certain reverence for French educational ideals, however, there reverberated through educational discourse an echo of the strong post-Revolution Francophobia.¹¹⁹ Among more conservatively-minded evangelical educators, this fear was particularly strong. In the passage below from Mrs Trimmer, for example, it is apparent that the fear incited by the French Revolution was both stimulated and counteracted in works for children:

Questions

What books should not be read? [Ans: Bad Books] Are not those bad books which set people against the king and the government? [Ans: Yes] Which is the best, to live in peace and quietness with your neighbours, or to join in riots and mobs? [Ans: To live peaceably].¹²⁰

Mrs Trimmer's reaction may be extreme, but even those liberal women who were generally more sympathetic to the French Revolution, eyed French women with caution in this period. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese has commented that "English, German, Russian and Spanish visitors [to France] concurred that French women differed unfavourably from those at home" and attributes this to a perceived "failure of decency and modesty", women's apparent sexual licence and their intrusion into intellectual and political life in French culture. But it was French governesses who came in for the greatest censure.

¹¹⁹ Linda Colley suggests that there was a sense in which the British conceived of themselves as "an essentially masculine culture - bluff, forthright, rational, down-to-earth to the extent of being philistine - caught up in eternal rivalry with an essentially effeminate France, subtle, intellectually devious, preoccupied with high fashion, fine cuisine and etiquette, and so obsessed with sex that boudoir politics were bound to direct it," *Ibid.*, 252.

¹²⁰ Mrs Trimmer, The Teacher's Assistant, Consisting of Lectures in Catechetical Form Being Part of a Plan of Appropriate Instruction for the Children of the Poor (n.d.) (London: J.G.F. Rivington, 1836), 254.

British women writers came to see something threatening in the presence of French teachers working within British homes. Maria Edgeworth, for example, opens her chapter on the hiring of governesses in Practical Education with a vivid anecdote about the impropriety of hiring a French opera singer from Lyons as a governess to one's children.¹²¹

Women of non-European countries, from Turkey and Asia for example, were also compared and contrasted with British women in educational terms. On the one hand, educationalists stressed the similarities between women all over the world in their concern for the proper education of their children. On the other hand, however, the patriotism engendered by British imperialism created a sense of the superiority of rational and moral British women above their "irrational" and "superstitious" Eastern counterparts. Britain was considered to be a country at the peak of civilisation, and, as Jane Rendall has argued, the level to which middle-class women were educated was very much a symbol of this high degree of cultivation.¹²² Histories of the world were revised to stress the importance of the Northern nations, and the way in which such societies had supposedly treated their women was contrasted favourably with that of Greek and Roman societies and societies of the East.

A further complexity involved the analogous relationship between British women and

¹²¹ Maria Edgeworth, "On Female Accomplishments: Masters and Mistresses," chap. in Maria and Richard Lovell Edgeworth, Practical Education, 519-553, 519.

¹²² See Jane Rendall, "Writing History for British Women: Elizabeth Hamilton and the Memoirs of Agrippina," in Wollstonecraft's Daughters: Womanhood in England and France, 1780-1920, ed. Clarissa Campbell Orr (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 79-93; and her 'Introduction' to William Alexander's History of Women from the Earliest Antiquity to the Present Time: Giving Some Account of Almost Every Interesting Particular Concerning That Sex, Among all Nations Ancient and Modern (1779), 2 vols. 3rd ed. (Bristol: reprint Thoemmes Press, 1994).

their Eastern counterparts. In liberal feminist educational discourses of the period, including Mary Wollstonecraft's Vindication of the Rights of Woman, complaints against certain features of women's lifestyles in the West, such as their physical confinement, their tendency to luxury and indolence, and their attraction to finery, were compared metaphorically with aspects of the lives of Eastern women.¹²³ In her challenge to such features of education, the British female educator was considered to be banishing oriental elements from female education in the West.

In the ways described above, the preceptress was a champion of national qualities as much as of particular religious, class and gender qualities.¹²⁴ In her personal attributes and talent for teaching she became in effect an agent of "civilisation" - the civilisation popularly associated with the Western world.

This civilising role was reinforced by the fact that the preceptress embodied a fine balance between the abstract philosophical notions of "nature" and "culture" as they were understood during the Enlightenment.¹²⁵ Most pedagogues in texts for children are mothers, and are described as the most "natural" educators of their children. This

¹²³ This use of the East to "feminist" ends is discussed by Joyce Zonona in "The Sultan and The Slave: Feminist Orientalism and the Structure of Jane Eyre," Signs 18:3 (Spring 1993): 592-617. Zonona describes Wollstonecraft's Vindication of the Rights of Woman as "the fullest explicit feminist oriental perspective" in this period, 599. For a more general discussion of the varied responses to the Orient see Martha Pike Conant, The Oriental Tale in England in the Eighteenth Century (New York: Columbia University Press, 1908).

¹²⁴ The reputation of the British governess travelled before her. Even the French Madame d'Épinay distrusted governesses hired from her own country and extolled the British governess, Samia I. Spencer, "Women and Education" in Women and the Age of Enlightenment, 91.

¹²⁵ For contradictory accounts of the role of women in the Enlightenment see Roy Porter, The Enlightenment (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education Limited, 1990), 49; and Margaret Hunt, Margaret Jacob, Phyllis Mack and Ruth Perry, eds., Women and the Enlightenment, vol. 9 of Women and History Series (New York: Co-published by the Institute for Research in History and the Haworth Press, 1984). See particularly Phyllis Mack, "Women and The Enlightenment," in Ibid., 1-11.

emphasis on pedagogy as a "natural" impulse is reinforced in works for children in which women are often portrayed teaching children about the workings of "nature" in the garden.¹²⁶ In this discourse, children too, are seen as natural objects. Despite such rich metaphorical links between "nature" and education, however, the "art" of pedagogy was also conversely seen as the antidote to the disorder of "nature", especially by those who opposed Rousseau. As Ludmilla Jordanova has pointed out, the polarities between man as "culture" and woman as "nature" in this period were "riddled with tensions, contradictions and paradoxes."¹²⁷ Women could, for example, be associated with the civilizing influence of culture in specific circumstances. Sylvana Tomaselli asserts that women "not only benefited from culture. They were its agents. They brought it about, kindled it and nurtured its advancement."¹²⁸ In works on education, women were consistently seen as acculturators involved in the civilisation of society through the transference of manners and also through the transmission of knowledge of a number of different kinds, including literature, history, science and mathematics. In educational writing then, there was a powerful recognition of the "cultural", as opposed to the "natural", influence of the female pedagogue which necessarily complicated contemporary Enlightenment definitions of woman.

¹²⁶ See my section in Chapter 1, "'Nature' and the Preceptress," 114.

¹²⁷ On the complexity of the associations between women and nature and men and culture and the positive and negative values simultaneously evoked by such symbols, see Ludmilla Jordanova, ed., Languages of Nature: Critical Essays in Science and Literature with a foreword by Raymond Williams (London: Free Association Books, 1986); and Sexual Visions: Images of Gender in Science and Medicine Between the Eighteenth and the Twentieth Centuries (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989), 19-24. See also Maurice and Jean H. Bloch, "Women and the Dialectics of Nature in Eighteenth-Century French Thought," in Nature, Culture and Gender, eds. Carol MacCormack and Marilyn Strathern.

¹²⁸ Sylvana Tomaselli has argued that despite the age-old association between woman and nature, middle-class woman has simultaneously been associated with culture at particular moments in history, "The Enlightenment Debate on Women," History Workshop Journal, here 121. See also Sylvana Tomaselli, "Reflections on the History of the Science of Woman," History of Science.

4) Literary Criticism and Women's Education

The preceptress appears repeatedly in educational works in the period 1780-1820. But she was not merely a "character" within literature of the period. Her distinctive features, I shall argue, shaped the very processes of the writing of a particular group of women. This section assesses why connections between the educating woman and the writing woman seem to have been neglected in feminist literary criticism and suggests a reappraisal.

In the last twenty years, feminist critics have reanalysed standard literary accounts of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and have pointed out both the existence and the importance of women's literary endeavour in the past. Whilst the first wave of feminist criticism concentrated on writing by women in the mid to late nineteenth century, more recent critics have looked further back for the origins of a women's novelistic tradition in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Attention has been paid to the work of female novelists, and to the gendered connotations of the novel as a genre. The result has been an overturning of traditional accounts of eighteenth-century literature and the recontextualisation of the "big five" male novelists - Defoe, Richardson, Fielding, Sterne and Smollett - amid the feverish productivity of female novelists.¹²⁹ Such studies have challenged longstanding notions about the "rise" of the

¹²⁹ A brief review of this criticism reveals an overwhelming preoccupation with fiction. Dale Spender's Mothers of the Novel, for example, emphasises the sheer number of women writing novels in the period and suggests why a twentieth-century male-biased literary establishment has allowed them to disappear. Mary Anne Schofield and Cecilia Macheski's edited collection of essays on early British women novelists, Fetter'd or Free goes further in exploring the issue of gender as a theme and artistic principle of fictional writing and as a determining condition of the lives of women writers. Jane Spencer's The Rise of the Woman Novelist: From Aphra Behn to Jane Austen (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986) examines the woman writer's use of the concept of femininity, suggesting that women obtained a degree of respectability for themselves and for novel-writing as a pursuit over the course of the eighteenth century in return for displaying a number of positively valued feminine characteristics. Terry Lovell's Consuming Fiction (London: Verso, 1987) which compares late eighteenth- and mid nineteenth-century responses to the novel, considers the consumer power of the eighteenth-century woman reader and analyses the "value" of novels in the period.

novel, have introduced gender as an important thematic and philosophical principle of eighteenth-century writing and have tackled the biases of contemporary criticism. As my thesis will show, however, the concentration of literary criticism on fiction has shaped scholarship of the period in ways which ignore a number of crucial historical variables, amongst them the educational aspects of women's writing.

Accounts which concentrate purely on the history of fiction (and secondarily of poetry) by women have shown that, contrary to popular twentieth-century myths, women had relatively generous access to publication in the eighteenth century. This is nowhere truer than in the case of non-fictional works on educational subjects published by women in the latter decades of the century.¹³⁰ Writers on education participated in the development of new literary genres, styles, themes and movements.¹³¹ The late eighteenth century saw an enormous increase in the number of books written for children and the early nineteenth century brought a new emphasis on biography and autobiography.¹³² The anxieties and possibilities generated by new genres, including, and particularly, the novel, brought about a new interest in aesthetics and the birth of what we might term the science of literary criticism. These new literary genres were

¹³⁰ Roger Lonsdale, ed., Eighteenth-Century Women Poets (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990); Cheryl Turner, Living by the Pen and Jane Spencer, The Rise of the Woman Novelist have shown how responses to women's writing became more favourable over the course of the century.

¹³¹ As early as 1940, Frank Gees Black for example, discusses the upsurge in epistolary writing in this period and comments on the numbers of women producing it, The Epistolary Novel in the Late Eighteenth Century: A Descriptive and Bibliographical Study (Oregon: Oregon University Press, 1940).

¹³² Chapter 1 deals with the increase in children's literature in this period. Patricia Meyer Spacks discusses the rise of the novel and autobiography in the eighteenth century and the connections between the two genres, Imagining A Self: Autobiography and Novel in Eighteenth-Century England (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976). Felicity Nussbaum considers women's autobiographical practice in the eighteenth century, The Autobiographical Subject: Gender and Ideology in Eighteenth-Century England (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

valued differently from their classical predecessors and were popularly described in gendered terms. Some genres, such as the novel for example, were designated "feminine" since they were assumed to be predominantly written and read by women, to have addressed domestic themes, and to be technically inferior to the more "masculine" genres of classical drama and poetry.¹³³ Many works in these new genres were heavily influenced by enlightened educational ideas and the terminology of pedagogy.

Seen as a case-study, my thesis suggests that our understanding of fiction by women might be enhanced by an appreciation of writing in other educational genres from the same period. I thus contradict those studies of writers such as Jane Austen or Fanny Burney which consider their works as isolated masterpieces, or as the precursors of later feminisms, without tracing affinities with contemporary non-fiction and its exponents.¹³⁴ As Vivien Jones has shown, textual constructions of femininity in the eighteenth century are best understood with reference to a range of different kinds of writing.¹³⁵ The texts under consideration in this thesis, like those in Jones's anthology,

¹³³ These issues of gender and genre will be investigated more thoroughly in Chapter 3.

¹³⁴ See for example, Joanne Cutting-Gray, Woman as 'Nobody' and the Novels of Fanny Burney (Florida: Florida University Press, 1992) and LeRoy W. Smith, Jane Austen and the Drama of Woman (London: Macmillan, 1983).

¹³⁵ That literary criticism tends to focus on fiction and poetry - on those genres traditionally constituting "literature" - is, of course, partly the result of the power of disciplinary boundaries in the academic world. For students of literature, novels are the accepted basic material of study, especially as far as the eighteenth century is concerned. The inappropriateness of mono-disciplinary study in this period has recently been pointed out by Mary Poovey in an essay on the connections between aesthetics and political economy in the late eighteenth century, "Aesthetics in Political Economy: Mary Wollstonecraft's Critique of Adam Smith" (unpublished paper given at the University of Utrecht, June 1992). Poovey describes how feminist literary criticism and women's history have recently come together but suggests that "Such convergences [] are being resisted by practitioners of some disciplines who worry that they will lose what is special about their object of study," 1. For a similar view see Vivien Jones, ed., Women in the Eighteenth Century. Jones samples instruction manuals, medical literature, works of political and educational theory and literary criticism.

bear witness to the very fluid boundaries between the genres operative in educational writing.

If the emphasis on eighteenth-century fiction has provided some distorting results for the history of women's writing, a further distraction has been the dominance of Romanticism in literary-critical, including feminist literary-critical, histories.¹³⁶ Such an emphasis tends to ignore the co-existence in this period of writing which does not conform to Romantic models. Moreover, the aesthetic tools required for reading Romantic poetry are highly unsuitable for the study of educational texts; it would not be appropriate, for example, to view the relationship between Art and Nature in educational texts in quite the same way as one would view it in Romantic poetry.

Marilyn Butler's work has sought to rectify this misapplication of scholarship by contextualising works produced during the Romantic period, but usually excluded from the Romantic canon, within the history of ideas.¹³⁷ The contextual approach of Butler and a number of more recent "new historicist" critics is of significant value to a gendered literary history of this period, Women were, for instance, responsible for much of the popularisation of educational theory that circulated around Romantic

¹³⁶ Several critics have usefully considered the contribution to the Romantic canon by women active within the Shelley/Byron circle. See, for example, Anne K. Mellor, Romanticism and Feminism (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988). Barbara Schapiro suggests that romantic poetry often either expresses or implies an ambiguous psychological relationship between the poet and the mother figure, The Romantic Mother: Narcissistic Patterns in Romantic Poetry (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983) On genius, see Christine Battersby, Gender and Genius: Towards a Feminist Aesthetics (London: The Women's Press 1989). More recently still interest has been shown in women writers of poetry in the Romantic period, see Stuart Curran, ed., The Poems of Charlotte Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) and A. Ashfield, Women Romantic Poets: An Anthology, 1770-1838 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995).

¹³⁷ Marilyn Butler, Jane Austen and the War of Ideas (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975) and Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries: English Literature and its Background, 1760-1830 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981).

literature.¹³⁸ The numerous educational texts written by women between 1780 and 1820 suggest that the rational ideals of the Enlightenment were popularly maintained in literature well beyond the period conventionally ascribed to them. In this thesis, I view literary works through the lens of pedagogical discourse rather than against conventional aesthetic criteria.¹³⁹ As I have pointed out in my brief analysis of Ellen Weeton's Journal, however, pedagogical and more traditional literary qualities were mutually-informing rather than separate in women's writing.¹⁴⁰ There is, for example, a reciprocal influence between pedagogical and romantic discourses in this period. Though I touch on such an overlap in individual chapters, a fuller examination of this phenomenon is beyond the scope of this thesis.

In recent feminist literary criticism, there seem to be several common misapprehensions about the nature of women's education in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and about its relationship to women's writing. Biographical approaches to women's writing often mistakenly declare that middle-class women simply were not seriously educated in the period. The supposed "lack of education" among women writers has been used as a powerful rhetorical tool in feminist discourse.¹⁴¹ Secondly,

¹³⁸ A useful volume of essays which follows Butler's approach is Stephen Copley and John Whale, eds., Beyond Romanticism: New Approaches to Texts and Contexts, 1780-1832 (London: Routledge, 1992).

¹³⁹ Stephen Copley and John Whale suggest that studies of literature in this period which do not follow the contextual approach have been limited by the "restrictive binaries of culture and society, art and politics, and self and other" that have been ascribed to Romanticism, Beyond Romanticism, 10.

¹⁴⁰ This overlap of discourses is evident in the tensions between rationalism and Romanticism in the works of writers such as Mary Wollstonecraft and Helen Maria Williams. See, for example, Jane Moore, "Promises, Promises: The Fictional Philosophy of Mary Wollstonecraft's Vindication of the Rights of Woman," chap. in The Feminist Reader: Essays in Gender and the Politics of Literary Criticism, eds. Catherine Belsey and Jane Moore (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989), 155-173.

¹⁴¹ Early criticism is, therefore, full of praise for the "untutored genius" of women writers. Mary R. Mahl and Helene Koon, for example, comment on eighteenth century-women writers that, "If they had neither the education nor the opportunity to express themselves, they nonetheless spoke and their awareness of the world was not merely that of passive observers." The Female Spectator: English Women

in biographical literary-critical accounts prestige is accorded to those women who succeeded in educating themselves through, as Katherine M. Rogers has described it, "luck and their own herculean and largely unaided efforts."¹⁴² This image may well be a legacy of the Romantic or Victorian cults of self-education and individualism. Its construction of isolated female auto-didacts in the past is misleading, however, and obscures a cycle of pedagogical endeavour by parents and by paid male and female pedagogues in middle-class homes.

Concessions to the history of education are sometimes made in biographical literary criticism, but there has often been undue emphasis on the education provided for women writers by fathers and brothers. This emphasis is understandable given the tendency of women writers to dramatise their own educational upbringings. Access to a "father's library" or to a brother's learning, for example, is a common feature of women's autobiographical reminiscences, encoding an awareness of gender prejudices and adding a theatrical note. Catharine Cappe, the subject of Chapter 4, complains of her father's lack of interest in her education and blames him for her lack of confidence in writing and her lack of application to reading.¹⁴³ Likewise, the "Retrospect" which accompanies Ellen Weeton's Journal describes how her brother shared with her what he learnt at school, but reveals Weeton's bitter resentment at the favouritism bestowed on him in terms of educational opportunity.

Writers Before 1800 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977), 2.

¹⁴² Katherine M. Rogers, ed., Before Their Time: Six Women Writers of the Eighteenth Century (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1979), viii.

¹⁴³ Catharine Cappe, Memoirs of the Life of the Late Mrs Catharine Cappe (1822), 2nd ed. (Longman, Hall, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1823).

Teaching by brothers and fathers did play a part in the lives of some of those women who became writers, but my research suggests that it was women - mothers, governesses and sometimes schoolmistresses - who were primarily responsible for the education of girls of the middling classes. Ellen Weeton, for example, was the daughter of a schoolmistress and spent her early years teaching at her mother's school. Catharine Cappe learnt reading, sewing and arithmetic from a female friend of the family. It is with the content and representation of such educational relationships that this thesis will, for the most part, be concerned.¹⁴⁴

Critical studies of the eighteenth-century novel have long recognised that women's education was often the fundamental premise upon which fictional plots turned.¹⁴⁵ From the mid eighteenth-century, when the novels of Richardson and Fielding had placed female protagonists at the centre of fiction, the question of the female subject's potential for moral improvement had been a driving force in novels by both men and women. This potential was closely related to the heroine's intelligence. Though novelists

¹⁴⁴ An exception to the neglect of women's education in literary criticism is Ellen Moers's Literary Women (London: The Women's Press, 1975).- an early feminist history of writing by women. In the chapter "Educating Heroism : Governess to Governor," Moers considers the phenomenon of "educating women" within courtesy literature and in fiction, "Today it is fashionable to talk of the sisterhood of feminism as a paradigm of that strength that issues from equality, but there is more in women's literature about the timeless bond of teaching, which links mother to daughter and teacher to pupil as equal to equal," 229. Starting with the mid-eighteenth century works of Madame de Genlis and moving through Jane Austen to nineteenth- and twentieth-century women writers, Moers comments on the position of women as educators both as the heroines of fiction and as the writers of it. According to Moers, the educating woman is, "the proponent of reason over feeling, of prudence over spontaneity, of private influence over public celebrity... the educating heroine is not an artist on display. Heard more than seen and feared as much as admired, she is sometimes anonymous to the point of invisibility, a narrative presence which controls and dominates behind the scene," 228. Moers's description is a starting point for an examination of the educating woman writer in history and this thesis takes up and develops its suggestions.

¹⁴⁵ Dale Spender, Mothers of the Novel "The absence of formal and extensive education was the reality for all these women writers so it is understandable that the education of women is one of the most frequent themes of their writing," 3. See also Jane Spencer, "Reformed Heroines: The Didactic Tradition" in The Rise of the Woman Novelist, 140-180; and Susan Fraiman, Unbecoming Women: British Women Writers and the Novel of Development (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

considered learnedness in women to be unattractive, the heroines of novels by Sarah Fielding and Charlotte Lennox, and later Clara Reeve, Charlotte Smith and Fanny Burney continued in the tradition of Richardson's Pamela, in being intelligent, reasonable and spirited.¹⁴⁶ Silliness in women was frequently castigated. In the last two decades of the century, models of female education in novels drew heavily on examples from the conduct book tradition.¹⁴⁷ Literary historians have considered the "education" of the heroine of such novels in terms of this moral development.¹⁴⁸

In addition to an increased focus on character development within eighteenth-century novels, the interest in "education" among critics has generated particular questions about the development of the didactic authorial voice. This didacticism has often been attributed to the "univocal" nature of much eighteenth-century narrative.¹⁴⁹ According to this model, the author's moral message is supported by the "choric voices" of other minor characters. The novels of Fanny Burney, for instance, have conventionally been

¹⁴⁶ Many novels fit this broad outline but the following are the most frequently debated by critics, Sarah Fielding, The Adventures of David Simple: Containing an Account of his Travels Through the Cities of London and Westminster in Search of a Real Friend, 2 vols. (London: A. Millar, 1744); Charlotte Lennox, Henrietta (London: A Millar, 1758) and Sophia (London: James Fletcher, 1762); Clara Reeve, School For Widows (London: T. Hookham and J. Carpenter, 1791); Charlotte Smith, Emmeline, the Orphan of the Castle (London: T. Cadell, 1788) and Fanny Burney, Cecilia: or, Memoirs of an Heiress, 5 vols. (Dublin: Price, 1774); Camilla: or, A Picture of Youth, 5 vols. (London: T. Payne, T Cadell Junior and W. Davis, 1796), Evelina: or, A Young Lady's Entrance into the World, 3 vols. (London: T. Lowndes, 1778). These novels built upon the model of Richardson's Pamela: or, Virtue Rewarded in a Series of Familiar Letters from a Beautiful Young Damsel to her Parents, 4 vols. (London: n.p., 1741). Their educational content is cogently discussed by Elizabeth Bergen Brophy in Women's Lives and the Eighteenth-Century English Novel (Tampa: University of South Florida Press, 1991).

¹⁴⁷ I shall examine this matter more thoroughly in Chapters 2 and 5.

¹⁴⁸ Jane Spencer identifies "seduced heroines", "romantic heroines" and "reformed heroines" in eighteenth-century novels. Of these the last is the most relevant to my purposes here. See "Reformed Heroines: The Didactic Tradition", The Rise of the Woman Novelist, 140-181.

¹⁴⁹ See, for example, John Dwyer, "The Novel as Moral Preceptor," in Virtuous Discourse, 141-167. For an explanation of the differences between "univocal" and "multivocal" narratives in didactic novels in this period, see Sarah E. Parrott, "Escape from Didacticism: Art and Idea in the Novels of Jane Austen, Fanny Burney and Maria Edgeworth" (D. Phil., York University, 1993), 48-52.

described as projecting a straightforward moral message through these techniques. In Camilla the voice of the narrator is supported by the voices of various other mentor figures in the story. Contradictory voices are barely heard.¹⁵⁰ I would argue that the conception of "writer" which controls this didactic tradition is reminiscent of contemporary conceptions of the good preceptress. Like the didactic writers, the preceptress governs her subjects (pupils rather than readers) with the voice of reason and common sense.

Though literary criticism commonly acknowledges the fact that many women writers were also educators of one sort or another, there is little recognition that the two activities - writing and teaching - shared principles which allow them to be considered as mutually informing. There are, in fact, deep historical connections between the novel and philosophies of education in the eighteenth century. Arguably many of the features which distinguished the novel from other genres may be attributed to the growing interest in education in the same period. The dispassionate, almost scientific scrutiny of individuals and society that contributed to novelistic realism, the notion that truth might be obtained through individual example, the interest in particular people placed in particular circumstances, the emphasis on the development of characters through time: such features are as fundamental to Lockean theories of education as they are to the

¹⁵⁰ There have recently been a number of challenges to the univocal nature of eighteenth-century didacticism, however. Reappraisals of Burney have identified aspects of subversion and irony in her works which they attribute to the complexity of narrative voices. See for example, Katharine M. Rogers, Frances Burney: The World of Female Difficulties (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990), Margaret Anne Doody, Frances Burney: The Life in the Works (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) and Julia L. Epstein, The Iron Pen: Frances Burney and the Politics of Women's Writing (Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1989). Austen is frequently distinguished as a better writer than other educational novelists of the time, precisely because she allows a number of characters to have their say. Sarah E. Parrot argues that Jane Austen's moral message is strengthened by these techniques, "Escape from Didacticism", 52. I shall return to these questions about narrative voice in Chapter 5 where I argue that multivocal models may also be derived from educational discourse.

development of the novel.¹⁵¹ For this reason, it seems natural that the eighteenth-century novel should be studied, to some extent, as the embodiment of certain educational theories. I would like to extend the connections between the two fields by considering the ways in which the language and ideas of eighteenth-century educational practice inform and are informed by the conventions of fiction. I am also anxious to suggest that such an emphasis on educational practice inevitably brings issues of gender into consideration since, as we have seen, women were increasingly viewed as the practitioners of education in the late eighteenth century.

5. Methodology

The educating woman, as I have shown, is a proper object of study for the disciplines of both history and literature. Though I refer at intervals to the social history of women educators, my study is essentially an examination of texts produced by, for or about educating women who were in the main from a rationalist background. The texts were produced over a short period by women who often worked in more than one genre and who frequently produced fiction alongside their more overtly pedagogical works. As I have argued, an historically-nuanced reading of women's writing in this period must take into account non-fictional alongside fictional texts. Though I chart some chronological development in the ideal of the rational preceptress over my forty-year time span, my emphasis is on the relative stability, though not necessarily the coherence, of her image in this period.

I am primarily concerned with the inner mechanisms, languages and rhetorical devices

¹⁵¹ Ian Watt has identified these features in The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding (London: Chatto and Windus, 1957).

of individual educational works, but my aim is also to make links between texts of different kinds, to point to the common features of educational texts as much as to the qualities that characterise particular genres. Rather than considering texts to be a mere illustration of history, or history as mere background for literature, I regard educational genres as firmly embedded in their historical context and, to some extent, constitutive of the educational ideology of the period. In considering texts in their historical context, I adopt the approach described by "cultural" critics of literature, most notably Raymond Williams.¹⁵² But my emphasis on the importance of language, the internal disruptions and contradictions of texts, the identification of discourses, and the emphasis on the construction of writer and reader (whom I construe as teacher and pupil) has much in common with the work of critics working in the field of new historicism. The most valuable work to my research has been that of literary critics and historians Felicity Nussbaum, Joan Scott, Mary Poovey and Nancy Armstrong.¹⁵³ Scott and Poovey, in particular, show a commitment to the importance of gender as an historical category, changing over time, and subject to construction and deconstruction in published writing.

My chapters are organised, for ease, along genre lines, though as I emphasise at intervals, there are multiple connections between the texts discussed in different chapters. The affinities between prescriptive literature and autobiography, for example, are part of the argument of their respective chapters. I have organised the chapters loosely around a chronological development - starting with writing for children of the

¹⁵² See, in particular, Raymond Williams's "Introduction" to English Literature in History, 1780-1830: Pastoral and Politics, ed. Roger Sales (London: Hutchinson, 1983), 1-2. See also Vivien Jones's "Introduction" to Women in the Eighteenth Century.

¹⁵³ Felicity Nussbaum and Laura Brown, The New Eighteenth Century: Theory, Politics and English Literature (New York: Methuen, 1987); Felicity Nussbaum, The Autobiographical Subject; Joan Wallach Scott, Gender and the Politics of History (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988); and Mary Poovey The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer and Uneven Developments.

1780s and 1790s and ending with Jane Austen's novel, Emma, published in the second decade of the nineteenth century. There is also a general movement from non-fictional writing to the novel. This is designed not so much to extol the novel as to make certain that it is read in the light of its non-fictional context. Ideally, the chapters should be read in a circular fashion, each contributing to the argument of the others.

In Chapter 1, I look at a range of literature for children from textbooks for the schoolroom to moral tales. I ask how, through the figure of the enlightened female mentor in such tales, the woman writer developed the possibilities of her literary "voice". I consider how the female mentor in texts for children became implicated in and helped to shape debates over "reason" and "imagination" and the meanings of "nature" at the end of the eighteenth century.

In Chapter 2, I trace the development of a tradition of female-authored educational advice literature, contrasting its concerns with those of the better-documented tradition of male-authored advice. I consider, in particular, a text of uncertain generic status Maria Edgeworth's Letters for Literary Ladies (1795) in order to highlight the many possibilities of the prescriptive voice for women writers.¹⁵⁴ I show how these possibilities included both satire on prescriptive assumptions and modes, and the use of advice techniques in the production of fiction.

In Chapter 3, I suggest that the satirical attempts of women writers to subvert prescriptive literature were accompanied by incisive attempts at literary criticism. This

¹⁵⁴ Maria Edgeworth, Letters for Literary Ladies to which is Added an Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification (London: J. Johnson, 1795).

criticism in turn became a part of the role of the female pedagogue. I focus on the work of Clara Reeve (1729-1807), and in particular on her Progress of Romance (1785).¹⁵⁵ Setting this text in the context both of other literary-critical works and of educational works in the period, I point to the connections forged by Reeve between gender and genre and reveal the significance of pedagogy to literary criticism and of literary criticism to pedagogy.

In Chapter 4, I ask how pedagogy affected the genre of female self-history in the period. I look at the Memoir of a Unitarian woman, Catharine Cappe of York (1745-1821). Here, Unitarian theology and educational discourse are combined in an autobiographical narrative. The chapter sets Cappe in the context of other Unitarian (auto)biographers of the period, and asks how she redefines the genre in ways which are specifically connected with her role as a female educator.

Chapters 1-4 might be considered to provide a context for the discussion in Chapter 5 of Jane Austen's novel, Emma (1816). I read Austen's novel as an exploration of the dilemmas surrounding the issue of female pedagogy and suggest that it marks the point at which the late eighteenth and mid-nineteenth century concerns of pedagogy, both social and literary, come together. Finally I re-examine Jane Austen's technique as a pedagogical novelist.

The focus of my thesis is the intellectual context of educational writing in the period, and the prevalence and complexity of educational discourse. For this reason, I devote

¹⁵⁵ Clara Reeve, The Progress of Romance through Times, Countries and Manners: with Remarks on the Good and Bad Effects of it, on them Respectively, in the Course of Evening Conversations, 2 vols. (Colchester: W. Keymer, 1785).

little space to an examination of the writers' biographies except in so far as they illuminate educational upbringing. My emphasis on texts, however, might be criticised for detracting from the agency of individual women in the past.¹⁵⁶ The women who wrote educational works, and the women who read them and put pedagogical ideas into practice, remain shadowy figures in this thesis. Nevertheless, I hope I have pointed to some of the important social repercussions of educational writing. These texts helped to improve the condition of women's education - an improvement that was also brought about by the efforts of individuals and the establishment of institutionalised educational systems in the nineteenth-century. The texts themselves, finally, and the ideas that connect and differentiate them remain the prime object of this research.

I have made extensive use of primary published material on women's education written in a number of different genres. Though I examine the key works of some familiar names such as Jane Austen and Mary Wollstonecraft, I have been anxious to look at how their methods and ideas were played out in the "lesser literature" of the period. Some of these texts reveal the ideological contradictions implicit in women's role as educators more clearly than those of their better-known counterparts. They therefore help to depict a more nuanced history than that which the more major works alone might have suggested. In all cases I am concerned to examine the ways in which pedagogical ideas and discourse shaped the development of literary genres in the period 1780-1820.

The primary texts considered in this thesis lie scattered in various states of disrepair in

¹⁵⁶ The question of agency in history is examined in Joan Wallach Scott, "Experience," chap. in Feminists Theorize the Political, eds. Judith Butler and Joan Wallach Scott, (New York: Routledge: 1992), 22-40; Janaki Nair, "On the Question of Agency in Indian Feminist Historiography," Gender and History 6:1 (April 1994): 368-404; and Joan Hoff, "Gender as a Postmodern Category of Paralysis," Women's History Review 3:2 (1994): 149-168.

a number of copyright libraries, their leather bindings reminder enough that those who owned them belonged to the upper middle ranks of society. Though they are now read in specially darkened rooms, the text is fading fast. Just occasionally I noticed handwritten marginalia, a memorandum of some error or omission recorded by the hand of a mother or governess as she adapted the printed word to the demands of good pedagogy. The focus of this thesis is the moment at which such a preceptress took up her pen.

Chapter 1

"The Wand of Reason:"

The Preceptress in Writing For Children¹

I will endeavour to improve you by admonition, though I cannot drop from the bell of a Lilly to attend you. Do make the best use of the opportunities of improvement you enjoy; which (though not supernatural) are great; for though no Fairy watches over you, you are blest with one of the best of mothers! That her care for you and for the rest of her children may be blessed with success is the sincere wish of E... F...

Eleanor Fenn, The Fairy Spectator: or, The Invisible Monitor [1788].²

The task is humble but not mean; for to lay the first stone of a noble building, and to plant the first idea in a human mind, can be no dishonour to any hand.

Mrs Barbauld, Lessons for Children [1808].³

In their popular works for children at the turn of the nineteenth century, Lady Eleanor Fenn (1743-1814), a philanthropist and founder of Sunday Schools, and Mrs Barbauld (1743-1825), a Unitarian intellectual, view the teaching of young children as a proper activity for women. Fenn and Barbauld are exact contemporaries from rather different backgrounds: Fenn was a liberal Anglican of gentrified origins, Barbauld a member of the dissenting middle class.⁴ For all their differences of provenance, however, both their

¹ Lucy Aikin, Poetry for Children Consisting of Short Pieces to be Committed to Memory, 2nd ed. (London: R. Phillips, 1803), iv.

² Lady Eleanor Fenn, preface to The Fairy Spectator: or, the Invisible Monitor by Mrs Teachwell and Her Family (1788) (London: John Marshall, 1790), iii.

³ Mrs Barbauld, Lessons for Children in Four Parts, Part 1: For Children from 3 to 5 Years Old (London: J. Johnson and Co., 1808).

⁴ Little is known about Eleanor Fenn's life. For brief biographical details see Janet Todd, A Dictionary of British and American Women Writers 1660-1800 (London: Methuen, 1984), 122-123. For biographical studies of Mrs Barbauld see my introduction, 43.

texts deploy a representation of the female mentor as rational yet inventive, practical yet philosophical. Their works for children, in other words, are informed by similar philosophies and employ comparable tactics.

As historians of writing for children have long agreed, from the middle of the eighteenth century and particularly from the opening of John Newbury's publishing house in 1743, there was a significant increase in the publication of works for young people.⁵ Cheryl Turner has shown that an increasing number of writers for children were women.⁶ In this chapter I intend to focus mainly on the large number of children's books written by those women writers who were either connected to dissenting circles or came from a liberal Anglican tradition, though there were, of course, many evangelical women writers for children in the period including Hannah More, Dorothy and Mary Ann Kilner and Mrs Trimmer.⁷

There is some evidence of networks among writers for children: some were personally

⁵ The economic context of writing for children - generally characterised by an analysis of the activity of publishing houses - is usefully set out in several early critical works including: E. M. Field, The Child and His Book: Some Account of the History and Progress of Children's Literature in England (London: Wells and Gardner, Darton and Co., 1891), 290; Florence V. Barry, A Century of Children's Books (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1922), 91; and J. Harvey Darton, Children's Books in England: Five Centuries of Children's Books (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932), 145.

⁶ Cheryl Turner, Living by the Pen: Women Writers in the Eighteenth Century (London: Routledge, 1992), 117-119. Other literary historians who indicate the increasing number of women writers for children in this period include Percy Muir, English Children's Books 1600-1900 (London: B.J. Batsford Ltd., 1954), 82-89.

⁷ The pedagogical methods of Hannah More are documented in Leslie Pamela Fox, "Hannah More, Evangelical Educationalist: A Study of the Educational Ideas and Practices of the Evangelicals" (Ph.D. diss.: McGill University, Montreal, 1949). See also Susan Alice Miller, "Hannah More (Self-Defence) and the Construction of Eighteenth-Century Anti-Feminism" (M.A. diss.: York, 1985) and M.A. Hopkins, Hannah More and Her Circle (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1947). Mrs Trimmer left an autobiographical account of her own life in Some Account of the Life and Writings of Mrs Trimmer with Original Letters, Meditations and Prayers Selected from her Journal 2 vols. (London: n.p., 1814). See also Clara Lucas Balfour, A Sketch of Mrs Trimmer (London: W. and F. G. Cash, 1852) and Doris M. Yarde, The Life and Works of Mrs Trimmer, a Lady of Brentford (Bedfont, Middlesex: Hounslow and District History Society, 1972).

acquainted whilst others were familiar with the works of their contemporaries. Fenn's Fairy Spectator, for instance, alludes appreciatively to the works of Hannah More, and Maria Edgeworth and Mrs Barbauld engaged in a lengthy correspondence.⁸ As I have indicated in the Introduction, many rationalist women writers were published by the liberal publisher Joseph Johnson: the evangelical Mrs Trimmer also benefited from Johnson's expertise.⁹ The works of enlightened and evangelical women writers differed in terms of their spiritual interest. Where the enlightened writers offered their young charges a rational, moral, and increasingly secular vision of the world, evangelical writers tended to emphasise the authority of God and to draw extensively on long-standing traditions of biblical hermeneutics for their pedagogical strategies.¹⁰

For the most part, however, works by writers of varying religious backgrounds differed in emphasis rather than content.¹¹ There were many points of overlap between writers from the two traditions. In the debates over imagination, which I address in section 3, for example, it will be apparent that women writers from both religious traditions were responsible for waving 'the wand of reason'. Similarly, in section 4, I show how both enlightened and evangelical women writers turned to nature for educational material and

⁸ Eleanor Fenn, The Fairy Spectator, 14. See Walter Sidney Scott, ed., Letters of Maria Edgeworth and Anna Laetitia Barbauld Selected from the Lushington Papers (London: Golden Cockerel Press, 1953).

⁹ See Gerald P. Tyson, Joseph Johnson: A Liberal Publisher (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1942).

¹⁰ Gillian Avery and Angela Bull comment that the children who peopled these rationalist works were diligent rather than religious, Nineteenth-Century Children: Heroes and Heroines in Children's Stories 1780-1900 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1965), 11. Samuel F. Pickering Jr. comments that the writers were influenced more by Locke than by religion, John Locke and Children's Books in Eighteenth-Century England (Knoxville: University of Tennessee, 1981). Paul Sangster examines the huge number of eighteenth-century evangelical works for children including hymn books, poetry, religious tracts, stories and magazine serialisations in Pity My Simplicity: The Evangelical Revival and the Religious Education of Children, 1738-1800 (Buckinghamshire: The Epworth Press, 1963).

¹¹ Jane McDermid, "Conservative Feminism and Female Education in the Eighteenth Century", History of Education, 18:4 (1989): 309-22, here 311.

shared a belief in natural theology, in a divine plan observable in the workings of nature. As I have indicated in the Introduction, both enlightened and evangelical writers were extolling the virtues of mothers in the education of their children; there were also many similarities between the educational methodologies of writers from the two traditions.¹² In this chapter I occasionally draw on the works of Mrs Trimmer to illustrate the overlap between the two traditions.

My focus on women writers perhaps requires qualification. A number of male writers from dissenting backgrounds also produced stories for the young, often in collaboration with their female relatives. Like their female counterparts, writers such as Richard Lovell Edgeworth, Thomas Day and John Aikin cast educational stories in the domestic environment, employed realistic settings, plot structures and character types, and rooted their stories in the moral concerns of contemporary society.¹³ I do not investigate the work of male writers in this chapter though it follows from my argument that male and female educators occupied different positions in relation to the publication practices and philosophical debates which I outline here.¹⁴

In this chapter I consider the pedagogical context of writing for children in this period,

¹² Introduction, 50.

¹³ Richard Lovell Edgeworth wrote the prefaces to Maria Edgeworth's Moral Tales for Young People, 5 vols. (London: J. Johnson, 1801). He also co-wrote "Stories of Harry and Lucy" which appear in Early Lessons (1809), 7th ed. (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1909). Thomas Day wrote Sandford and Merton: A Work Intended for the Use of Children (London: J. Stockdale, 1783-9). John Aikin's work included Calendar of Nature Designed for the Instruction and Entertainment of Young Persons (Warrington: W. Eyres, 1784) and, with his sister, Anna Laetitia Aikin (later Mrs Barbauld), Evenings at Home: or, the Juvenile Budget Opened, Consisting of a Variety of Miscellaneous Pieces for the Instruction and Amusement of Young Persons, 6 vols. (London: J. Johnson, 1792-96).

¹⁴ For a general review of children's literature in history see Jayne Bingham and Grace Scholt, Fifteen Centuries of Children's Literature: An Annotated Chronology of British and American Works in Historical Context (London: Greenwood Press, 1980).

though other contexts, such as the material and the intellectual, will be alluded to where relevant. I support my claims about this context by surveying a large number of textbooks written by women for children. In sections 3 and 4, I suggest that the figure of the female pedagogue performed an interpretative role vis à vis certain key cultural debates at the end of the eighteenth century. The representation of the rational female educator was, as I have argued in the Introduction, formulated in part through her embodiment of the contradictions between the terms "reason" and "imagination" and through her negotiation of the meanings of "nature." These terms were also key counters in debates about the education of children. Though often popularly constructed as opposites and (in the case of reason and imagination) as mutually exclusive, these terms were reconciled and made to serve educational purposes in writing for children by the intervention of the female author and her representation of the female mentor.

Of all the genres of writing attempted by women educators, books for children provide the plainest evidence of the ways in which the demands of pedagogy might be used to serve more recognisably literary purposes. My analysis of the way these texts connect the role of pedagogue with that of author leads me to hypothesise the existence of a significant, if modest, mode of cultural authority for a particular group of educating women in the period.

1) Women Writers and the Preceptress in Works for Children

Although eighteenth-century children's books have been well-served by historians of literature, they have tended to be examined within frameworks which ignore their place in the history of pedagogy. This disregard has also led to a focus on practices, such as publishing and educational philosophy, which are dominated by men. Mitzi Myers

comments that "even when scholars seriously examine this key period which marked the establishment of children's books as a distinctive genre, they focus on fathers, begetters, progenitors."¹⁵ The characteristic organising principle of many late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century books for children - the activity of educating women - is frequently overlooked.¹⁶ This claim needs further elucidation. Historians have, for example, contextualised their narratives with reference to the economic issues connected with writing for children. The writer Charlotte Smith (1749-1806), for instance, is frequently portrayed as a heroine who wrote her way out of poverty.¹⁷ An analysis of the material advantages to be had from writing for children is valuable in that it draws attention to the increasing professionalisation of women writers in the period 1780-1820, but, as I hope to show, it fails fully to account for the relationship between gender, pedagogy and writing in the late eighteenth century.¹⁸ A second context of writing for children favoured by literary historians is that of earlier eighteenth-century educational philosophy. Such critics have seen writing for children as the necessary and logical outcome of the educational theories of Locke and Rousseau, and show, for example, how the child characters in moral tales are educated empirically through their

¹⁵ Mitzi Myers, "Impeccable Governesses, Rational Dames and Moral Mothers: Mary Wollstonecraft and the Female Tradition in Georgian Children's Books," Annual of the Modern Language Association, Division on Children's Literature and the Children's Literature Association (London: Yale University Press, 1986), 31.

¹⁶ The one preceptress who seems to have escaped this critical neglect is Mary Wollstonecraft's Mrs Mason in Original Stories from Real Life with Conversations Calculated to Regulate the Affections (1788), 2nd ed. (London: J. Johnson, 1791). She has been singled out for special attention in several works, perhaps because of her severity and her "unwomanliness", or possibly because she appears in William Blake's well-known illustrations of the book. See Mitzi Myers, "Impeccable Governesses," 31-59.

¹⁷ See, for example, Stuart Curran, ed., The Poems of Charlotte Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), xxi.

¹⁸ For more on the increasing professionalisation of women writers (particularly writers of fiction) in this period, see Cheryl Turner, Living By The Pen, especially Chapter 6, "Professional Women Novelists, Earning an Income", 102-126. See also her graphs and statistical information which show a considerable increase in the annual totals of women's novels in the last two decades of the eighteenth century, 34-39.

experiences in the manner suggested by the educational philosophers.¹⁹ This attention to the formal intellectual context, though related to the history of pedagogy, has led to a disregard for the importance of contemporary ideas about women's responsibilities as teachers.

My aim in this chapter, as throughout this thesis, is to consider the implication of issues of gender and pedagogy to the economic and intellectual contexts within which late eighteenth-century texts have, quite properly, been viewed. To be more precise, I would suggest that writing for children such as Fenn's and Barbauld's needs to be examined in the light of the pedagogical issues relevant to the late-eighteenth-century literary context: the standards and methods demanded of good teachers; the relative modernity of female pedagogy; the importance of motherhood and the problems posed by, and for, surrogate teachers; the transformation of the middle-class home into schoolroom; the kinds of authority wielded by female educators; and most crucially, the connections between writing, femininity and educating. It is when one focuses on this context that the rational female educator emerges as a key figure in texts for children. It was, I contend, under the auspices of the contemporary interest in pedagogy, that some women writers were able to achieve economic independence. Furthermore, it was in acknowledgement of their middle-class femininity and specifically their own experience of teaching that they invoked, adopted, modified and even challenged the legacies of Locke and Rousseau.

¹⁹ Critical histories frequently link Locke and the children's writers via the figure of Isaac Watts, who popularised Locke's works in the mid-eighteenth century. An alternative genealogy traces the ideas of Rousseau through the work of Richard Lovell Edgeworth and Thomas Day, his "English followers". See Frederick Joseph Harvey Darton, Children's Books in England and Florence V. Barry, A Century of Children's Books. Geoffrey Summerfield, Fantasy and Reason: Children's Literature in the Eighteenth Century (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1984) and Samuel F. Pickering Jr., John Locke and Children's Books in Eighteenth-Century England usefully retrieve some of the philosophical complexity of writing for children in the period.

Texts for children were often engineered around the activities of a female mentor figure who was closely related to the educating author herself. This figure was firmly and impressively drawn and took a leading role in the speech and action of stories as well as in informative prefaces, advertisements and appendices. Mrs Teachwell, Mrs Mason, Mrs Talbot and 'the Good French Governess,' created respectively by Lady Eleanor Fenn, Mary Wollstonecraft, Charlotte Smith and Maria Edgeworth were just a few of the fictional preceptresses who presided in school textbooks, moral tales, school stories and educational dialogues and conversations set in the home environment and directed at young children of both sexes, older girls and their teachers.²⁰

The presence of the preceptress spanned a wide range of texts and fulfilled many different functions. At her most mechanical her distinctive rational voice was used to introduce grammars, spellers and readers. In texts such as Charlotte Smith's Rural Walks in Dialogue (1795), authorial comment was pared down to a bare minimum and stories were dramatically enacted as conversations between female educator figures and their pupils.²¹ Other texts such as Miss Trimmer's A Book of Questions Adapted to Mrs Trimmer's History of England (1798) were simply lists of questions and answers to be repeated by teacher and taught.²² Many such conversations mirrored the form of the classical dialogues used within the public schools, although the religious catechism also

²⁰ Lady Eleanor Fenn, The Fairy Spectator; Mary Wollstonecraft, Original Stories from Real Life; Charlotte Smith, Conversations Introducing Poetry: Chiefly on Subjects of Natural History for the Use of Children and Young People (1804) (London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1863); and Maria Edgeworth, "The Good French Governess," in The Parents' Assistant: Or Stories For Children (1795) (Cork: George Cherry, 1800).

²¹ Charlotte Smith, Rural Walks in Dialogues Intended For the Use of Young Persons (Dublin: P. Wogan, 1795).

²² Miss Trimmer, A Book of Questions Adapted to Mrs Trimmer's History of England (London: J. Harris, 1817). See also Richmal Mangnall, Historical and Miscellaneous Questions (Stockport: J. Clarke, 1798).

provided a model for the repetitive questioning and answering that characterised texts for children.²³ Greg Myers has argued that the dialogue form of texts for children contributed to the way in which specific subjects, particularly science, were perceived and received in the period.²⁴ But the dialogue form also played its part in constructing gender roles for its interlocutors. In educational dialogues, women presented knowledge in the face of childish ignorance, and though this knowledge was generally represented as something acquired and passed on rather than actively formulated, it nevertheless contributed a degree of gravity and intellectual prowess to representations of women in texts for children.²⁵

I begin by summarising the prefaces to textbooks written by Lady Eleanor Fenn, Charlotte Smith, Mrs Barbauld, Lucy Aikin and Mrs Trimmer in order to illustrate some of the connections between gender, education and writing in works for children in this period.

²³ On the importance of conversation strategies to writing for children in this period see Marion Amies, "Amusing and Instructive Conversations: The Literary Genre and its Relevance to Home Education," *History of Education*, 14:2 (1985), 87-99. Paul Sangster comments on the similarities between educational dialogues and catechisms in evangelical writing for children in *Pity My Simplicity*, 40.

²⁴ Greg Myers, "Science for Women and Children: The Dialogue of Popular Science in the Nineteenth Century," in *Nature Transfigured: Science and Literature, 1700-1900*, eds. John Christie and Sally Shuttleworth (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), 171-200. Through a close examination of individual texts, including Richard Lovell and Maria Edgeworth's *Practical Education* (London: J. Johnson, 1798), Myers argues that language, characters and narrative form contribute not only to our literary appreciation of the text but also to the way in which science itself was perceived. In the late eighteenth century, Myers argues, the notion of science as a knowable reality outside the text considerably reduces the scientific authority of the educator figures who describe it. See my later comments on "the meanings of nature" in this chapter.

²⁵ The role of the rational female mentor within domestic dialogue is a theme that I take up more fully in Chapter 3, 205.

2) "There Must be a Dame": Women Writing Textbooks²⁶

In the final two decades of the eighteenth century, the quantity of non-fictional material available for the education of children increased considerably. The older standard texts, "letter-writers", "spellers", "grammars", "readers", and "speakers" (which typically consisted of extracts from literature for elocution or reading practice) had generally been written by men, several of whom were from the dissenting tradition. Dr Lowth's Short Introduction to English Grammar (1762), and Dr Enfield's The Speaker (1774), for example, were written for a youthful, male audience.²⁷ My research has shown that in the late eighteenth century, these texts were very decisively supplemented by others written by women. The new textbooks were not always for use in the domestic environment. Some, by evangelical women, fed the growing Sunday school market and many, such as those compiled by Lady Eleanor Fenn and Mrs Trimmer, were geared to the education of the poor in village dame schools.²⁸

It is with an examination of these forgotten educational materials and what they might tell us about a particular group of women writers at the end of the eighteenth century that this section will be concerned.

i) "Young Girls Don't Read Prefaces"

In spite of Voltaire's assertion that girls did not read prefaces (a comment recorded by Clara Reeve in 1785), women writers took great care in compiling the advertisements,

²⁶ Lady Eleanor Fenn, The Child's Grammar: Designed to Instruct Ladies who may not have Attended to the Subject Themselves to Instruct Their Children (Dublin: B. Dugdale, 1799), ii.

²⁷ Dr Lowth, A Short Introduction to English Grammar with Critical Notes (London: n.p., 1762) and Dr William Enfield, The Speaker (London: J. Johnson, 1774).

²⁸ I do not focus specifically on the education of the "lower orders" in this thesis, but some of the texts cited in this chapter provide useful insights into early attempts at public education.

prefaces, dedications and introductions to their works.²⁹ These introductory comments all point to an intricate re-evaluation of gender within education in the late eighteenth century. This section looks at the way in which women writers saw their works in relation to those by men, described the practicalities of teaching, handled that crucial educational concept, association, and delineated their own kind of pedagogical authority.

Female educationalists proved themselves highly conscious of the male-dominated tradition into which they had introduced themselves. They often opened their books, for instance, with respectful claims that they only aimed to supplement or popularise the achievements of their male predecessors. In the Preface to The Child's Grammar (1799), Lady Eleanor Fenn suggests that Dr Lowth's Grammar, the most well-known grammar for children in the eighteenth century, and one reprinted many times, might be enhanced by her specifically female talents:

Dr Lowth speaks of his Introduction to English Grammar as being calculated for the use of the learner, even of the lowest class, but a perusal of it will convince any person conversant with such learners, that the Doctor was much mistaken in his calculation. It is a delightful work! highly entertaining to a young person of taste and abilities who is already initiated: and perhaps in the private and domestic use for which it was designed, his Lordship's commentary might render it intelligent to his own family; but for general and public use there is certainly need of an introduction to it: There must be a DAME to prepare a scholar for the Lessons of such a Master: and should I be gratified in my wish to supply that office, I shall think myself highly honoured. [emphasis mine]³⁰

Fenn's book, which is "designed to enable ladies who may not have attended to the subject themselves to instruct their children," takes Lowth gently to task for being out

²⁹ Clara Reeve, The Progress of Romance through Times, Countries and Manners: with Remarks on the Good and Bad Effects of It on Them Respectively, In the Course of Evening Conversations, 2 vols. (Colchester: W. Keymer, 1785). Reprinted with an introduction by Suzi Halimi (London: British Library Facsimile, 1980), 2:15. The quotation is taken from Voltaire's Prophétie (Genève: n.p., 1761) simultaneously published in English as A Prophecy (Geneva: n.p. 1761). I look more closely at Reeve's book in Chapter 3.

³⁰ Lady Eleanor Fenn, The Child's Grammar, ii.

of touch with the average learner. She suggests that her book is "general and public" in the sense that it reaches more social levels than Lowth's and could equally well be used in schools as in homes. The "Dame", who, it is implied, understands the needs of young children, is far better equipped to teach the early stages of grammar than the more erudite "Master". In the guise of a supplement to Lowth, Fenn offers a powerful critique of his scope as an educator.

Women supplemented other kinds of text written by men. The evangelical Mrs Trimmer republished Isaac Watts's Divine Songs in 1789 but wrote her own commentary on them, complaining in her preface:

This excellent writer [Watts] has contributed very largely to the religious education of children and I believe no-one ever had a better judgment in respect to the things they should be taught, and the methods of instructing them; but I hope it will not be deemed impertinent in me to say, that he left much to be done by parents and teachers, since I am ready to acknowledge, that were his plan punctually followed, my present undertaking would be unnecessary. [emphasis mine] ³¹

In this passage, the abilities of ordinary parents and teachers in the field of education are invoked to enhance the qualities of a well-known text. Mary Wollstonecraft, writing under the pseudonym, Mr Cresswick, similarly countered Dr Enfield's The Speaker with The Female Reader (1789) a book containing narrative, didactic, moral, pathetic, descriptive and devotional pieces as well as allegories, dialogues and fables.³²

³¹ Mrs Trimmer, A Comment on Doctor Watts' Divine Songs (London: J. Buckland and others, 1798), iii. The text she supplements is Dr Isaac Watts, Divine Songs: Attempted in Easy Language for the Use of Children to Which are Added the Principles of the Christian Religion, Expressed in Plain and Easy Verse 2nd ed. (London: M. Lawrence, 1716).

³² Mary Wollstonecraft (Mr Cresswick), The Female Reader (London: J. Johnson, 1789). See also Damon D. Hickey, "Mary Wollstonecraft and the Female Reader," English Language Notes, 13:2 (1975): 128-129. For a critical analysis of The Female Reader see Moira Ferguson, "Introduction" to Mary Wollstonecraft: The Female Reader (1789) (New York: Scholars Facsimiles and Reprints, Delnor, 1980), v-xxxiii.

The femaleness of authors was evidently recognised as a significant feature in the production of books and, by extension, books for children themselves were often personified as female.³³ The Preface to Lady Eleanor Fenn's Juvenile Correspondence, or Letters Suited to Children (1785), for example, likens her book to a "virgin daughter":

A manuscript is highly favoured - people are curious to see, what everyone cannot see - it is a virgin daughter, under parental protection. But a printed work is in everybody's power, at everybody's mercy; all have a right to condemn and abuse what they have purchased, should they think their money ill-exchanged for the book. [emphasis mine]³⁴

In this passage, the manuscript is analogously placed to those young women whom it aspires to educate. The publication of the book is likened to the educational maturation of the female child. Once the author/parent's influence is at an end, the book/daughter stands alone in the (marriage) market. Virgin daughters must be protected from finding themselves "in everybody's power, at everybody's mercy." Ironically, this protection, Fenn implies, might be obtained by reading a book such as the one she has written. This preface suggests that writers used the metaphorical femininity of textbooks to enhance their commercial appeal.

In an underdeveloped field, women's special knowledge and experience of very young children became a selling point of textbooks, and writers were increasingly precise about the ages of the children at whom their texts were aimed. In the advertisement to Mrs Barbauld's Lessons for Children (1808), she points to some of the practical considerations of writing books for very young children:

This little publication was made for a particular child, but the public is welcome to the use of it. It was found, that, amidst the multitude of books professedly

³³ The metaphor connecting women and the books they read was a highly developed one in the period, as Chapter 3 will show, 188.

³⁴ Lady Eleanor Fenn, Juvenile Correspondence, or Letters Suited to Children from Four to Above Ten Years of Age, in Three Sets, 2nd ed. (London: John Marshall, 1785), viii.

written for children there is not one adapted to the comprehension of a child from two to three years old. A grave remark, or a connected story, however simple, is above his capacity; and nonsense is always below it; for folly is worse than ignorance. Another great defect is the want of good paper, a clear and large type and large spaces. They only who have actually taught young children, can be sensible how necessary such assistances are. The eye of a child and of a learner cannot catch, as ours can, a small, obscure, ill-formed word, amidst a number of others all equally unknown to him. To supply these deficiencies is the object of this book. [emphasis mine] ³⁵

The advertisement presents Mrs Barbauld as a practical educationalist, an amalgam of able researcher, typesetter and educator involved in the materiality of the book's production. In referring to a "real" child, Mrs Barbauld appeals to her own experience of teaching infants as a means of authenticating her qualities as a writer.³⁶ A similar preface to the "Stories of Harry and Lucy" by Maria and Richard Lovell Edgeworth begins with "a few words to parents" and asserts that the writers are certain that their lessons will be easily intelligible "because they have been readily comprehended by several young children and in particular by a boy of four years and two months old."³⁷ Such comments presuppose and legitimate the serious two-way dialogue between empirical observation and educational writing which characterises the period. In this respect, Mrs Barbauld's preface is an elementary example of the way in which pedagogical practice helped to construct the rudiments of a rationalist autobiographical voice for a number of women writers at the end of the eighteenth century.³⁸

Textbooks also indicate the methodologies employed by teachers and reveal that writers

³⁵ Mrs Barbauld, Lessons for Children, i.

³⁶ Though not a mother herself, Anna Laetitia Barbauld, had adopted her brother, John Aikin's, son and this book was written for him.

³⁷ Maria Edgeworth, "Stories of Harry and Lucy", Moral Tales, ix. Reviews of Maria Edgeworth's Moral Tales appear in British Critic 22 (Aug. 1803): 195; Monthly Review 39 (Nov. 1802): 334-35; and Monthly Visitor 14 (Sept. 1801): 98-99.

³⁸ I deal more fully with the connections between the educational and the autobiographical in Chapter 4.

of the dissenting tradition in particular were conversant with philosophical ideas about education. As I have explained in the Introduction, Locke's and Hartley's theories of association were crucial to ideas about the transmission of knowledge in education. At its most basic level, association provided a way of describing how children actually learnt. It is used by Mrs Barbauld in the mother/child dialogue below to suggest how reading skills might be taught through pictures and the alphabet:

See I have brought you a picture, What is it a picture of? It is a picture of a horse. Is it like a horse? O yes, very like. How well he holds his head. What a fine mane. How he stretches out his legs. He is galloping along very fast indeed. What is the word that is written under? That is Horse too. Is that like a horse? I do not know. I do not quite understand the question, it means horse. If you were to shew it a French man that had not learned English, would he know that it means horse? No, not till he was told. If you were to ask him what word means horse, what would he say? He would say cheval. But if you were to shew him this picture, would he know what it is? Yes, directly. Or an Italian, a Spaniard or a German? Yes, any body would know it directly without being told. If you were to take this picture and cut it into pieces what would you have? I should have the head in one piece and the legs in another and the body in another. And the legs would be like legs would they not and the body like a body? Yes But if you were to take the word horse and cut it in pieces, what would you have? I should have letters h and o and r and s and e. Would those letters be the legs and the head? No they would mean nothing. Could you have known that the word horse means a horse before you were told? No. I remember learning to read it, I did not know it before.³⁹

As well as demonstrating the practical nature of educational methods and the consolidation of the idea of Britishness, the lesson also reveals an educator who is acquainted with philosophical ideas about the operations of language. For the benefit, one suspects, of the educators rather than the pupils, Mrs Barbauld continues by explaining the importance of association to reading processes:

Well, then you see that the picture of a horse is really like a horse, but the word is not. The word only means horse, because people chose to make it so; any other letters would have done as well. If they had chosen that RAB should mean horse; it would have done but nobody could make the picture of an eagle to be the picture of a horse, because a picture must be like the thing it is a picture of. Words are arbitrary marks of our ideas, but you cannot understand that sentence

³⁹ Mrs Barbauld, Lessons for Children, 97-103.

yet. I have tried to explain the thing. [emphasis mine] ⁴⁰

This allusion to the "arbitrary" nature of language serves to remind mothers of the serious scientific ideas underpinning this simple lesson and suggests the way in which the preceptress appealed simultaneously to her double audience of children and adults.

From its basic use in the teaching of reading, the associative principle was extended to teach morals and religion in books for older children. In texts for children, educators used objects, pictures or ideas that were already understood to suggest, through association, more abstract realms of meaning such as morality, ethics and religion. Association as a pedagogical technique was aimed at stretching pupils' understandings and bridged different levels of knowledge. In Mrs Barbauld's Hymns in Prose for Children, the principle of association is recommended as the means of securing devotional feelings to "sensible objects" and of anchoring the abstract in the concrete:

The peculiar design of this little publication is to impress devotional feelings as early as possible on the infant mind; fully convinced as the author is that they cannot be impressed too soon, and that a child, to feel the full force of the ideal of God, ought never to remember the time when he had no such idea -- to impress them by connecting religion with a variety of sensible objects; with all that he sees, all he hears, all that affects his young mind with wonder or delight; and thus by deep, strong and permanent associations, to lay the best foundation for practical devotion in future life.⁴¹

Such passages illustrate the ways in which rationalist writers for children were using the world of real objects to teach moral lessons. As I have discussed in the Introduction, Locke and Hartley's influential theories of association were refined in the late eighteenth century through a language of sensibility, which suggested that sensations and feelings engendered by objects and ideas were transmitted through the nervous system.⁴² The

⁴⁰ Ibid, 105-107.

⁴¹ Mrs Barbauld, Hymns in Prose for Children (London: J. Johnson, 1781), vi.

⁴² See Introduction, 56.

passage from Barbauld, which implies a strong connection between the corporeal senses and the mental faculties, suggests that these philosophical ideas were filtering into popular educational discourse, at least in enlightened circles.

In works for children, correct association was guided by a commanding but sympathetic educator figure. In general, the enlightened writers examined in this chapter distrusted harsh and tyrannical modes of pedagogy, and created educators who exercised a moderate authority based on reason and affection: educators who exemplified their own rational and moral vision of the world. This kind of authority was already part of the tradition of children's literature in the eighteenth century and is certainly to be found in the fictional forerunner of late eighteenth-century children's stories, Sarah Fielding's The Governess, or The Little Female Academy (1749), a text frequently mentioned by later children's authors.⁴³ Mrs Teachum, who runs an academy for girls between the ages of nine and fourteen, diffuses her authority through her eldest student, Jenny Peace. Whilst Mrs Teachum ultimately co-ordinates and controls the learning that occurs at the academy, she encourages responsibility and participation among her pupil-subjects and it is Jenny Peace and the other pupils who tell the stories that constitute the greater part of the text.

Later eighteenth-century writers emulated these ideals of refracted authority. In Eleanor Fenn's Juvenile Tatler (1789), for example, the girls are "invited" to write stories on bits

⁴³ Sarah Fielding, The Governess: or, The Little Female Academy (1749) with an introduction by Mary Cadogan (London: Pandora, 1985). The introduction describes this text as "the earliest known full-length novel for young people and the first school story for girls," vii. Fielding's own education had involved attendance at a boarding school in Salisbury and it is possible that The Governess is partly modelled on her experiences there. Jill E. Grey's introduction to Sarah Fielding's The Governess: or, The Little Female Academy (London: Oxford University Press, 1968) provides an invaluable history of the fictional female preceptress in English literature from Mrs Teachum onwards.

of paper which are placed in an urn and then picked out haphazardly. The stories are all subject to a "private perusal" by Mrs Teachwell prior to being read out, yet there is a strong sense of pupil involvement.⁴⁴ In Mrs Barbauld's Evenings at Home (1792-6), the children take it in turns to "rummage the budget" or pick out stories from a box.⁴⁵ Pedagogy here borders on a parlour-game. In these stories, as in those in the form of dialogues and conversations between children and their preceptresses, the final authority remains firmly with the teacher, though a sense of shared knowledge prevails.⁴⁶

ii) "The Magic of Ryme": Books of Poetry⁴⁷

In addition to the new textbooks, the period 1780-1820 witnessed a demand for simple poetry for children. Some of the particular properties of poetry - its condensation, its capacity (particularly if it rhymed) to be easily memorised and the way it lent itself to oral presentation and repetition - meant that it was considered a very "useful" educational tool. The metaphorical potential of poetry meant that it could easily link disparate subjects and could be used to train the rational mental faculty. Educationalists often professed themselves disappointed by the paucity of suitable verse for children in existing volumes. The well-known male poets, William Cowper (1731-1800) and Robert Burns (1759-1796), for example, did not write expressly for children, though the domestic tendencies of their verse and their localised landscapes were admired by

⁴⁴ Lady Eleanor Fenn, The Juvenile Tatler by a Society of Young Ladies under the Tuition of Mrs Teachwell (London: J. Marshall and Co., 1789). Fenn comments that the girls are "invited" to speak "because this was not a task but an amusement," preface, v.

⁴⁵ John Aikin and Mrs Barbauld, Evenings at Home.

⁴⁶ The same model of sympathetic authority is true of the influential French educational writers, Madame de Genlis and Madame Elie de Beaumont. In their works, education was shaped to fit the developing character of the child, and educators exercised a reasonable control moderated by maternal or quasi-maternal affection. For a summary of these writers as well as of other French women writers of the period, see the Introduction, 27.

⁴⁷ Lucy Aikin, Poetry for Children, iv.

educationalists. While some women writers wrote their own verses, others construed their task as the adaptation of the few existing books of poetry for children for educational purposes.

An important exception to the general dearth of verse specifically for children was Isaac Watts's Divine Songs (1715) which was reprinted twenty times in the eighteenth century.⁴⁸ As I have already indicated, Mrs Trimmer's Comment on Doctor Watts's Divine Songs aimed to make Watts's poetry "useful" by the addition of critical remarks. Her book explains each song, line by line - in places word by word - and her commentaries are followed by detailed question-and-answer routines to be used in the classroom.⁴⁹

The Unitarian Lucy Aikin shared Mrs Trimmer's recommendation of poetry as instructive material for the young, though she was less prescriptive about how it should be received. Her Poetry for Children collects together miscellaneous poems from many sources, including some original verse by the editor herself, and makes claims for the special capacities of women in the early presentation of poetry to young learners:

The magic of ryme is felt in the very cradle - the mother and the nurse employ it as a spell of soothing power. The taste for harmony, the poetical ear, if ever acquired, is so almost during infancy. The flow of numbers easily impresses itself on the memory, and is with more difficulty erased. By the aid of verse, a store of beautiful imagery and glowing sentiment may be gathered up as the amusement of childhood, which, in riper years, may soothe the heavy hours of languor, solitude and sorrow, may strengthen feelings of piety, humanity and tenderness, may soothe the soul to calmness, rouse it to honourable exertion, or fire it with virtuous indignation. [emphasis mine]⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Isaac Watts, Divine Songs.

⁴⁹ Mrs Trimmer, A Comment on Dr Watts' Divine Songs.

⁵⁰ Lucy Aikin, Poetry for Children, iv.

Aikin echoes the views of several other women writers, when she decries the way poets have ignored children:

when we consider how many of the subjects of verse are unintelligible to children, or improper for them -- how few poems have been written, or how few poets could be trusted to write, to them -- we shall not be surprised to find it a frequent complaint with judicious instructors, that so few pieces proper for children to commit to memory are to be found either in the entire works of poets or in selections made from them, purposely for the use of young people. To meet the wishes of such parents and teachers is the object of the following selection. It was thought that all the pieces ought to be short enough to be learned at one or two lessons, and good enough to be worth remembering; that their style should have nothing in it that a well-educated child might not, their matter nothing that he should not, understand, as soon as he should be at all able to feel the beauties of real poetry.⁵¹

As well as their forceful advocacy of the need for poetry for children, these passages tell us something of how poetry was to be learnt and the purposes for which it was to be taught. Memorising and/or copying out poetry were familiar exercises in the classroom and it was generally believed that the retention of the "imagery" and "sentiment" of poetry might have an effect on moral behaviour.

In the absence of suitable poetry for young learners and in the light of the obvious educational benefits that poetry might provide, a number of women writers such as Charlotte Smith were encouraged to become poets themselves. In Smith's Conversations Introducing Poetry (1804) the educator figure, Mrs Talbot, venerates the existing poetic tradition but also wields authority over it.⁵² Her femaleness is instrumental in allowing her to intervene in the transmission of literature. "Great" poetry, she implies, is not necessarily the best in the education of young children. It is the mother's prerogative to alter it as she sees fit and indeed to substitute her own poems if she feels so inclined.

⁵¹ Ibid., v.

⁵² Charlotte Smith, Conversations Introducing Poetry.

Well-known poems by Cowley and Cowper are transformed by Mrs Talbot to suit the age of their recipients or to fulfil specific educational purposes. As Appendix C shows, Mrs Talbot alters Cowley's translation of Anacreon's The Grasshopper, omitting all references to fertility, to luxury and epicureanism, to death, and to drunkenness. A number of poems in Conversations Introducing Poetry are also original works by Mrs Talbot and the children's aunt, alias Charlotte Smith and her sister. "Violets", "The Robin's Petition", "The Wheat Ear", "An Evening Walk by the Seaside", and "The Close of Summer" depict a small-scale natural landscape and cover topics hitherto virtually untouched in poetry for children. Like many women writers for children, Mrs Talbot uses great poetry instrumentally as a educational resource and supplements the canon with her own material.

In contrast to Charlotte Smith, Mrs Barbauld, in her Hymns in Prose for Children (1781), advocated the benefits of prose above poetry and dispensed with poetic form altogether:

it may well be doubted, whether poetry ought to be lowered to the capacities of children or whether they should not rather be kept from reading verse, till they are able to relish reading good verse; for the very essence of good poetry is an elevation in thought and style above the common standard; and if it wants this character; it wants all that renders it valuable.

The Author of these Hymns has therefore chosen to give them in prose. They are intended to be committed to memory and recited. And it will probably be found that the measured prose in which such pieces are generally written is nearly as agreeable to the ear as a more regular rhythmus.⁵³

Whether they agreed or disagreed with the use of poetry in the education of young children, it is evident that many women writers were certainly giving the matter serious attention in this period.

*

⁵³ Mrs Barbauld, Hymns, iii-iv.

I have analysed the prefaces of textbooks and books of poetry in order to show how the perceived pedagogical capabilities of women were affecting the content and style of works for children in the period 1780-1810. The connections between a gendered pedagogy and literary production so far examined are worth summarising briefly. First the belief that middle-class women had special capabilities for the training of infants meant that such women were increasingly portrayed at the centre of narrative. Secondly, the need to explain the theory of association to mothers whilst simultaneously entertaining and instructing children, meant that children's writing often cleverly addressed the needs of a double audience. Thirdly, the notion of reasonable pedagogical authority was embodied in a narrative voice which was both affectionate and authoritative, both open to the views of others and secure in its own superior knowledge.

In the third and fourth sections of this chapter, I move on to look at some longer texts for children in which the female mentor plays an important part. I suggest that in these texts, the figure took an interpretative role in educational debates over "imagination" and "reason", and "nature" and "society", and that her rational femininity was instrumental in shaping these debates. Though I argue in this thesis that these intellectual questions resurface across a wide range of genres, texts for children, with their bold depiction of character and unambiguous storylines, make the tendencies of these debates most obvious.

3) Fantasy, Reason and the Preceptress

Histories of writing for children have typically suggested that the late eighteenth century was a "desert" in imaginative terms. The banishing of imagination has been attributed both to the rationalist tendencies of eighteenth-century philosophical thought and to the

burgeoning influence of evangelicalism which as J. H. Plumb describes it "made a great deal of children's literature darker and gloomier as the century drew to a close."⁵⁴ Critics argue that it was only in the nineteenth century that imagination was allowed back into literature for children.⁵⁵ I propose in this section that though stories for children by both rationalist and evangelical authors included fewer supernatural elements in the late eighteenth century than immediately before or since, imagination itself was present as a contested issue with gendered and moral implications. As Geoffrey Summerfield suggests, "it is wrong to assume that the pre-rational, pre-decorous, pre-Christian world disappeared towards the end of the eighteenth century."⁵⁶ In terms of children's literature, two genres in particular - the fairy tale and the fable - demanded rational interpretation by female educators. This section will show how women writers of both evangelical and rational traditions held the conflicting claims of "imagination" (more commonly described as "fancy" or "fantasy") and "reason" in productive tension in works for children.

As I have suggested in the Introduction, in educational writing, "reason" and "fancy" were psychological concepts with connotations of class and gender. The fact that women had been and continued to be seen as the less rational of the two sexes irked many middle-class women writers who challenged the stereotype and strove to represent themselves as supremely rational. "Imagination" as an intellectual quality was

⁵⁴ J. H. Plumb, "The New World of Children in Eighteenth-Century England", Past and Present, 67 (May, 1975): 64-93, here 83.

⁵⁵ Mitzi Myers, "Impeccable Governesses," complains that Georgian writing for the young still suffers from "something of the equivalent of urban blight," 31. For the dilemma over imagination and reason in children's writing in the nineteenth century, see Gillian Avery and Angela Bull in Nineteenth-Century Children, 4. They suggest that fairy tales were frowned upon until 1840 and that they only became fully established after 1860.

⁵⁶ Geoffrey Summerfield, Fantasy and Reason, xiv.

conveniently displaced by these women onto lower-class women and servants.⁵⁷ In the following passage from Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education (1801), Elizabeth Hamilton addresses mothers as the champions of reason whose chief responsibility is to guard their children from the imagination of maid servants. The servants themselves become pupils in this discourse:

But how is it possible you will say to guard against the improper conduct of nurses and nursery maids? One cannot always be with one's children. The watchful eye of a mother may do much. Convince your servants, that to preserve your children from the influence of terror is an object of importance in your mind: attentively observe the first appearance of its effects, nor let it pass without an examination into the cause: make them sensible from experience that children may be prevented from touching what is hurtful, by other means than telling them it will bite them: and that making it a constant rule never to give them what they obstinately cry for will be found a far more efficient remedy, than to call for the old man or the black dog, who is to come down the chimney for naughty children. What an excellent foundation for the principles of moral rectitude is the common mode of nursery education! To allure or to frighten children into compliance with our will, we employ a system of falsehood and then expect them to speak the truth!⁵⁸

By the end of the eighteenth century, as a response to the influx of reading material for children into the literary market, writers had turned their attention to the imaginative content of the books themselves. As Mitzi Myers has commented, the belief prevalent in this period that books "modified people's lives", meant that many writers and educators carefully scrutinised the ways in which the plot, characters and language of children's books might stimulate or impede the workings of the faculties of reason and fancy in children.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ On the representations of servants within educational discourse in this period see Mitzi Myers, "'Servants as they are now Educated': Women Writers and Georgian Pedagogy," Essays in Literature, 16 (1989): 51-69.

⁵⁸ Elizabeth Hamilton, Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education (1801), 2 vols., 6th ed. (Bath: R. Cruthwell, 1818), 42-43.

⁵⁹ On the effects of books for children, see Mitzi Myers, "A Taste for Truth and Realities: Advice to Mothers on Books for Girls," Children's Literature Association Quarterly 12:3 (Fall 1987): 118-124.

Though the terms "reason" and "fancy" are rarely defined exactly in books for children, their frequent usage suggests that there was a degree of consensus about their meanings. Certainly, there was agreement about the need to emphasise the reasonable elements of stories and to dispense with the fantastic. Fanciful elements were mistrusted for various reasons: because they were time-wasting and misleading; because they invited children to lie and, as the evangelical writers in particular were to point out, because they encouraged sinful dissipation. Rational writers, like the evangelical Mrs Trimmer, railed against the inclusion in stories of anything supernatural such as giants, fairies or goblins. They also tended to be wary of the use of anthropomorphism, though there were many books written about talking animals in this period.⁶⁰ Some writers, such as Maria Edgeworth, went so far as to disapprove of the way in which the imaginative use of language might distort scientific truth. She criticised Mrs Barbauld, for example, for commenting that "the moon shines at night when the sun has gone to bed."⁶¹

The women writers examined in this section registered almost unanimous distaste for certain kinds of text. Fairy tales, many of which were of French provenance, and tales from the East were reserved for particular censure. Aesop's Fables met with widespread resistance despite the fact that Locke had recommended them.⁶² More realistic narratives depicting excesses of sensibility were also roundly condemned. Elizabeth

⁶⁰ The most popular of these was Mrs Trimmer's The History of the Robins: or, Fabulous Histories Designed for the Instruction of Children Respecting Their Treatment of Animals (London: T. Longman, G.G. J. and J. Robinson, 1788), x.

⁶¹ Elizabeth Hamilton, in turn criticises Maria Edgeworth for this remark in Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Bath: R. Cruthwell, 1801), 411, confirming the existence of both mutual interest and constructive debate amongst the generation of women writers I am discussing.

⁶² James A. Axtell, ed., The Educational Writings of John Locke: A Critical Edition with Introduction and Notes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 259-260. Axtell's text includes John Locke, Some Thoughts Concerning Education, 5th ed. (London: n.p. 1705). Locke published his own version of Aesop's Fables, Aesop's Fables in English and Latin, for the Benefits of those who, not Having a Master, would Learn Either of these Tongues (London: n.p., 1703).

Hamilton comments:

In proportion as they give an unnecessary stimulus to imagination, they retard the progress of the other faculties of the mind; and while they create an insatiable thirst for novelty, they produce a habit of indolent reverie which destroys the active powers, by preventing their exertion. I have known children of uncommonly dull capacities, and who seemed very deficient in imagination, who yet took great delight in these fictions, especially where the events were new and marvellous; but I could never observe that any of the faculties were in the least degree improved by their perusal; so far the reverse, that I have generally found the dislike to application increased, and the capability to attention destroyed, after a free indulgence in these visionary tales.⁶³

It is difficult to pinpoint exactly which texts are meant here and one suspects that the denunciation is, to a large extent, rhetorical and requisite only to create the aura of good sense before the story was embarked upon.⁶⁴

By the end of the eighteenth century, if we are to believe the existing literary chronologies, the "moral tale" had completely replaced its fantastic counterparts. In the following sections, however, I challenge this view by showing that, although the moral tale achieved a precedence in the late eighteenth century, it did so only by confronting and engaging with the legacies of earlier eighteenth-century fairy tales and fables.

i) Fairy Tales

Fairy tales in Britain had a history stretching back to the late seventeenth century with the translations of Charles Perrault's Contes du temps passé (1697) and Madame d'Aulnoy's Conte des fées (1698).⁶⁵ The educational possibilities of fairy tales were

⁶³ Elizabeth Hamilton, Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education, 6th ed., 294.

⁶⁴ See, for example, Lucy Aikin, Poetry for Children, i, "it may well be questioned ... whether a romantic sensibility be not an evil, more formidable in magnitude and protracted in duration than a wild and exalted fancy." This quotation is given in full on 113.

⁶⁵ Charles Perrault, Contes des fées: ou, Contes du temps passé de ma mère l'oye: avec des moralités (Paris, 1695) (New York: J. Rivington, 1795); translated into English by Guy Miège as Histories: or, Tales of Past Times with Morals (London: J. Pote and R., Montagu, 1729). Madame D'Aulnoy, Les

still being promulgated as late as 1749 in Sarah Fielding's The Governess, or Little Female Academy. Here, Jenny Peace, assistant of the preceptress Mrs Teachum, diverts the pupils during their leisure time with a fairy story: "The Story of the Cruel Giant Barbarico, the Good Giant Benefico, and the pretty little Dwarf Mignon." Mrs Teachum explains how the students must ignore the supernatural elements in the story or use them purposefully to adduce a moral:

I have no Objection, Miss Jenny, to your reading any Stories to amuse you, provided you read them with the proper Disposition of Mind not to be hurt by them. A very good moral may indeed be drawn from the Whole, and likewise from almost every part of it; and as you had this story from your Mamma, I doubt not but you are very well qualified to make the proper Remarks yourself upon the Moral of it to your Companions. But here let me observe to you (which I would have you communicate to your little Friends) that Giants, Magic, Fairies and all sorts of supernatural assistances in a story, are only introduced to amuse and divert: For a Giant is called so only to express a Man of great Power; and the magic Fillet round the Statue was intended only to shew you, that by Patience you will overcome all Difficulties. the supernatural Contrivances in this Story, [I do not] so thoroughly approve, as to recommend them much to your Reading; except, as I said before, great Care is taken to prevent your being carried away, by these high-flown Things, from that Simplicity of Taste and Manners which it is my chief study to Inculcate. ⁶⁶

Following Mrs Teachum's advice, Jenny Peace "desires [the pupils] to consider the Moral of the story, and what use they might make of it, instead of contending which was the prettiest part."⁶⁷ After hearing a second fairy story, The Princess Hebe, the girls respond intelligently with rational analysis. Jenny Peace and Mrs Teachum have, therefore, provided the girls with the interpretative tools to translate fantasy into moral lessons. In addition, the pupils have learnt to treat fairy tales with the utmost caution.

Contes des fées: a collection of novels and tales of the fairies (1699) 2nd ed. 3 vols. (London: T. Brotherton and W. Meadows, 1728). For the history and terminology of the fairy story see Iona and Peter Opie, The Classic Fairy Tale (London: Oxford University Press, 1974). The first use of the term "fairy tale" is recorded in 1749.

⁶⁶ Sarah Fielding, The Governess (1987), 34-35.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 37.

Mrs Teachum tells them that "if the Story were well-written, the common course of things would produce the same incidents without the help of fairies."

After the fairy tales are concluded, Mrs Teachum suggests that the girls relate tales about their own lives before they arrived at the Academy. These autobiographical accounts are similar to the moral tales of both rationalist and evangelical writers which dominated writing for children in the latter part of the century. The Governess marks something of a turning point in the history of writing for children in the eighteenth century, in that it invokes moral imperatives to advocate a shift - which the text itself enacts - from fanciful narrative to realistic narrative.

As the fantastic tale fell from favour in the late eighteenth century, mentor figures were increasingly called upon to write and to interpret moral tales, by far the most preferred narrative mode.⁶⁸ These tales were stylistically relatively crude. Twila Yates has summed up their characteristics as "contrasting characters", "cause and effect", "rewards and punishments" and "anecdotal techniques".⁶⁹ But moral tales also often involved more than one layer of meaning, and hence required an interpretive presence in order to be effective. They could usually be read, for instance, either straightforwardly as an account of good or bad behaviour and its consequences, or as a simple allegory. Maria Edgeworth's elementary but hugely popular story "The Purple Jar", for example, in which a child chooses to buy a beautiful purple jar rather than a "useful" pair of shoes,

⁶⁸ Mrs Trimmer advocated the banning of fairy tales in The Guardian of Education (London: J. Hatchard, 1812). Jack Zipes attributes the decline of the popularity of the French fairy tale to the French Revolution, Fairy Tales and The Art of Subversion: The Classical Genre for Children and the Process of Civilization (London: Heinemann, 1983).

⁶⁹ Twila Virginia Yates, "Devising the Techniques of Educative Fiction" in "Maria Edgeworth and the Art of Education", (Ph.D. diss.: Purdue University, 1976).

has both a literal and a symbolic significance.⁷⁰ Exponents of the moral tale were to be found across religious divisions and included the liberal Maria Edgeworth, the Unitarian Mrs Barbauld, the radical Mary Wollstonecraft, and the evangelicals, Mrs Trimmer, Mrs Sherwood, and Hannah More.⁷¹

I have indicated that the moral tale achieved its precedence at the expense of the more "fanciful" genres. As I hope to show, however, the fairy tale did not quite disappear; indeed, recognition of - and often resistance to - its residual presence was one of the constitutive elements of the subjectivity of the preceptress. In what follows I consider how various fantastic narrative possibilities were played out in one tale written in the late eighteenth century. The very title of Lady Eleanor Fenn's The Fairy Spectator or the Invisible Monitor (1789) provocatively challenges the rationalist and realist model recommended by other educators in the later part of the eighteenth century and it also illuminates some of the ways in which women writers, even those of a rational persuasion, were exploiting rather than avoiding the concept of fantasy in their writing.⁷²

Fenn's story takes as its starting point an earlier "pre-rationalist" book of fables by John Gay which had already met with some opposition in the period.⁷³ The Fairy Spectator begins with a pupil, Miss Sprightly, reading one of Gay's Fables, "The Mother, The

⁷⁰ Maria Edgeworth, "The Purple Jar," in The Parents' Assistant (1801).

⁷¹ The moral tale is analysed by Marilyn Butler, Maria Edgeworth: A Literary Biography (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 161-5; and Margaret Maxwell, "The Perils of the Imagination: Pre-Victorian Children's Literature and the Critics," Children's Literature in Education 13 (1974): 45-52.

⁷² Lady Eleanor Fenn, The Fairy Spectator.

⁷³ John Gay, Fables: Invented for the Use of his Highness, Duke of Cumberland, 2nd ed. (London: J. Johnson, 1778).

Nurse and The Fairy". The child dreams that a dragonfly flitting around her room becomes a fairy and hands her two mirrors. In the morning, Mrs Teachwell, her governess, offers to complete, explain and transcribe the dream. Moreover, she transforms it into a lesson: "I will write you a dialogue in which a fairy shall converse and I will give you a moral for your dream." In Mrs Teachwell's composition, the child ("Miss Child") successfully shuns the fairy's offer of a bountiful purse, a magic bonnet and a ring, thus confirming, in some respects, the moral bent of the story. the tale seems to enact the familiar process of educating the errant child into virtue.

Fenn's peculiar little book has occasionally been used by critics of eighteenth-century children's writing to show how fairy tales were being banished by rational wisdom.⁷⁴ Despite these claims, however, the fantastic elements of Fenn's tale are not in fact straightforwardly replaced by the rational. Whilst Fenn moralises the fantasy, she also delights in its imaginative potential. As Samuel Pickering suggests, the story assumes a level of knowledge of other fairy stories.⁷⁵ The reference to Gay's Fables suggest a continuity with earlier fantastic literature for children rather than a departure from it. In Fenn's tale, the rational narrative about the governess and her pupil dissolves into the fantasy world and is never resumed. Miss Child herself becomes a fairy who has the power to "assume any shape [she] pleases" and acts as guardian to the children of Mrs

⁷⁴ Janet Todd's biographical notes on Eleanor Fenn suggest that "although she did write fiction and fantasy, her prefaces show her insistence on their value as moralising agents for the young," A Dictionary of British and American Women Writers 1660-1800, 122-123. Similarly, Samuel Pickering, demonstrating the connections between Lockean rationalism and late eighteenth-century children's writing, comments, "Ellenor [sic] Fenn's book was actually an anti-fairy tale with an anti-fairy heroine, who turned down the usual miraculous paraphernalia for solid moral reasons and in the process exposed the pedagogical dangers of traditional fairy tales. When offered a ring like Tom Thumb's, which would make her invisible, or a purse and a bonnet like those of the Fortunates which would always be filled with money or would convey her to any place in the world, Miss Child rose above mortal infancy and refusing them became the ideal Miss Everychild. [emphasis mine]." Samuel Pickering, John Locke and Children's Books in Eighteenth-Century England, 66-67.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 66-67.

Teachwell's family. The magical power of the enchanted mirrors, one of which shows "the child as she is" and one which shows her "how she might be", is never called into question.

In The Fairy Spectator, then, the firm moral line on the matter of genre usually taken by writers for children in the late eighteenth century is missing. There is instead an interweaving of dreams, visions, story-writing, story-telling and moralising, all of which are considered to be equally valid educational resources. In particular there is a close connection between the Fairy, Miss Child, Mrs Teachwell and God in their roles as monitors of behaviour. Exactly who is meant by the "fairy spectator" or the "invisible monitor" is deliberately left unclear.

There were, Fenn seems to suggest, aspects of teaching and kinds of writing that were not reducible to rational exposition. Mothers and teachers, like fairy spectators, must be omnipresent in the lives of their children; their influence must act as an "invisible monitor" even when they are not physically present. Moreover, the effect of a good educator could be magical, transforming bad children into good ones simply by the telling of a story. Fenn's explanatory preface, which is phrased in the ambiguity of the subjunctive mood, cleverly maintains the confusion between the mentor/writer's rational and imaginative qualities. She is not a fairy but she uses her rational powers in magical ways:

Were I a Fairy, I should devote much of my attention to you. Had I the bonnet which Miss Child prudently declined accepting, I should be frequently at your elbow: but if I were in possession of the wonderful ring which was offered to her, I should probably sometimes conceal myself from your sight for the friendly purpose of remarking your conduct when you suppose yourself to be unobserved: and I hope that I should have the pleasure to see you act always as if you were in the presence of your dear Mamma: or to speak in still higher terms, as if you

remembered that there is an Eye which sees us wherever we are.⁷⁶

The careful crafting of the preface leaves the reader with the impression that pedagogy, like writing for children itself, thrives as much on the imagination as on reason.

In other children's texts of the period, the fantasy element is less obvious. Even moral tales which depict the real circumstances of life, however, play on archetypal fairy tale narratives: the good, poor child who obtains great riches as a reward for her behaviour plays on the Cinderella story, for example. Rather than dismiss the fanciful from their narratives altogether then, it might be more accurate to suggest that women writers in the period 1780-1820 provided imaginative material for interpretative and ultimately educative purposes.

ii) Fables

The fable might be considered to lie between the fairy tale and the moral tale on the gauge of reason. Though fables purported to teach a moral in ways that fairy tales did not, they employed imaginative means to do so. In the eighteenth century, many fables were written with a specifically female audience in mind, as the preface to Edmund Moore and Henry Brooke's Fables for the Female Sex (1744) makes clear:

The following Fables were written at intervals when I found myself in humour, and disengaged from matters of great moment. As they are the writings of an idle hour, so they are intended for the reading of those, whose only business is amusement... I have leave from her Royal Highness to address her, and I claim the Fair for my readers. My fears are lighter than my expectations; I wrote to please myself, and I publish to please others; and this so universally, that I have not wished for correctness to rob the critic of his censure or my friend of the laugh.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Eleanor Fenn, preface to The Fairy Spectator, iii.

⁷⁷ Edmund Moore and Henry Brooke's Fables for the Female Sex (1744), 3rd ed. (London: R. Franklin, 1749). One of Moore and Brooke's fables is used at the end of Sarah Fielding's The Governess. Other books of fables included La Fontaine's Fables choisies (Paris: Denys Théry, 1668) first translated into English as Fables and Tales from La Fontaine to which is Prefix'd the Author's Life (London: A.

The association of fables with the idle amusement of females was widely held.

Rousseau, in Émile (1762), was particularly dismissive of the genre:

How can people be so blind as to call fables the child's system of morals, without considering that the child is not only amused by the apologue but misled by it? He is attracted by what is false and he misses the truth, and the means adopted to make the teaching pleasant prevent him from profiting by it. Men may be taught by fables, children require the naked truth.... All children learn La Fontaine's Fables, but not one of them understands them. It is just as well that they do not understand, for the morality of the fables is so mixed and so unsuitable for their age that it would be more likely to incline them to vice than to virtue...I maintain that the child does not understand the fables he is taught, for however, you try to explain them, the teaching you wish to extract from them demands ideas which he cannot grasp, while the poetical form which makes it easier to remember makes it harder to understand, so that clearness is sacrificed to facility.⁷⁸

Rousseau criticised fables morally and textually with a view to dissuading parents from reading them to their children. Most British educationalists of both enlightened and evangelical persuasions, following Rousseau, assumed fables might be misleading and mendacious.

Several women writers from both traditions, however, seized on the fable for its didactic properties. The negative connotations of fables - that they were chiefly for amusement - were sometimes reversed. Indeed fables came to be considered as useful and accessible learning materials for girls, since they demanded the same skills of interpretation required of boys in their reading of classical mythology. In the Introduction to her own most popular work, The History of the Robins, or Fabulous Histories (1788), Mrs Trimmer's mother/mentor figure explains how her anthropomorphic tale is to be read as moral instruction with an application for the children themselves:

Bettesworth, C. Hitch and C. Davis, 1734) and John Gay's Fables.

⁷⁸ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Émile: ou, de l'éducation, 4 tom. (Amsterdam: n.p., 1762) translated as Emilius and Sophia: or, a New System of Education (London: R. Griffiths and others, 1762). I refer to Émile, translated by Barbara Foxley and with an introduction by P.D. Jimack (London: J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1992), 77.

[The] mamma, therefore, to amuse them, composed the following Fabulous Histories; in which the sentiments and affections of a good father and mother and a family of children, are supposed to be possessed by a nest of Redbreasts; and others of the feathered race are, by the force of imagination, endued with the same faculties: but, before Henry and Charlotte began to read these Histories, they were taught to consider them, not as containing the real conversation of birds (for that it is impossible that we should ever understand) but as a series of FABLES, intended to convey moral instruction applicable to themselves, at the same time that they recommend universal benevolence and excite compassion and tenderness for those interesting and delightful creatures, on which such wanton cruelties are frequently inflicted.⁷⁹

Likewise, in The Teacher's Assistant, a textbook of the question-and-answer variety for schools, Mrs Trimmer gives the teacher exact instructions as to how to introduce the concept of the Fable to a class:

Instruction: By a fable is meant a fictitious story, intending to show by similitudes, how amiable goodness is, and how hateful vice. In Fables, good and bad people are sometimes represented under the similitude of birds, beasts etc. A fox is usually put for one who has wit and parts, but is very sly and deceitful. A Lion, for one who is of generous temper. An Ass for a stupid fellow, etc. Therefore when you read fables do not suppose you are reading of real foxes etc, but of fox-like men, or lion-like men etc.

In like manner, when a husbandman, a farmer, a shepherd boy, etc are brought into a fable, you are not to suppose them any particular persons, but imaginary characters meant to represent all people who have the same virtues or vices as those in the fable are represented to have.

When you read a fable take particular notice of the moral, for that shows what the Fable is intended to teach.

What is meant by a fable? [Ans: A fictitious story] What kind of a man is a fox usually put for? [Ans: A sly deceitful one] What sort of person is a lion usually put for [Ans: A generous one] What is an Ass usually put for [Ans: A stupid one] Are you to think when you are reading fables that you are reading of real foxes, lions etc [No]. [emphasis mine]⁸⁰

This kind of educational lecturing, involving rudimentary exercises in comprehension, taught the child to discriminate between the several different levels of an imaginative story and to retrieve the moral which was, after all, its most important principle. The

⁷⁹ Mrs Trimmer, The History of the Robins: or, Fabulous Histories, ix.

⁸⁰ Mrs Trimmer, The Teacher's Assistant Consisting of Lectures in Catechetical Form Being Part of a Plan of Appropriate Instruction for Children of the Poor (n.d.) (London: J.G.F. Rivington, 1836), 254.

evangelical writers employed the same methods to teach children how to interpret biblical parables.⁸¹

Many women writers for children thus considered fables more favourably than fairy tales on the grounds that they solicited the exercise of reason. Few thought that imagination should be pursued for its own sake, though Lucy Aikin in her Poetry for Children urged that "the wand of reason" should be used sparingly. Childhood, she suggested, should not be deprived altogether of "the fanciful and the marvellous." Aikin went so far as to suggest that fairy stories were perhaps less dangerous than the growing genre of romantic novels:

Since dragons and fairies, giants and witches have vanished from our nurseries before the wand of reason, it has been a prevailing maxim, that the young mind should be fed on mere prose and simple matter of fact. A fear rational in its origin, of adding by superstitious and idle terrors, to the natural weakness of childhood, or contaminating, by any thing false or impure, its truth and innocence - has, by some writers, and some parents, been carried to so great an excess, that probably no work would be considered by them as unexceptionable for the use of children, in which any scope was allowed for the fanciful and the marvellous. It may well be questioned however, whether the novel-like tales now written for the amusement of youth, may not be productive of more injury to the mind by giving a false picture to the real world, than the fairy fiction of the last generation, which only wandered over the region of shadows;- whether a romantic sensibility be not an evil, more formidable in magnitude and protracted in duration than a wild and exalted fancy. [emphasis mine]⁸²

At the end of the eighteenth century, the fanciful aspects of writing for children might have waned, but rationalism had new battles to fight with romantic sensibility. Maria Edgeworth's tale "Angelina or L'Amie Inconnue" for older girls is a striking example

⁸¹ See for example Rowland Hill, Instructions for Children: or, A Token of Love for the Rising Generation (London: G. Thompson, 1794). This is discussed by Paul Sangster, Pity My Simplicity, 53.

⁸² Lucy Aikin, Poetry For Children, iv.

of this.⁸³ The heroine's pursuit of the imagination - her obsessive search for the writer of her favourite romance novels - ends in the depressing reality of a hovel in Wales in which the slovenly writer, Angelina, composes her idle tales. Just as in the case of fairy tales and fables, Edgeworth leads her reader to rational moral conclusions by tracking the workings of the imagination.

To sum up, imagination was not eradicated in literature for children at the end of the eighteenth century; rather, it provided material for explication - and a focus for active resistance - by rational women educators. *Fantastic stories and their more adult counterparts*, the late eighteenth-century novels of sensibility, were the raw materials upon which such women educators exercised their reason. In a sense they were the matter upon which a particular group of middle-class educators formulated their rational identity.

4) "Nature" and the Preceptress

If women educators addressed the vexed question of reason versus fancy in books for children, they also touched on another debate central to philosophical and popular thought in the period: the meaning and uses of "nature" and the "natural". At its most basic, this involved inducting children in the pleasures of botany and natural history: many children's works reveal a fascination for the world of plants and animals to be found just outside the domestic classroom in gardens, woodland and on the sea-shore.⁸⁴ This fascination for "nature", which is embodied in poetry and prose passages of detailed

⁸³ Maria Edgeworth, "Angelina or L'Ami Inconnue," Moral Tales, 221-282.

⁸⁴ On the general importance of natural history to writing for children in this period see, R. B. Freeman, "Children's Natural History Books before Queen Victoria," History of Education Society Bulletin 17 (1976): 7-21.

description, in accounts of simple experiments, and in searching question-and-answer routines, has been seen as a rudimentary scientific enterprise.⁸⁵

The complex meanings of "nature" in the late eighteenth century have been extensively investigated. Scholars have focused on the variety of meanings of the term and of those terms - including "society" - to which it was opposed.⁸⁶ In this section, I am concerned with the particular meaning of the term "nature" that I see as predominating in texts for children in the late eighteenth century. This meaning has been defined by Maurice and Jean H. Bloch as "the universal order which implies the harmonious co-existence of human nature and the external world of plants and animals in the countryside."⁸⁷ This definition points to a crucial philosophical problem in the period, the extent to which the workings of human society and the workings of the "natural" world were comparable or indeed the same. Texts for children, as I shall show, were to answer this question in distinctive ways.

Conceptions of gender interacted with definitions of nature in a number of ways in the late eighteenth century. Crucial to my arguments in this section are the ways in which women's relationship to children had been explained. As Ludmilla Jordanova has shown,

⁸⁵ See, for example, Greg Myers, "Science for Women and Children: The Dialogue of Popular Science in the Nineteenth Century," in Nature Transfigured: Science and Literature, 1700-1900, eds. John Christie and Sally Shuttleworth.

⁸⁶ Maurice and Jean H. Bloch have shown the complexity of the term "nature" and women's relationship to it. They also suggest that "nature" was contrasted with a number of opposite terms during the eighteenth century. "Society" is one such term. See their "Women and the Dialectics of Nature in Eighteenth-Century French Thought," in Nature, Culture and Gender, eds. Carol MacCormack and Marilyn Strathern, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 25-41. See also Ludmilla Jordanova, "Introduction" to Languages of Nature: Critical Essays in Science and Literature, with a foreword by Raymond Williams (London: Free Association Books, 1986), 15-47.

⁸⁷ Maurice and Jean H. Bloch, "Women and the Dialectics of Nature," 27.

woman's reproductive role meant that she was seen in medical ideology as being closer to the natural world than men; a relationship formulated in both negative and positive ways.⁸⁸ Whilst women were generally considered less reasonable and logical than men as a direct result of their "natural" reproductive capacities, the importance of women as the moral monitors of children necessarily implied that their "natural" motherhood had a function in the civilization of society. But the role of women as pedagogues, transferring scientific knowledge about the natural world to children in their early years, complicates the paradox even further. The fact that women were delegated the responsibility for imparting scientific information on "nature" and of using it to inculcate morals, distanced them to some extent from their association with nature and authorised them as the agents of culture. This configuration of gender, nature and culture in the late eighteenth century - a configuration to be found in proliferation in texts for children - necessarily conflicted with and modified those contemporary views which aligned women with "nature".⁸⁹

Academic interest in institutionalised scientific endeavour has, until recently, tended to obscure the scientific efforts of women in the past. Though few women played a prominent part in scientific discovery in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, recent scholars including Margaret Alic and Ann B. Shteir have shown that women were the authors of a number of popular scientific tracts in this period.⁹⁰ The

⁸⁸ Ludmilla Jordanova, Sexual Visions: Images of Gender in Science and Medicine Between the Eighteenth and the Twentieth Centuries (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989), 19-24.

⁸⁹ Sylvana Tomaselli discusses women's historical relationship with both nature and culture in "The Enlightenment Debate on Women" History Workshop Journal, 19 (1985): 101-24 and in "Reflections on the History of the Science of Woman," History of Science 29 (1991) 185-205. See also above page 63.

⁹⁰ Margaret Alic aims to set the record straight on women's historical role in science in Hypatia's Heritage: A History of Women in Science from Antiquity to the Late Eighteenth Century (London: The Women's Press, 1986). Chapter 8, "The New Naturalists" is particularly relevant to my arguments in this section, 108-118. Ann B. Shteir also argues that women's popular science writing was a distinctive feature

most prolific were probably Maria Jacson, Margaret Bryan and the Quaker Priscilla Wakefield.⁹¹ Jane Marcet's Conversations on Chemistry, Intended More Especially for the Female Sex (1805), brought a new scientific subject within the domestic environment.⁹²

Whilst these women were primarily "scientists" and only secondarily educationalists, many writers for children, including Thomas Day, Richard Lovell Edgeworth, Maria Edgeworth, Mrs Trimmer, Mrs Barbauld, Mary Wollstonecraft and Charlotte Smith exploited late eighteenth-century "botanomania" and the popular interest in natural history as the basis for moral education.⁹³ Educator figures, many of them women, created lessons by drawing the attention of the children in their charge to various aspects

of science culture in late eighteenth-century England, "Botanical Dialogues: Maria Jacson and Women's Popular Science Writing in England," Eighteenth-Century Studies 23 (Spring, 1990): 301-317. See also Margaret W. Rossiter, "Women and the History of Scientific Communication," Journal of Library History 21 (1986): 39-59.

⁹¹ Maria Jacson (sometimes Jackson), Botanical Dialogues Between Hortensius and Her Four Children: Designed for the Use of Schools (London: J. Johnson, 1797); Botanical Lectures, (London: n.p. 1804); Sketches of the Physiology of the Physiology of Vegetable Life (London: John Hatchard, 1811) and A Florist's Manual: or, Hints for the Construction of a Gay Flower Garden (London: n.p. 1816). Her work is analysed by Ann B. Shteir in "Botanical Dialogues: Maria Jackson and Women's Popular Science Writing in England," Eighteenth-Century Studies. Margaret Bryan's work included: Natural History: A Compendious System of Astronomy (London: n.p. 1797); A Comprehensive Astronomical and Geographical Class Book for the Use of Schools and Private Families (London: Baldwin, Cradock and Joy, 1815) and Lectures on Natural Philosophy with an Appendix Containing Astronomical and Geographical Problems (London: George Kearsley and James Carpenter, 1806). Priscilla Wakefield, An Introduction to Botany: in a Series of Familiar Lessons (London: n.p., 1796), Domestic Recreation: or Dialogues Illustrative of Natural and Scientific Subjects (London: Darton and Harvey, 1805); Instinct Displayed, or Facts Exemplifying the Sagacity of Various Species of Animals (London: Harvey and Darton, 1811) and An Introduction to the Natural History and Classification of Insects, in a Series of Letters (London: n.p., 1816).

⁹² Jane Marcet, Conversations on Chemistry: Intended More Especially for the Female Sex (1805) (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees and Orme, 1806).

⁹³ The correspondence in this period between Maria Edgeworth and the American educationalist Rachel Mordecai Lazarus reveals a close connection between their interests in natural history and in education. See Edgar E. MacDonald, ed., The Education of the Heart: The Correspondence of Rachel Mordecai Lazarus and Maria Edgeworth (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1971). The two women frequently sent each other plants, flowers, and, on one occasion, a parrot from their respective countries.

of the "natural" environment around them often with the aid of assorted literary sources and by showing the similarities between the natural and the social worlds.

In their depictions of "nature", women writers for children dissociated themselves from Romantic science with its emphasis on imagination, individual genius and discovery, and instead adopted a rationalist approach to science focusing particularly on natural history, a topic which included the observation of all natural forms from minerals to man.⁹⁴ In works for children, no less than in greater philosophical works of the period, an interest in natural history was typically construed as consistent with a belief in natural theology.⁹⁵ Both rational and evangelical women writers saw the study of natural history as a means of uncovering a perfect divine order: a world in which the hand of God might be perceived in natural forms and processes.⁹⁶ Though a belief in natural theology was common to writers of both traditions, they differed in the manner of their devotion. Whilst rational writers tended to focus on the scientific explanations behind natural phenomena and reached religion through an understanding of the divine mechanisms at work in nature, evangelical writers delighted in the marvellous variety of nature, suggesting that through a sentimental appreciation of the beauties of the

⁹⁴ See Marina Benjamin, "Elbow Room: Women Writers on Science, 1790-1840," in Marina Benjamin, ed., Science and Sensibility: Gender and Scientific Enquiry (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), 27-59.

⁹⁵ John Gascoigne charts the increased interest in natural theology over the course of the eighteenth century and suggests that in the last decades of the century after the turbulence of the American and French Revolutions there was a general need amongst writers of all religious persuasions to see the immediate and observable hand of Providence at work in nature, "From Bentley to the Victorians: The Rise and Fall of British Newtonian Natural Theology", Science in Context 2:2 (1988): 219-256. At the heart of the period covered by this thesis William Paley produced his Natural Theology: or, Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity, Collected from the Appearances of Nature (London: R. Faulder, 1802).

⁹⁶ Charles Coulston Gillespie stresses that people of all religious denominations were united in a belief in natural theology. He also explains how natural history, which encompassed the descriptive or biological sciences such as botany and zoology, was becoming distinct and separate from the physical sciences - physics and chemistry - in this period. See his Genesis and Geology: The Impact of Scientific Discoveries Upon Religious Beliefs in the Decades Before Darwin (New York: Harper Row, 1959).

natural world, man might obtain salvation.

With its close proximity to the educational environment and its theological overtones, natural history was seen as a familiar and fitting subject for women's education. The qualities required of students of natural history - observation, description, classification and memory - made it a subject entirely befitting the supposedly narrower capacities of the female mind. Botany, horticulture and other kinds of study of the natural world could be pursued in the home and garden and were often seen as an unworldly, and therefore preferable, alternative to the learning of "accomplishments" and indeed to the learning of other developing sciences such as physics and astronomy. Natural history was also a subject that yielded easily to the precise and empirical methods of the preceptress. It was, therefore, a suitable subject for the domestic classroom, not least because it was relatively easy to teach.

Girls were encouraged to draw from nature and to read extracts from literature depicting natural scenes. Botanical drawing necessitated the patient and exact rendering of scientific detail; anatomical drawing of animals, by contrast, was considered improper and time-consuming. Other arguments about gender circulated around the subject of botany.⁹⁷ The appropriateness of young women using the Linnaean system of classification - a system which depended upon a recognition of plant sexuality - was widely debated in the latter part of the century, though the system was generally preferred to other methods.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Ann B. Shteir discusses the gender-specific qualities of the study of botany in "Botanical Dialogues", 307.

⁹⁸ In contrast to the Linnaean system in which plants were simply differentiated by descriptions of their reproductive parts, George Louis de Clerc, Count de Buffon's system, delineated in Histoire naturelle, generale et particuliere, avec la description du cabinet du roi (Paris: de L'Imprimerie Royale, 1749-67),

As Ludmilla Jordanova has shown, the relationship between nature and society had long been regarded as at least partly metaphorical.⁹⁹ Educators in textbooks for children played an interpretative role in the explanation of the meanings of nature to their young charges and in doing so promulgated this metaphorical view of nature and society. The study of natural history, though valuable in itself, was seen mainly as a method of exemplifying other subjects more relevant to the activities of man in society. Debates on natural history were therefore extended to refer to geography, history, art, language, ethics and morals: phenomena and processes occurring in the natural world were used figuratively to explain the workings of society.

It was within this context of writing on natural history that Charlotte Smith published Conversations Introducing Poetry (1804).¹⁰⁰ In this popular book, Smith conveyed scientific information about flora and fauna through poetry adapted from the works of others or composed by herself.¹⁰¹ Readers study the poems alongside prose discourses on natural history.¹⁰² One of Smith's models for this work for children was

emphasised the reproductive history of the plant and suggested that two examples might be of the same species only if they could reproduce fertile offspring. See Thomas L. Hankins, Science and the Enlightenment (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 147. For a detailed study of the various available systems of classification, and of the gendered assumptions of the Linnaean system, see Londa Schiebinger, "The Private Life of Plants: Sexual Politics in Carl Linnaeus and Erasmus Darwin" in Marina Benjamin, ed., Science and Sensibility, 121-143. See also Ann B. Shteir, "Linnaeus's Daughters: Women and British Botany," in Women and the Structure of Society, eds. Barbara J. Harris and Joann K. McNamara (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1982), 67-73.

⁹⁹ Ludmilla Jordanova, ed., Languages of Nature, suggests that nature and society were sometimes viewed as existing in metaphorical relationship to each other and sometimes viewed "as different aspects of the same thing". 39.

¹⁰⁰ Reviews of Smith's book appear in The Lady's Monthly Museum 16 (March 1806): 202-203; and The Monthly Review 49 (Jan. 1806): 79-82.

¹⁰¹ See 2 ii).

¹⁰² The best source of information on the life and works of Charlotte Smith remains Florence May Anna Hilbish, Charlotte Smith: Poet and Novelist 1749-1806 (London: The Mitre Press, 1941). Hilbish comments that Conversations Introducing Poetry, of all Smith's books for children, "persisted the longest and is the most frequently listed", 210. See also Stuart Curran, ed., The Poems of Charlotte Smith. Curran

undoubtedly the two-part epic poem The Botanic Garden (1789-91) by Erasmus Darwin, in which descriptive passages, anecdotes and mythology were tantalisingly interwoven.¹⁰³ Conversations Introducing Poetry aimed to combine the same elements in ways which were simultaneously entertaining and instructive for the young.

Smith's book is composed of ten lengthy exchanges between Mrs Talbot and her two children, George, aged seven, and Emily, aged five. Mrs Talbot acts as poet, editor and commissioner of poems. She continually composes her own verses, searches her book-closet for more famous works and solicits her sister to write on different subjects.¹⁰⁴ The children collect poems on different aspects of flora and fauna and copy them on to drawing cards and into personal poetry books before committing them to memory.

principally examines Smith's sonnets and also includes her poetry for children. See Smith's other children's books for similar uses of literature and natural history: Rural Walks; Rambles Farther: A Continuation of Rural Walks in Dialogues Intended For the Use of Young Persons (London: W. Cadell Jun. and W. Davies, 1796) and Minor Morals: Interspersed with Sketches of Natural History, Historical Anecdotes and Original Stories Intended for the use of Young Persons (London: Sampson Low, 1798).

¹⁰³ Erasmus Darwin, The Botanic Garden: A Poem in Two Parts (Lichfield: J. Jackson, 1789) Darwin was interested in the education of girls and wrote a pedagogical tract entitled Plan for the Content of Female Education in Boarding Schools (London: J. Johnson, 1797). This was for use in the school established in 1794 by his two illegitimate daughters Susan and Mary Parker. Ann B. Shteir points out that the botanist Maria Jacson may have written her first scientific books for use in this school, "Botanical Dialogues", 309. For an account of the poetic and scientific context of The Botanic Garden see Maureen McNeil, "The Scientific Muse: The Poetry of Erasmus Darwin" in Ludmilla Jordanova, ed., Languages of Nature, 159-207.

¹⁰⁴ The book allegedly began as a collection of poetry not intended for publication. Smith, a writer better known for her novels and sonnets, intended to collect poems from other writers to form an anthology of verse for a five-year old female child (probably her granddaughter) who had arrived in England from abroad and could not yet speak English. Finding "very few verses that met with [her] purpose," in works already published, Smith set about making alterations to seven well-known poems and wrote five of her own. Her sister, Mrs Dawson, later a well-known poet herself, contributed the remaining poems. On sending the book to Joseph Johnson, Smith was told that there was not manuscript enough to make even a very small volume. She therefore enlarged the work by adding "conversations" on the subject of natural history. See Appendix B. This preface serves the purpose of disarming possible critics and soliciting an hospitable reception for Conversations Introducing Poetry.

Conversations Introducing Poetry moves deftly from the scientific to the moral, from an enquiry into the workings of nature into an analysis of social issues. The educator figure, Mrs Talbot, generates from natural objects a number of associations which may roughly be categorised as scientific, linguistic or literary, and social or moral. Some examples will elucidate this process. In the first instance, the poems are crammed with factual information about the appearance and life-cycle of plants and animals, as well as their uses for mankind. But Mrs Talbot also uses natural history in the poems to present a number of other kinds of knowledge. For example, Conversations Introducing Poetry moves easily between the world of the garden and the world of literature. In addition to her impressive scientific knowledge, Mrs Talbot has a firm grasp of literary history. In her discussions of poetry she provides a brief chronology of famous writers from the classical poets to Shakespeare, Milton, and Pope and finally to her contemporaries Cowper, Burns, Gray, Dr Warton and Cowley, and the lesser-known Mr Gifford and Mr Crowe. From literary history Mrs Talbot moves on to geography. After reading verses about plants in other countries and climates, George is prompted to ask about the size and content of the forests in France and Germany. The children's vocabularies are extended as Mrs Talbot explains all kinds of words.¹⁰⁵

The import of botany is carried further. Different kinds of plant are used as analogues of the social world to teach the children about distinctions within society. Mrs Talbot makes the observation that fashionable people who keep houses of exotic plants often have no real love of Nature, whilst poor country people by contrast value plants for their

¹⁰⁵ Mrs Talbot explains the names of parts of animals such as "shards" and "corselets" as well as more poetic expressions such as "the red stomacher" - a kind of waistcoat used to describe the robin's red-breast. She also defines other terms used figuratively in the poetry such as "alchemy" and even gives the children a taste of the language of literary criticism itself, explaining concepts such as "personification".

medicinal qualities. Finally, poetry is used to illustrate moral precepts. The thistle that wraps itself around the dwarf furze is compared to "the prejudices and conceits which adhere to the human heart without having their roots in the earth."¹⁰⁶ It is Mrs Talbot's task to forge and then to explain the metaphorical connections between nature and society. She compares, for example, the way in which small animals such as the mouse, bird or squirrel are drawn inexorably to their deaths by the rattlesnake with the way in which some people are drawn to folly. In these ways the preceptress's moral and social purpose to teach children virtue is skilfully attained through a "scientific" discussion of natural history.

Conversations Introducing Poetry is typical in its productive combination of the period's interest in the study of natural history with its fascination for the workings of society and the inculcation of morals in the young. By allowing the female educator to explain and exemplify the metaphorical relationship between what are conceived as the parallel worlds of nature and human society, writers for children, across the religious spectrum, portrayed women as active agents in the construction of knowledge. Scientific educational texts provided what might now be regarded as an integrated curriculum - a detailed study of the workings of nature and the workings of society - a curriculum geared to educational, moral and theological ends.

I have indicated that the preceptress simultaneously embodied both "nature" and "culture" in that her "natural" capabilities as a mother were balanced against her cultural role as imparter of knowledge. Called upon to be knowledgeable about nature, her function in educational discourse is paradoxical, pointing to contradictions between

¹⁰⁶ Charlotte Smith, Conversations Introducing Poetry, 181.

contemporary representations of women as passive domestic creatures and women's evolving role as pedagogues, and thus begging questions of contemporary definitions of appropriate femininity.¹⁰⁷

My analysis of the interplay between the natural and social worlds in quasi-scientific books for children in the period encourages me to challenge Marina Benjamin's assertion of "the childlike benignity" of these works.¹⁰⁸ Benjamin's comparison of children's texts with formal scientific discourse in the period leads her to conclude that such texts were "fragmentary, pedagogic and introductory." I have shown, however, that focusing instead on the ways in which natural history was used to support, exemplify and illustrate moral education in the period - in other words taking "pedagogic" as a term of recommendation rather than depreciation - invites other conclusions. The relationship between the natural and human sciences - a characteristic debate of the late eighteenth century - is both illustrated and, in part, formulated in texts for children in ways that are clear and comprehensible and in which female mentor figures play a prominent part.

5) Educating and Authorship in Works for Children: Some Conclusions

The books I have discussed in this chapter were, in the first instance, directed at women (mothers, governesses and schoolteachers) who read the texts to educate themselves and then to reread them with their younger children and older daughters. As I have shown, in works for children the practice of pedagogy was linked to authorship in a number of

¹⁰⁷ Ann B. Shteir comments on the paradox of this form of science writing in that it "enabled significant scientific knowledge among women who could not move beyond a domestic sphere and who were largely excluded from ... public science," "Botanical Dialogues", 313.

¹⁰⁸ Marina Benjamin, "Elbow Room: Women Writers on Science, 1790-1840," chap. in Science and Sensibility, 47.

ways. Women writers of educational texts, and the educators they depicted, engaged in a variety of similar pedagogical tasks: the collection of educational resources (objects from the home and the garden for example); the provision of educational materials (pins for reading, pictures, drawing cards, reading cards); the search for stimuli for lessons; and the gathering of information from a variety of written sources.

The female writer, like her preceptress, claimed to disseminate rather than to create knowledge, presenting herself as a cypher. Yet her patient transmission of information is frequently accompanied by a note of expertise, originality and technological competence. Writers presumed a broad knowledge on the part of the educators themselves. Pedagogues explained, exemplified, judged and evaluated topics as diverse as religion, economic growth, the rights of animals, botany, geography, natural history, metallurgy, pronunciation, elocution, poetry, fantasy and fable, literature, grammar and foreign languages. Dealing with such a plethora of subjects required wide reading beyond the information actually conveyed to children. Women educators designed a well-rounded curriculum in which what are now regarded as distinct disciplines appeared side by side. Maria and Richard Lovell Edgeworth's stories "Harry and Lucy", for example, combine literature, elementary physics and morals; and Mary Wollstonecraft's Original Stories from Real Life (1788) unites natural history and ethical issues.¹⁰⁹

However, writing for children, as I have shown, amounted to more than the documentation of pedagogical methods. In the preparation of educational materials, women writers and the teachers they depicted were exercising the skills required of

¹⁰⁹ Maria Edgeworth, "Harry and Lucy," in Early Lessons; Mary Wollstonecraft, Original Stories from Real Life.

authorship. In texts for children they grasped the reins of the literary process in all its aspects, immersing themselves in the material aspects of book production, developing editorial skills, exercising the literary-critical responsibilities of their audience and developing a narrative voice.

On a practical level, as their prefaces testify, such writers liaised closely with publishers such as Joseph Johnson and Thomas Cadell and were instrumental in determining such functional matters as the selection of paper, woodcut illustrations and typeface large enough to be picked up by young eyes.¹¹⁰ Moreover, in publishing books that might appeal simultaneously to parents and children, writers for the young became acquainted with the tastes of the wider literary market. Charlotte Smith "confesses" that "in the progress of my work I became so partial to it, as to wish it might, at least the latter part, be found not unworthy the perusal of those who are no longer children."¹¹¹

Both writers and their preceptress characters engaged in a wide-ranging and vigorous literary-critical exercise. Recommending or castigating books to their young audiences, they set about the task of evaluating literature on "useful" rather than aesthetic grounds, and elaborated their own literary hierarchies. Educators from enlightened circles in particular displayed a familiarity with the vernacular literary tradition, with certain popular French authors, and especially with the contemporary fictional and poetic milieu. They scanned novels and poetry for suitable educational examples and widened the

¹¹⁰ On the relationship between women writers and their publishers in this period, see Jan Fergus and Janice Farrar Thaddeus, "Women, Publishers and Money, 1790-1820," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, 17 (1987): 191-207. On methods of publication see "Publishers and Writers in Eighteenth-Century England," in *Books and their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England*, ed. Isabel Rivers (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982), 5-25.

¹¹¹ Charlotte Smith, preface to *Conversations Introducing Poetry*. See Appendix B.

range of educational material available for children by searching out suitable poetry for young learners and producing their own commentaries on it. Other writers compiled lists of literary pieces for elocution practice and moral instruction.

Texts for children reveal women writers fulfilling a number of intellectual functions: the commissioning of material, translation, transcription, the interpretation of biblical types, dreams, moral stories, and mythology. Educators were attentive to the suitability of particular genres and styles to educational ends. Works for children were often an amalgam of different narrative modes. As I have shown, the realist moral tale, the fairy tale, the fable, dreams, letters, dramatic sequences and dialogue - modes available to those women writers without a classical education - each had an interpretative and therefore an educational value independent of the narrative of stories. The management of the different genres and styles, the arrangement of character and the use of dialogue in these moral tales were similar to the techniques required of didactic fiction, for which several of these women writers were also well-known. I deal more fully with the literary-critical role of the female mentor figure in Chapter 3, but in writing for children rational female intervention in culture is apparent at its most rudimentary level.

Some works for children indicate the development of autobiographical and fictional subjectivities. Accordingly, preceptresses were not always stiff, two-dimensional figures. Mary Wollstonecraft's Mrs Mason, for example, otherwise a stern moraliser, is occasionally passionate and emotional:

I lost a darling child, said Mrs Mason, smothering a sigh, in the depth of winter - death had before deprived me of her father, and when I lost my child he died again. The wintry prospects suiting the temper of my soul, I have sat looking at a wide waste of tractless snow for hours; and the heavy sullen fog that the feeble rays of the sun could not pierce gave me back an image of my mind. I was unhappy, and the sight of dead nature accorded with my feelings - for all was

dead to me.¹¹²

Many writers drew on their own past teaching experiences, and some works were presented as part of ongoing educational programmes with family members or pupils.¹¹³ These incipient connections between autobiography and education will be the subject of Chapter 4, but they are a consistent feature of texts for children. The subjectivity of the educating woman was to be developed to greater effect by the novelists of the nineteenth century as Chapter 5 will show. Here, I would simply point to the presence of traits of personality, however undeveloped, in figures usually dismissed as mere cyphers.

As should by now be clear, the entry of dissenting women writers into the processes of literary production for children was affected by considerations of gender and class. In The Female Speaker (1811), a collection of literary extracts for older females designed to train young ladies to read out loud, Mrs Barbauld emphasises how important the femininity of her audience has been to her selection of pieces:

The editor has only to add that this collection, being intended chiefly for females, she has considered that circumstance, not only in having a more scrupulous regard to delicacy in the pieces inserted, but in directing her choice to subjects more particularly appropriate to the duties, the employments and the dispositions of the softer sex.¹¹⁴

Countless "mothers" in moral tales emulate Mrs Barbauld's scrupulous attention to the

¹¹² Mary Wollstonecraft, Original Stories from Real Life, 145.

¹¹³ Mary Wollstonecraft's Mrs Mason undoubtedly draws on the author's experience of governing in Ireland. For biographical accounts of Wollstonecraft see my Introduction, 45. Charlotte Smith had ten children of her own and numerous grandchildren; see Florence Hilbish, Charlotte Smith: Poet and Novelist. Smith's preface to Conversations Introducing Poetry makes clear the connections between her writing for children and her own teaching of members of her family (appendix B). Maria Edgeworth's teaching of her 21 brothers and sisters is well-documented, see for example, Marilyn Butler, Maria Edgeworth.

¹¹⁴ Mrs Barbauld, The Female Speaker: or, Miscellaneous Pieces in Prose and Verse, Selected from the Best Writers and Adapted to the Use of Young Women (London: J. Johnson, 1811), v.

particular needs of her female audience. Like her, they are ruthless in selecting, altering, abbreviating and interpreting what they see as fit literature for their daughters. What younger pupils learnt was also often explicitly dependent on their gender. In Charlotte Smith's Conversations Introducing Poetry (1804), the little girl, Emily, cannot understand the references to classical mythology present in some of the poetry she is asked to memorise, while her brother, George, it is suggested, will learn to understand such allusions at public school. Meanwhile, the mother/teacher, Mrs Talbot, is described as having picked up her knowledge of mythology from the classical knowledge of her older son. Likewise, when the two young children in the Edgeworth's "Stories of Harry and Lucy" show an interest in an elephant, Lucy is given a simple vernacular poem to read whilst Harry reads in Latin about the great Roman Fabricius and an elephant.¹¹⁵ Such texts enact the middle-class ideology of separate educational spheres even as they embody in the preceptress a mediating role between the two.

It was emphatically as classed as well as gendered individuals then that the preceptress addressed her charges. In general, the kinds of knowledge imparted by educator figures were designed to separate middle-class children from both their aristocratic and their vulgar counterparts. Excess wealth was almost universally condemned, poverty charitably pitied. In describing her own life-history, Mrs Talbot in Charlotte Smith's Conversations Introducing Poetry, suggests that educational endeavour might be independent of wealth and status:

I considered that my pursuits and pleasures were totally independent of high birth or high affluence: that the want either of the one or the other would never make me less alive to the charms of nature, or detract one atom of delight from the

¹¹⁵ Maria Edgeworth, "Stories of Harry and Lucy," in Early Lessons, 64-65.

enjoyments of reading and writing. [emphasis mine]¹¹⁶

Mrs Talbot admonishes her daughter for showing off in front of the neighbours, the upper-class and flighty Miss Welthams, but she likewise warns her children against displaying their knowledge in front of the poor children of the neighbourhood for "nothing offends more than pretence to knowledge, in a company which you know cannot possess it."

Although poor children are portrayed as being close to "nature" in educational discourse, only the children of middle-class and gentrified families are shown as being able to translate that "nature" into useful knowledge. To facilitate this process, Smith's Minor Morals gives an appendix in which both the common and scientific names of plants are given. In Conversations Introducing Poetry, Mrs Talbot tells the children that the domestic "guelder rose" has a scientific Latin name and is also known as the "snow-ball" by servants and country people. Corresponding with these three names, different stories are offered about the life-history of the plant which range from the scientific to the superstitious. It is the task of Mrs Talbot to separate these stories from one another and to provide an explanation that is quasi-scientific, but also accessible.¹¹⁷ Moreover, though she encourages a philanthropic sympathy for the poor, Mrs Talbot ensures that her own children do not pick up provincial pronunciation.¹¹⁸ In these ways, like many educators in works for children, Mrs Talbot creates and perpetuates a view of both

¹¹⁶ Charlotte Smith, Conversations Introducing Poetry, 261-2.

¹¹⁷ Marina Benjamin discusses the dichotomy between the refined and the vernacular languages of science in the period and suggests their gendered connotations, "Elbow Room: Women Writers on Science 1790-1840," chap. in Science and Sensibility, 27.

¹¹⁸ Smith uses the rhythm and rhyme of poetry to teach proper pronunciation in Conversations Introducing Poetry.

nature and culture which, I suggest, is specific to her class context.¹¹⁹

*

To sum up, by the first decades of the nineteenth century, a number of well-known women educators from enlightened backgrounds had firmly established themselves alongside evangelical women writers as authors of books for children. Pedagogical concerns had a tangible influence on literary production. As we shall see, these concerns were to spill over from writing for children into more adult genres. Writing for children allowed a particular group of women writers to intervene in the key debates of late eighteenth-century philosophy. In writing for children, they addressed themselves to the realm of the fabulous, the fantastic and the dream, subjected it to reason and showed others how to undertake the same process; the same prerogative for interpretation allowed them to explain the workings of nature and to use this information to adduce lessons about society through which to provide moral instruction.

The work of those women writers described was far more complex and creative, far more attuned to deeper movements in intellectual history, than the simple style of the texts themselves might, at first, suggest. Works for children are a manifestation of the general intellectual preoccupations of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In this period, fashioning relationships between terms such as "reason" and "fantasy" and musing on the meanings of "nature" was a common activity of writers from enlightened circles. In works for children, as I have shown, such terms were often defined, reconciled and made to complement each other through the pedagogical practice of

¹¹⁹ For more on the class issues in Georgian children's literature see Gillian Avery, Nineteenth-Century Children, 189.

female educators. With her good sense and wide knowledge, the preceptress showed the possibilities of a modest agency for middle-class women in the dissemination of culture: it was an agency that her activity in other genres could only refine and enhance.

Chapter 2

The Absent Mrs Gregory: The Preceptress in Advice Literature

You will all remember your father's fondness, when perhaps every other circumstance relating to him is forgotten. This remembrance, I hope, will induce you to give a serious attention to the advices I am now going to leave with you. I can request this attention with the greater confidence, as my sentiments on the most interesting points that regard life and manners, were entirely correspondent to your mother's whose judgement and taste I trusted much more than my own.

I draw but a very faint and imperfect picture of what your mother was, while I endeavour to point out what you should be [emphasis mine].

Dr Gregory, A Father's Legacy to his Daughters (1774)¹

In one of the most popular advice books of the eighteenth century Dr Gregory (1724-1773) invoked the memory of his dead wife to support his efforts to educate his daughters. A Father's Legacy records Gregory's retirement from his chair of medicine at Edinburgh and reports his fears lest, his own health giving way, his daughters should be left orphans. Though Gregory acknowledges the rights and capacities of a father to educate his daughters, he nevertheless constantly appeals and defers to the authority of the absent mother as confirmation of his pedagogical ideals. What is striking about these passages is Gregory's continual recommendation of the mother as advice-giver. The deceased Elizabeth Gregory is portrayed here and elsewhere as a woman of some moral stature.² But whatever her real virtues, she stands, as a textual device, for the

¹ Dr Gregory, A Father's Legacy to his Daughters (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1774), 4-5 and 25. Gregory and his wife Elizabeth, née Forbes, had three sons and two daughters.

² Elizabeth Gregory (daughter of Lord Forbes) was "a lady of beauty, wit and fortune," according to the entry for her husband in The Dictionary of National Biography, ed. Sir Leslie Stephen and Sir Sidney Lee (London: Oxford University Press, 1950).

acknowledged authority of female advice in the last decades of the eighteenth century.³

The importance of recovering advice literature such as A Father's Legacy has recently been demonstrated by Nancy Armstrong.⁴ She suggests that works of advice have often escaped serious scholarly attention because, since they deal with the domestic activities of women rather than great political or economic events, they have rarely been considered to have contributed to history. Armstrong has shown that this oversight depends on an assumption that what constitutes "history" and "politics" is confined to public power relations.

Advice texts provide a rich seam of evidence for the way in which societies have discussed the roles of both women and men: for the history of the representation of gender politics then, they are a prime source. My first task in this chapter is to trace the changing patterns of educational advice-writing in the eighteenth century. I suggest that, from 1780, numerous female writers provided a maternal model of advice which joined, and in some respects superseded, the paternal model afforded by enlightened middle-class male authors such as Dr Gregory. This advice had two primary functions. First it prescribed the content and manner of female education and secondly it showed the domestic woman in her function as educator. Following Armstrong's initiative, I shall suggest that the role of educator was usually construed as an integral part of the

³ Dr Gregory's A Father's Legacy is discussed alongside the advice writing of his contemporary James Fordyce in John Dwyer, Virtuous Discourse: Sensibility and Community in Late Eighteenth-Century Scotland (Edinburgh: John Donald Publications, 1987), 123.

⁴ Nancy Armstrong and Lennard Tennenhouse, The Ideology of Conduct: Essays in Literature and the History of Sexuality (London: Methuen, 1987). See also Nancy Armstrong, Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987). Armstrong sees the ideal of domesticity as defining not only middle-class gender relations, but the formation of the English middle-classes as such. While my argument draws on, and in some respects confirms, Armstrong's argument, her wider challenge to industrial models of class formation lies outside the agenda of this thesis.

domestic role prescribed for middle-class women in the period 1780-1820. But, as I shall show, pedagogy interacted in complex ways with the ideology of domesticity prevalent in the period.

My second aim in this chapter is to make some suggestions about the connection between advice-writing and the novel of education in the last decades of the eighteenth century. In this period, both advice books for women and novels of education dramatically increased in number. The connections between these two kinds of writing are complex and have been widely investigated. My own suggestions about links between the two genres are illustrated with reference to a much neglected work of advice, Maria Edgeworth's Letters for Literary Ladies (1795).⁵ I suggest that the of plot and character delineation, development of the authorial voice and training of the reader that characterise late eighteenth-century novels of education (including those by Fanny Burney, Jane Austen, Elizabeth Inchbald, Mary Hays and Mary Brunton) were simultaneously developed in advice genres.⁶

1) The History of Educational Advice: Some Considerations of Gender

In its inscription of social obligations and relationships, advice was a genre shaped by factors of gender and class. Before the eighteenth century, advice literature had been

⁵ Maria Edgeworth, Letters for Literary Ladies to which is Added an Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification (London: J. Johnson, 1795). In this chapter I refer to the edition by Claire Connolly (London: J. M. Dent, 1993).

⁶ Fanny Burney, Evelina: or, a Young Woman's Entrance into the World, 3 vols. (London: T. Lowndes, 1778); Cecilia: or, Memoirs of an Heiress, 5 vols. (1782) (Dublin: Price, 1774); Camilla: or, a Picture of Youth, 5 vols. (London: T. Payne, T. Cadell Junior and W. Davis, 1796) and The Wanderer: or, Female Difficulties (London: Longman and Co., 1814). Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice: A Novel, 3 vols. (London: T. Egerton, 1813); Sense and Sensibility: A Novel, 3 vols. (London: n.p., 1811), Mansfield Park: a Novel 3 vols. (London: T. Egerton, 1814); and Emma: A Novel, 3 vols. (London: T. Egerton, 1816). Mary Brunton, Discipline: A Novel, 3 vols. (London: n.p., 1814); Self-Control: A Novel, 3 vols. 2nd ed. London: n.p., 1811). Mary Hays, The Memoirs of Emma Courtney, 2 vols. (London: G. G. and J. Robinson, 1796). Elizabeth Inchbald, A Simple Story, 4 vols. (London: G.G. and J. Robinson, 1791).

predominantly written by men and anticipated an aristocratic male readership, though there was a small amount of literature directed at aristocratic females.⁷ By the last quarter of the eighteenth century the picture had changed. A number of men from professional rather than aristocratic backgrounds, including Dr Gregory, were writing advice books for young men and women. These writers were predominantly from rationalist dissenting or Presbyterian backgrounds and many, including Hugh Blair (1718-1800), James Fordyce (1720-1796), and Henry Home, Lord Kames (1696-1782), were Scottish or educated in Scotland. There were also a number of male advice writers from within the Church of England, including Thomas Gisborne. The new advice writers were concerned with the socialisation of youth and were probably inspired by Rousseau's pioneering work on the young *Émile*.⁸ They shared Rousseau's intellectual interest in adolescence though they challenged his emphasis on "natural" education. In their advice to young men, many such writers were concerned with the education of the "whole man" and particularly with education outside formal institutions. One might argue that their approach to youth represented a move towards the feminisation of educational practice in the mid to late eighteenth century, because the issues with which they were dealing - the moral virtues, manners, dress and conversation - were those with which the evolving discourse on women's education was also concerned. Whether advice writing for males grew out of a feminisation of educational thinking or gave rise to an

⁷ For the earlier period, Suzanne W. Hull notes that all but one of the books that she designates as practical guides (a group which includes educational advice books) were written by (or appear to have been written by) men, Chaste, Silent and Obedient: English Books for Women, 1475-1640 (San Marino, Calif.: Huntington Library, 1982), 34. On the conduct books of the seventeenth century, see Ruth Kelso, Doctrine for The Lady of the Renaissance (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1978), and Patricia Crawford, "Women's Published Writings, 1600-1700," in Women in English Society, 1500-1800, ed. Mary Prior (New York: Methuen, 1985).

⁸ On educational writing for young men, see John Dwyer, "The Construction of Adolescence in Late Eighteenth-Century Scotland," chap. in Virtuous Discourse, 72-98. See Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Émile: ou, de l'éducation, 4 tom. (Amsterdam: n.p., 1762), trans. as Emilius and Sophia: or, a New System of Education (London: R. Griffiths and others, 1762).

interest in the education of females at the end of the eighteenth century remains a matter for debate.

From the mid-eighteenth century onwards, the number of advice books directed at females significantly increased.⁹ As we will see, some of the new writers looked back to and criticised the earlier, though still familiar, eighteenth-century purveyors of advice such as Lord Halifax (1633-95) and Lord Chesterfield (1694-1773).¹⁰ Those male writers who advised young women, including Drs Fordyce, Gregory and Percival (1720-1796), and the radical and dissenting women writers who later joined them, such as Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-97) and Catharine Macaulay (1731-91), wrote books of advice aimed predominantly at the middle classes. The vast majority of advice books for females in the period turn on the basic assumption that girls would be confined to a home-based education fitted to their approaching domestic role in society. From this starting point, however, advice could take a number of different directions, from what we might now call overtly "misogynist" to the potentially "feminist." According to Armstrong, the female objects of middle-class advice were explicitly differentiated from their upper-class counterparts by a language of manners and morality as opposed to one

⁹ See Mary Poovey, The Proper Lady and The Woman Writer: Ideology as Style in the Works of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley and Jane Austen (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 3-47. Joyce Hemlow suggests that the high point of such literature lay between 1760 and 1820, "Fanny Burney and the Courtesy Books," PMLA 65 (1950): 732-61. Nancy Armstrong, Desire and Domestic Fiction, suggests that the relative number of conduct books for women appeared to decrease at the end of the eighteenth century "not because the female ideal they represented passed out of vogue", but because, by this time, the ideal of the domestic woman had "passed into the domain of common sense" and appeared in new genres of writing including the novel, 63.

¹⁰ Lord Halifax, The Complete Works of George Savile, First Marquess of Halifax including New Year's Day Gift: or, Advice to a Daughter (1700), 9th ed. (London: D. Midwinter, 1719). Lord Chesterfield, Letters Written by the Right Honourable Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield to his Son, Philip Stanhope, Esq. Late Envoy Extraordinary at the Court of Dresden Together with Several Other Pieces on Various Subjects published by Mrs Eugenie Stanhope from the Originals now in her Possession, 2 vols. (Dublin: G. Faulkner, 1774).

of luxury and leisure.¹¹ As we have seen, in the late eighteenth century, the middle-class domestic woman was also differentiated in pedagogical works from her lower class counterparts.

Armstrong's contention that the changes inscribed in advice works were confined to the middle-class only in this period needs, however, to be treated with some scepticism. John Dwyer has argued, by contrast, that the new prescriptive discourse was aimed at the nation's future cultural élite including aristocratic, gentry, intellectual and professional groups. The evidence appears to confirm that advice works were written in the period for girls from higher social backgrounds. Elizabeth Hamilton's Letters to the Daughter of a Nobleman on the Formation of Moral and Religious Principle (1806) inculcates similar notions of domestic womanhood to those described by writers aiming at groups in the middle of the social hierarchy.¹² Like Wollstonecraft and Macaulay, Hamilton decried mere "accomplishments" and advocated "useful" learning and the preparation of young women for the teaching of their own children. In similar ways to those writers from the rationalist tradition who addressed middle-class audiences, she drew on associationist methodologies of education. Her book, in other words, attests to the possibility that certain key assumptions about middle-class female education may have been shared by sections of the gentry. Such shared assumptions suggest that the

¹¹ Nancy Armstrong, Desire and Domestic Fiction, 19-20, "The curriculum aimed at producing a woman whose value resided chiefly in her femaleness rather than in traditional signs of status, a woman who possessed psychological depth rather than a physically attractive surface, one who, in other words, excelled in the qualities that differentiated her from the male. As femaleness was redefined in these terms, the woman exalted by an aristocratic tradition of letters ceased to appear so desirable. In becoming the other side of this new sexual coin, the aristocratic woman represented surface instead of depth, embodied material instead of moral value, and displayed idle sensuality instead of constant vigilance and tireless concern for the welfare of others. Such a woman was not truly female." [emphasis mine].

¹² Elizabeth Hamilton, Letters to the Daughter of a Nobleman on the Formation of Moral and Religious Principle, 2nd ed. (London: T. Cadell and W. Davis, 1806). See Gary Kelly, Women, Writing and Revolution, 1790-1827 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 126-161 and 265-304. Kelly states that Hamilton's book was addressed to Lady Elizabeth Bingham, daughter of Lord Lucan, 274.

gendered educational ideals attributed by Nancy Armstrong among others, to "the rise of the bourgeoisie" may have had a more complex provenance - may have drawn on older discourses characterising the lives of the gentry and the nobility, or may have been part of a mutual re-evaluation and reconstruction of gender roles by both the upper and the middling classes.¹³

The corpus of work to which this chapter is devoted requires some clarification.¹⁴ The study of advice literature (which will also be referred to as prescriptive literature) involves several problems of definition including distinctions of audience, of subject matter, and of what is loosely termed "genre" (though this covers a number of issues to do with content and form). Advice literature was geared towards specific sections of the population, distinguished by age and sex as well as by class. This chapter considers those books directed primarily at young middle-class females, broadly from the ages of fourteen upwards, though works for younger children have been included where the author advises the educator at length. Moreover during the period 1780-1820 advice was written on a multitude of topics from social etiquette to recipe books.¹⁵ Many volumes addressed the teaching of a number of interrelated skills. This chapter focuses on those

¹³ Armstrong consistently implies that the domestic female ideal emanated exclusively from the middle-classes and contributed to the distinctive character of the middle classes. Desire and Domestic Fiction, 8 and passim.

¹⁴ For a useful early guide to the multitude of educational advice works written for women in this period, see Barbara Schnorrenberg, "Education for Women in the Eighteenth Century," Women and Literature 4 (1976): 49-55.

¹⁵ Nancy Armstrong's Desire and Domestic Fiction illustrates the range of domestic advice literature available in this period. For a useful selection of passages from advice works, see Vivien Jones, Women in the Eighteenth Century: Constructions of Femininity (London: Routledge, 1990). Advice books for women in earlier periods have been examined by Suzanne W. Hull, Chaste, Silent and Obedient and Ruth Kelso, Doctrine for the Lady of the Renaissance. See also John E. Mason, Gentlefolk in the Making: Studies in the History of English Courtesy Literature and Related Topics from 1531-1774 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1935) and George C. Brauer, The Education of a Gentleman: Theories of Gentlemanly Education in England, 1660-1775 (New York: Bookman Associates, 1959).

books which emphasise moral education and the training of educators rather than more practical issues such as cookery or the training of servants.

Volumes of educational advice appearing in this period are difficult to categorise in terms of genre - indeed it might be argued that all the various genres examined in this thesis fall under the category of advice works. As such works came to be aimed at the instructors of younger and younger audiences, "amusement" increasingly tempered straightforward didacticism. The inclusion of lighter elements was assumed to be the special talent of women writers, who frequently opened their books with boasts of their abilities to combine the supposedly opposite impulses of "amusement" and "instruction". In Maternal Instructions, for example, Elizabeth Helme (1787-1814) suggested that as "the value of knowledge is not, in general, sufficiently appreciated by young minds," she has "clothed" her advice "in the guise of amusement."¹⁶ New genres were thus generated by the combination of advice with entertainment, and prescription often appeared in the form of informal epistolary conversations, maternal dialogues and humorous anecdotes.¹⁷ At the younger end of the market, advice genres blended into the kinds of works for children that I have enumerated in Chapter 1.

Other advice works were aimed at a more informed audience, and bore a generic resemblance to religious tracts, histories of women, works of literary criticism and anthropological studies. At this end of the spectrum, educational advice was therefore blended with the kinds of socio-political and literary-critical works I analyse in Chapter

¹⁶ Elizabeth Helme, Maternal Instructions: or, Family Conversations on Moral and Entertaining Subjects Interspersed with History, Biography and Original Stories (London: M. and S. Brooke, for T. N. Longman and O. Lees, 1804), i.

¹⁷ I discuss the importance of the epistolary technique on 159.

3. Mary Wollstonecraft's A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792), to take a prominent example, considered the historical, political and anthropological situation of women, whilst also functioning as a work of advice.¹⁸ And although most of the works examined in this chapter advocated the improvement of women through the cultivation of their reason, judgement and moral feeling, more conservative evangelical writers such as Thomas Gisborne and Hannah More were not slow to appeal to theological discourse, and to the problematical place of women in it, to justify equally vigorous programmes of educational reform.¹⁹

I conceive that educational advice broadly encompasses all of these works, though their style, content and degree of intellectual depth vary considerably. The frequency of references to advice literature in other kinds of writing of the period suggests that, even if they were not given a practical application, advice books were commonly read as part of a middle-class female education.²⁰ The sheer amount and variety of advice literature would seem to imply that there was considerable anxiety about female education, though it is also possible that such writings constituted a kind of "currency" among networks of middle-class women. By the end of the century, I would argue, the demands of pedagogy allowed a number of women to enter a communal and semi-public realm of educational discourse in which advice and advice books could be exchanged and in which the discussion of pedagogical expertise could form a kind of social transaction.

¹⁸ Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (London: J. Johnson, 1792). I refer in this chapter to the edition by Miriam Kramnick (London: Penguin, 1975).

¹⁹ Thomas Gisborne, Enquiries into the Duties of the Female Sex (1797), 8th ed. (London: T. Cadell and W. Davis, 1808) and Hannah More, Strictures on Female Education with a View of the Principles and Conduct Prevalent Among Women of Rank and Fortune 2 vols. (London: T. Cadell Jr. and W. Davis, 1799).

²⁰ For a sceptical view of the real effect of advice works on societies, see J. Mechling, "Advice to Historians on Advice to Mothers," Journal of Social History 9 (1979): 44-63.

As we shall see, the diversity, accessibility and versatility of advice writing - and the range of teaching and learning positions to which it gave rise - seem to have contributed to the confidence with which women writers engaged in other, less directly utilitarian, modes of writing, including the novel of education.

i) "In the Eye of My Own Sex": Prescription and the Paternal Preceptor

Although writers of many religious persuasions produced advice for young people, there was, as I have indicated, an increasingly important tradition of advice writing by male writers within rational or enlightened circles. The three most significant of these writers for my purposes, Drs Fordyce, Gregory and Percival, had been educated at the Scottish universities or had been associated with the Dissenting Academies such as that in Warrington. I focus on these writers here because they provided a context, a set of concerns and a practical attitude towards education which was to be imitated and elaborated by a number of women writers at the end of the century. Critical to this advice writing was an emphasis on the surveillance and advice of parents in the education of youth.²¹

In response to the fashionable interest in parenting, male writers adopted a fatherly stance towards their readers, though as I shall show, there were some problems inherent in this model. The notion of "fatherhood" as grounds for advice was, to some extent, borrowed from the earlier advice writers to whom I have already referred. Lord Halifax and Lord Chesterfield had tended, however, to deploy a concept of fatherhood that was remote and abstract rather than intimate. Lord Halifax's The Lady's New Year's Gift:

²¹ As John Dwyer has commented, "The external environment could seduce [youth] and lead it astray. Thus youth needed to be strictly supervised. Parents, in particular, were instructed to win over their hearts and to establish control through friendship," Virtuous Discourse, 74.

or, Advice to A Daughter (first published in 1700) is addressed to Halifax's own daughter but the language is stiff and authoritarian.²²

You must take it well to be prun'd by so kind a hand as that of a Father. There may be some bitterness in meer Obedience. The natural love of Liberty may help the Commands of a Parent harder to go down. Some inward resistance there will be, where Power and not Choice maketh us move. But when a Father layeth aside his authority, and persuadeth only by his Kindness, you will never answer it to good Nature, if it hath not weight with you.²³

Here Halifax's conciliatory tone is underpinned by a consciousness of the importance of fatherly authority. His Advice to a Daughter reveals the advice-writer's ability to construct a gendered writer whilst purporting to design an educational object:

Whether my skill can draw the picture of a fine Woman, may be a question: but it can be None that I have drawn that of a kind Father. If you will take an exact Copy, I will so far presume upon my workmanship, as to undertake you shall not make an ill-figure. Give me so much Credit, as to try, and I am sure that neither your wishes nor mine shall be disappointed by it.²⁴

Halifax's Advice to a Daughter went into twenty-five editions during the eighteenth century. However, by the time his grandson Lord Chesterfield's Letters to his Son were published in 1774, the high-born assumptions of both writers about the importance of refined manners above moral instruction were to be widely contested and were to prove a ready target for a generation of middle-class prescriptive writers eager to carve out a new space for parental authority.²⁵

The later writers also adopted the paternal model, though they were now more often of the professional classes and their fatherhood was perceptibly less austere. In A Father's

²² Lord Halifax, The Complete Works.

²³ Ibid., 1-2.

²⁴ Ibid., 2.

²⁵ Lord Chesterfield, Letters to his Son. See Roger Coxon, Chesterfield and his Critics (London: G Routledge and Sons Ltd, 1925). See also John Dwyer, Virtuous Discourse, 74.

Instructions to his Children (1776), a book of advice for very young children of both sexes, Dr Percival (1740-1804), a retired doctor of dissenting sympathies, sets the scene for his lessons by depicting himself as a weary father who may now settle down with his children having escaped "the bustle of the town and the anxieties of an active profession."²⁶ He describes himself as a "faithful and affectionate father", and "a guardian, a friend, and father." For Percival, successful instruction depends on shared family experience and inspiration:

It is our wisdom therefore, and I trust it is our mutual wish, to improve the fleeting period of our union; to cherish the generous sympathies which the filial and paternal relations inspire; and to discharge our reciprocal duties with assiduity, delight and perseverance.²⁷

In similar vein, Dr Gregory's A Father's Legacy describes the writer as a middle-class father whose advice will be of greater benefit to his daughters than the more detached tones of the "nice moralist":

Paternal love, paternal care, speak their genuine sentiments, undisguised and unrestrained. A father's zeal for his daughters' improvement, in whatever can make a woman amiable, with a father's quick apprehension of the dangers that too often arise, even from the attainment of that very point, suggest his admonitions, and render him attentive to the thousand little graces and little decorums, which would escape the nicest moralist who should undertake the subject on uninterested speculation. Every faculty is on the alarm when the objects of such tender affection are concerned.²⁸

Gregory and Percival, therefore, were keen to champion the importance of intimate familial contact within education. But as Gregory showed, there were inherent problems for men in this scenario. Gregory's masculinity implicates him in the dangers he fears for his daughters, and he is anxious to correct this impression:

²⁶ Dr Thomas Percival, A Father's Instructions to his Children: Consisting of Tales, Fables and Reflections Designed to Promote the Love of Virtue, a Taste for Knowledge and an Early Acquaintance with the Works of Nature, 2 vols. (London: J. Johnson, 1776).

²⁷ Dr Percival, A Father's Instructions, I: 9.

²⁸ Dr Gregory, A Father's Legacy, vi-vii.

You will hear at least for once in your lives, the genuine sentiments of a man who has no interest in flattering or deceiving you.²⁹

In the final instance, Gregory's focus is double. Caught between his fatherly solicitude and his difference from his daughters, he directs himself to their happiness but at the same time represents the interests and attentions of men:

While I explain to you that system of conduct which I think will tend most to your honour and happiness, I shall at the same time, endeavour to point out those virtues and accomplishments which render you most respectable and most amiable in the eye of my own sex. [emphasis mine]³⁰

As John Dwyer has shown, the male advice writers of the late Scottish Enlightenment had very definite ideas about the role of women in society. Though they advocated a modicum of learning for women, they also emphasised women's special attributes - in particular their "complacency" or "sensibility" - attributes which supposedly differentiated them from men.³¹ Although he could advise his daughters, Gregory's gender, his education and the expectations of society, meant that he could not be a direct example to them.

Gregory also oscillates between the claims of fatherhood and those of authorship. Mary Wollstonecraft in the Vindication of the Rights of Woman astutely comments that "[Gregory's] melancholy tenderness of a husband and father is submerged beneath a degree of concise elegance conspicuous in many passages, that disturbs the

²⁹ Dr Gregory, A Father's Legacy, 6.

³⁰ Dr Gregory, A Father's Legacy, 8. See Lord Halifax whose paternal solicitude also finds itself at odds with his status as a man. In his lengthy section on husbands, he warns his daughter to ignore her husband's sexual misdemeanours and other faults of temper. Though he outlines the faults of his own sex, he cannot condemn them, The Complete Works, 118.

³¹ John Dwyer, Virtuous Discourse, 117-140.

sympathy."³² In the same vein, she points to the uneasy juxtaposition of authorship and fatherhood, "We pop on the author where we only expected to meet the father!" As Wollstonecraft's remark suggests, the metaphorical links between parenting, authorship and prescription could be problematical for the advice writer. For men, the professionalisation of letters and the domestication of fatherhood seemed at times to pull in different directions.

If A Father's Legacy to his Daughters fails to reconcile Gregory's dilemma between his role as educator, his gender and his role as writer, it does make an important gesture towards a possible solution. As I have indicated, Gregory's invocation of his dead wife acts as a source of inspiration and as a reminder to the reader of female pedagogical influence. Though he is keen to depict the benefits of a paternal education, Gregory admits to his daughters that the quality of his advice is necessarily limited by his sex:

You had the misfortune to be deprived of your mother at a time of life when you were insensible of your loss, and could receive little benefit, either from her instruction or her example - before this comes to your hands, you will have likewise lost your father...You must expect that the advices which I shall give you shall be very imperfect, as there are many nameless delicacies in female manners, of which none but a woman can judge.³³

Gregory ultimately suggests that women, and particularly mothers, might more successfully meet the demands of domestic educational advice and authorship.

ii) "Silken Fetters": The Maternal Model of Advice

As I have indicated, a number of prominent women writers published educational advice in the last two decades of the eighteenth century. Hannah More's Strictures on Female

³² Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1975), 196.

³³ Dr Gregory, A Father's Legacy, 1-5.

Education revealed her position within Anglican ranks.³⁴ But the majority of women prescriptive writers including Mary Wollstonecraft, Catharine Macaulay and Elizabeth Hamilton had connections, or at least sympathies, with the same dissenting and Presbyterian circles as Drs Gregory, Percival and Fordyce. Writers of all religious persuasions promulgated the idea of the importance of middle-class women as educators, though their approach and emphasis in this respect differed. More saw women as the bastion of religious principle not only within the home but beyond, and as the saviours of children from original depravity. She promoted the role of middle-class women within communities as teachers in Sunday schools and as visitors of the poor. The tradition of advice I discuss here also focused on the home but concentrated on the content of female education and the construction of the woman as domestic educator. Such writers concentrated on the processes and methods by which reason, and by extension, moral virtue might be inculcated in the young.

a) "A Regular Plan"³⁵

Traditionally, advice for women, especially that written by men, had turned from the practicalities of managing the household to the moral qualities that women should either cultivate or avoid. The various chapters of Lord Halifax's Advice to a Daughter, for example, had dealt with husbands, the house, family and children, servants, expenses and clothes, behaviour and conversation, friendships, censure, vanity, affectation and pride, religion and diversions. In the same vein, Dr Gregory had covered religion, conduct and behaviour, amusements, friendship, love and marriage. Although there was a certain amount of agreement about the virtues to be inculcated in women, such writers

³⁴ Hannah More, Strictures on Female Education.

³⁵ Elizabeth Hamilton, Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education (1801), 5th ed. (Bath: R. Cruthwell, 1816).

tended to be vague about how these virtues could be engendered. Though male prescriptive writers typically emphasised the development of moral characteristics, they paid little attention to the actual processes of teaching and learning.

Towards the end of the century, a number of women writers attempted to redress the vagueness of such well-known prescriptive texts by suggesting practical plans for education. Elizabeth Hamilton's Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education (1801) is typical in its complaint that "from an education conducted upon no regular plan, we acquire no regular association in our ideas, no accurate arrangement, no habit of mental application." Hamilton begins her work of advice with a lengthy description of the principle of association and how it might be applied, with examples.³⁶

The practical impetus of texts by women extended to an analysis of what kinds of education might be suitable for the daughters of different ranks of society. Clara Reeve's Plans for Education (1792) discussed the activities of charity schools and schools of industry for the poor as well as considering the education available in more expensive boarding schools for the wealthy. Priscilla Wakefield's Reflections on the Present Condition of the Female Sex: With Suggestions for Its Improvement (1798) divided society into four classes and recommended that daughters of the first two classes - the nobility and the opulent middle class - should be taught either at home or in boarding or day schools respectively.³⁷ Mary Wollstonecraft's Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792) suggested plans for a national schools system in which boys and girls

³⁶ Ibid.. See my Introduction, 48, and see Appendix A.

³⁷ Priscilla Wakefield, Reflections on the Present Condition of the Female Sex: with Suggestions for Its Improvement (London: J. Johnson, 1798), 54. See also a discussion of Wakefield's proposals in P. J. Miller, "Women's Education, 'Self-Improvement' and Social Mobility: A Late Eighteenth-Century Debate," British Journal of Educational Studies 20 (1972): 302-314, here 311-312.

from all classes might be educated together.³⁸

The best-known educational text for girls in the late eighteenth century was probably Hester Chapone's Letters on the Improvement of the Mind (1773) which was republished twenty-five times before 1844 and was frequently printed as a companion volume to Dr Gregory's A Father's Legacy to his Daughters.³⁹ In these twin volumes, Chapone might be considered to have figuratively stepped into the place vacated by Mrs Gregory. Her book, which takes the form of letters addressed to a niece in Yorkshire, places moral subjects such as "the Regulation of the Heart and Affections" and "the Government of the Temper" alongside advice on how to manage the household economy, and information on "Geography and Chronology" and "the Manner and Course of Reading History." By framing Gregory's text as general and introductory, Chapone is able to construct a niche for herself in which she supplements his more abstract precepts with more practical educational material.

Whilst Chapone frequently asserts that women are less intellectually capable than men, she also insists that women should "never lose an opportunity of enquiring into the meaning of anything they meet with in poetry, painting, theology, history, morality and physics". Her comments on the study of natural philosophy are typical of the kinds of domesticated learning she advocates for females:

Natural philosophy, in the largest sense of the expression, is too wide a field for you to undertake; but the study of nature, as far as it may suit your powers and opportunities, you will find a most sublime entertainment: the objects of this study

³⁸ Clara Reeve, Plans for Education with Remarks on the System of Other Writers: in a Series of Letters between Mrs Darnford and her Friends (London: T. Hookham and J. Carpenter, 1792); and Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman.

³⁹ Hester Mulso Chapone, Letters on the Improvement of the Mind Addressed to a Young Lady, 2 vols. (London: J. Walter, 1773).

are all the stupendous works of the Almighty hand, that lie within the reach of our observation. [emphasis mine]⁴⁰

Far from remaining ignorant of cultural and scientific knowledge then, middle-class female readers of books such as Chapone's were encouraged to acquire a modicum of knowledge in a surprising variety of subjects. This knowledge was considered entirely consistent with the demands of the developing domestic role for women: rather than encouraging them to enter the public arena, such knowledge was considered to enrich the private world of conversation and to facilitate domestic harmony. In Letters on the Improvement of the Mind, women were invited to partake of what might be seen as a more modest and more entertaining version of the male curriculum.

Women writers of educational advice believed that they offered something different and superior to their male counterparts. In 1803, for example, Miss Hatfield, who addressed her book to "a celibate man who thinks women are stupid", suggested that unlike the advice of "the mere Theorist who is frequently discovered to amuse the public with impracticable schemes", she will offer advice as "the result of reflection, of observation, of some professional experience and of a tender regard for the happiness and dignity of the sex."⁴¹ The well-known women writers on advice were increasingly seen as forming their own tradition and their works inspired lesser writers. With reference to the writing of Mrs Trimmer, Jane West, Hannah More and Elizabeth Hamilton, Mrs Cockle in her own Important Studies for the Female Sex comments:

Treading with equal humility and admiration in their steps, I aspire not to that high pinnacle they have attained; but entering the portal with deference and veneration, I offer only one apology for the attempt, "my anxious and watchful

⁴⁰ Hester Chapone, Letters on the Improvement of the Mind (London: Scatcherd, Letterman and others, 1773), 164.

⁴¹ Miss Hatfield, Letters on the Importance of the Female Sex with Observations on their Manners and Education (London: J. Adler, 1803), i.

tenderness for you"[emphasis mine].⁴²

This emphasis on the writer's regard for the upbringing of a particular individual is a commonplace of such advice works. The affection it denotes may be merely a literary trope, but it nevertheless suggests that the relationship between educator and educated was predicated on sympathy. This sympathy extended metonymically to the relationship between author and reader, as well as informing the structure and plot of contemporary novels of education. Mary Wollstonecraft's The Wrongs of Woman; or Maria (1798), for example, opens with a letter addressed from the central protagonist to her daughter.⁴³

ii) "The Most Proper and Attractive of all Teachers"⁴⁴

Advice works by rational women writers revealed a common awareness of the importance of the mother figure in the education of children.⁴⁵ Elizabeth Helme justified her emphasis on the mother figure in Maternal Instructions thus:

As I regard an informed mother the most proper and attractive of all teachers, I have chosen that character as the principal, in the following sheets. [emphasis mine]⁴⁶

For the most part, it seems, the instruction of children featured as a crucial and entirely proper part of women's domestic role. Elizabeth Helme's teacher figure, Mrs Thornhill,

⁴² Mrs Mary Cockle, Important Studies for the Female Sex in Reference to Modern Manners Addressed to a Young Lady of Distinction (London: C. Chapple, 1809), iii.

⁴³ Mary Wollstonecraft, The Wrongs of Woman: or, Maria (London: J Johnson, G.G. and J. Robinson, 1798).

⁴⁴ Elizabeth Helme, Maternal Instructions, iii.

⁴⁵ Kate Flint describes a similar situation in the mid-nineteenth century and suggests that advice books "claimed for themselves something of the ideological role of the mother which was constructed within their own covers," "Advice Manuals, Informative Works, and Instructional Articles," chap. in The Woman Reader, 1837-1914 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 71-117.

⁴⁶ Elizabeth Helme, Maternal Instructions, iii.

comments that:

To the mother of four fatherless children, as I alas! now am, that spot must be most agreeable where she can best educate them: that is now my first earthly duty, I owe it to you, to my conscience and to your ever honoured father.⁴⁷

There is no contradiction here between the domestic role and the role of pedagogue. In the education of boys, mothers were considered to be more "natural" educators than fathers. They were seen in the roles of consoler and adviser to their sons. Mrs Pilkington's Mentorial Tales (1802) suggests that:

in the more advanced stages of education, even when a boy is removed from his mother's anxious wing, she still retains that ascendancy over his affections which fathers have the art to gain. As years increase and his passions become stronger, he frequently sighs to break the chain of parental power; yet patiently submits to the silken fetters with which maternal fondness subdues impetuosity, and binds him to her heart.[emphasis mine]⁴⁸

But if sons were to benefit from a mother's advice, how much greater advantages might be achieved by daughters? Mrs Pilkington suggests that a daughter might learn from her mother's example as much as from her advice, and that a mother could best enter into the feelings of a young female for she alone would "reflect what she needed, how she was assisted, and what she feared" when she herself was young.⁴⁹

The life histories of mothers and daughters were thus commonly seen as inseparable, in that the qualities of a mother were legible in the behaviour of her daughter and vice-versa. Even where daughters were to be educated at school, the mother figure remained important. The title page advertisement for Ann and Jane Taylor's Correspondence between a Mother and Daughter at School (1817) states that:

⁴⁷ Ibid, 2.

⁴⁸ Mrs Mary Pilkington, "The Amiable Artist or Filial Fondness Displayed," chap. in Mentorial Tales for the Instruction of Young Ladies just Leaving School and Entering upon the Theatre of Life (London: J. Harris, 1802), 199.

⁴⁹ Mrs Pilkington, Mentorial Tales, 200.

the method of letters from a mother was adopted, as the most natural and convenient, and as the most likely to engage the attention of those for whose use the volume was designed.⁵⁰

To some extent, then, the notion of a smooth transition between household duties and the instruction of children is borne out in advice works of the period. Often such works show the mother directly instructing her pupils as she undertakes other tasks such as sewing or cooking. But this straightforward equation of motherhood and pedagogy masks a number of problems. Though the educating mother was frequently portrayed as contiguous with the domestic middle-class woman of advice works, she was also distinguishable from her.

The chief difference, perceived by many writers, was the necessary proximity of the mother to her children. This proximity was not required to the same extent in the domestic woman's other household tasks which could easily be delegated to servants.

Nancy Armstrong comments that:

the main duty of the new housewife was to supervise the servants who were the ones to take care of matters.⁵¹

In the education of children, unlike the other household duties, the idea of servants or others "taking care of matters" was problematical. Pedagogy involved a direct intervention in the minds of the young and as such was regarded as an activity that should not be put into the hands of the unqualified. Mothers could not easily hand over the task of pedagogy to others. The arguments characterising this debate took a number of different forms and in different ways led to the fracturing of the ideal of female

⁵⁰ Ann and Jane Taylor, advertisement to Correspondence Between a Mother and her Daughter at School (1817), 4th ed. (London: Taylor and Hessey, 1817).

⁵¹ Nancy Armstrong, Desire and Domestic Fiction, 67.

domesticity. The debate over which women might be the best educators of their children led to discussions in advice works on the distribution of roles within the household. Increasingly the moral and rational potential of middle-class mothers was pitted not only against their aristocratic counterparts, as Armstrong claims, but also against governesses, against female servants and nurses, and against those mothers who entrusted their children to the care of others.⁵²

Priscilla Wakefield considered pedagogy to be far more important than the other household duties. In Reflections on the Present Condition of the Female Sex (1798) she commented:

mothers only can be expected to make the sacrifices necessary for this important work: no other person can feel the same interest in the event, nor can any occupation in which they might be engaged have so powerful a claim upon their attention, unless it be for the actual support of the family. It is a very erroneous misapplication of time, for a woman who fills the honourable and responsible character of a parent, to waste her days in the frivolous employment of needlework, or the executive minutiae of domestic affairs, for which substitutes of equal ability may be so easily provided, if she be capable of taking an active part in forming the minds of her children.⁵³

As can be seen, Wakefield believed that if necessary, other activities ought to be dropped in favour of pedagogy. Similarly Mrs Cockle in her Important Studies for the Female Sex is adamant that the mother alone should teach her children:

And can a mother delegate to another the most sacred, the most cherished of her duties? that of watching the gradual unfoldings of the mind, of directing and alleviating its views, and fixing in it the principles of truth, virtue and honour? No, it is an awful responsibility, which ought not, which cannot be transferred. Nature forbids it, and claims from your hand the treasure she has committed to your care.⁵⁴

⁵² See my comments on the dangerous imaginations of servants and nursemaids in Chapter 1, 102.

⁵³ Priscilla Wakefield, Reflections on the Present Condition of the Female Sex, 39-40.

⁵⁴ Mrs Cockle, Important Studies for the Female Sex, iii.

But there were also those who argued that mothers themselves might not be suitable for the task of pedagogy. Miss Hatfield in her Letters on the Importance of the Female Sex suggests that the emergence of mother-educators (which she identifies as a recent historical phenomenon) might have its dangers. Motherhood itself did not exempt middle-class women from their psychological weaknesses, indeed it might well augment them:

mothers are become the ostensible governesses of their daughters; although very few can be found among them, who, either from the extremes of maternal softness or severity, an irritability or capriciousness of mind, arising from dissipation or from inferior knowledge, are calculated for the philosophic patience and researches of education. ⁵⁵

This anxiety over the mental attributes of mothers recalls Mary Wollstonecraft, who in A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, commented that:

It is [the] want of reason in their affections which makes women so often run to extremes, and either be the most fond or the most careless and unnatural mothers. ⁵⁶

In the absence or the failure of mothers, prescriptive writers proposed substitutes for daughters of the upper and middling classes including governesses and boarding-school teachers. These women were sometimes quizzed for their lack of training but met less resistance on the grounds of class than their later nineteenth-century counterparts. Advice texts of the late eighteenth century tended to accentuate the practical and intellectual skills required of all educators, be they paid or unpaid. Many governesses were gentlewomen fallen on hard times and it was hoped that they might, therefore be absorbed into existing family structures. Anxieties about the governess generally

⁵⁵ Miss Hatfield, Letters on the Importance of the Female Sex n.

⁵⁶ Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1975) 265

concerned her abilities to do the job properly rather than - as was later the case - her "status incongruence".⁵⁷ Miss Hatfield complained of the governess:

she is expected to be an epitome of knowledge; she is to know and communicate the various branches of polite instruction; the French and Italian languages, music, drawing, painting, geography, astronomy, dancing, writing, arithmetic and needlework - parts of education which require half the life of an individual to attain a professional knowledge of. ⁵⁸

Though there were evidently exceptions to this portrayal, it might be said that the disruptions signalled by the economic, and indeed sexual, status of the governess later in the nineteenth century were not so significant in the earlier period.⁵⁹ The main threat posed by the governess appears to have been to the moral and intellectual authority of the mother.

2) The Woman Writer and the Possibilities of Prescription.

As I have indicated, prescriptive writing, though based on and contributing to emergent gender and class ideologies, was by no means an homogenous body of work. Indeed, by the end of the eighteenth century, middle-class readers were familiar with the contours and conventions of advice writing and the genre was ripe for experimentation.

⁵⁷ I allude here to M. Jeanne Peterson, "The Victorian Governess: Status Incongruence in Family and Society," in Suffer and Be Still: Women in the Victorian Age, ed Martha Vicinus (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), 3-19. This examines the unusual class status of the nineteenth-century governess

⁵⁸ Miss Hatfield, Letters on the Importance of the Female Sex, 98.

⁵⁹ On this point, therefore, I disagree with Armstrong's suggestion that the governess, because she performed domestic tasks for money, was represented as a "morally bankrupt" figure, "... the governess was commonly represented as a threat to the household. Whether she was in fact a person of breeding fallen from economic grace or someone of lower rank who hoped to elevate herself through a genteel education, she was marketing her class and education for money," Desire and Domestic Fiction, 78-79. Armstrong uses the figure of the governess to illustrate the "absolutely rigid distinction" between domestic duty and labour that was performed for money - a distinction which she sees as crucial to this period generally. It is significant that Armstrong's example at this point is from a much later nineteenth-century text, Mrs Matilda Marian Pullan, Maternal Counsels to a Daughter: Designed to Aid her in the Care of her Health, Improvement of her Mind and Cultivation of her Heart (London: n.p., 1855). In Chapter 5, I suggest that Jane Austen's Emma (1816) might be considered to mark a transition between late eighteenth- and later nineteenth-century depictions of the governess. References to scholarly work on the governess appear in the introduction and in that chapter, 14, 290 .

Certain features of advice literature enhanced this possibility. Advice literature provided a forum in which very different views on women's history, education and anthropological characteristics could be aired. We have seen that a number of well-respected male prescriptive writers had expressed forceful views on women's education during the course of the eighteenth century. As the body of female-authored advice texts increased, women writers became less deferential to, and indeed, often attacked the work of their male predecessors.

Prescriptive literature by men was considered, by several women writers, to employ a pompous terminology and contradictory set of assumptions about women. Writers noticed that although advice texts described supposedly inherent differences between the sexes, they nevertheless indulged in strict sermonising on how to make sure girls and young women did not transgress the limits of female propriety. For instance, though Dr Gregory believed that women had a "natural" character and a place in society peculiar to their sex, and made continual references to women's special attributes, he also advocated a policing of women's activities and female behaviour, including what women should and should not read, what they should watch at the theatre and how they should exercise. What was referred to as "sex" and described as natural and unchanging, was, in fact, a much more malleable concept that was actively being constructed in the pages of A Father's Legacy. Female prescriptive writers were not slow to notice the logical flaw in many arguments about women's education: it was hardly fair to judge women's educational capabilities in the same way as men's, when women had rarely been given the same opportunities to learn.

Women writers eager to subvert (what they figured as) male models of advice seized

upon such discrepancies. Some tackled the dictates of prescriptive writing by straightforwardly debunking some of its suppositions. The potential of advice literature for satire had already been exploited by Swift in his Directions to Servants and Other Miscellaneous Pieces, 1733-1742.⁶⁰ But whilst Swift's satire was mischievous and biting, that of the later women writers was also instructive: it depended on readers being conversant with the advice traditions which I have outlined above. The historian Catharine Macaulay (1731-91) produced a forthright condemnation of contemporary prescriptive practices in her Letters on Education: with Observations on Religious and Metaphysical Subjects (1790).⁶¹ This book proposed that differences between the sexes were not natural but "entirely the effects of situation and education." As in Chapone's work, Macaulay's Letters on Education were addressed to a young female relation, Hortensia, and it covered the practicalities of female education as well as the inculcation of more abstract moral qualities. Most famous amongst the female critics of advice writing was Mary Wollstonecraft, whose Vindication of the Rights of Woman marked a departure from her acceptance in Thoughts on the Education of Daughters (1788) of women's subordinate station within education.⁶² The Vindication of the Rights of Woman opened with a resounding attack on what Wollstonecraft called the "false system of education, gathered from the books written on this subject by men who, considering females rather as women than human creatures, have been more anxious to make them alluring mistresses than affectionate wives and rational mothers."⁶³ I will show in

⁶⁰ Jonathan Swift, Directions to Servants and Other Miscellaneous Pieces, 1733-1742 (1745), ed. by Herbert Davis (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1964).

⁶¹ Catharine Macaulay Graham, Letters on Education with Observations on Religious and Metaphysical Subjects (London: n.p., 1790).

⁶² Mary Wollstonecraft, Thoughts on the Education of Daughters with Reflections on Female Conduct in the More Important Duties of Life (1787), (Clifton: Augustus M. Kelley, 1972).

⁶³ Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1795), 79.

Chapter 3 how Wollstonecraft condemned traditional advice writers, both for their assumptions about women's innate inferiority and for their wordy style. Advice writing was also a popular target for more obscure writers. Ellen Weeton in her Journal, for example, indulges in a lengthy disquisition on the insidiousness of Lord Chesterfield's advice.⁶⁴

Other prescriptive writers were more subtle in their attacks on standard advice works and this subtlety was aided by their adoption of a versatile narrative form, the epistolary technique. The greatest works of epistolary fiction had arguably been produced before 1780, in works such as Richardson's Pamela (1741), Rousseau's Julie: ou, La Nouvelle Héloïse (1761), and Fanny Burney's Evelina (1779).⁶⁵ The popularity and largest volume of epistolary writings, however, belong to the period 1780 to 1800 and, as Frank Gees Black has illustrated, the technique was used in a wide range of non-fictional materials, as well as novels and serialised stories in periodicals.⁶⁶ The epistolary genre had "feminine" connotations. The best-known epistolary novels of earlier decades had depicted the development of female subjectivities. Moreover, the epistolary form was favoured by female authors. Black informs us, for example, that of the 74 writers who

⁶⁴ Ellen Weeton, The Journals of Ellen Weeton, 1807-1822, ed. Edward Hall, with a new introduction by J. J. Bagley, 2 vols. (Newton Abbot: David and Charles reprints, 1969), 303-304.

⁶⁵ Samuel Richardson, Pamela: or, Virtue Rewarded in a Series of Familiar Letters From a Beautiful Young Damsel to her Parents, 4 vols. (London: n.p., 1741); Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Julie: ou, La Nouvelle Héloïse (1761), trans. into English as Eloisa: or, a Series of Original Letters Collected and Published by J.J. Rousseau, 4 vols. (London: R. Griffiths, T. Becket and P. A. de Handt, 1761); Briand, 1789); and Fanny Burney's Evelina (1778).

⁶⁶ In his early study of epistolary fiction, Frank Gees Black suggests that the production of epistolary works rose to its highest point in 1788 and then declined steadily to 1800, though it maintained its popularity throughout these twenty years. He uses statistical material from the unpublished papers of Professor Chester Noyes Greenough, whose project, "Bibliography of Prose Fiction from 1740-1832," was left incomplete at his death. Black traces in graph form the rise and fall of various forms of narrative prose in the period covered by this thesis, The Epistolary Novel in the Late Eighteenth Century: A Descriptive and Bibliographical Study (Oregon: Oregon University Press, 1940), 174. See also Godfrey Frank Singer, The Epistolary Novel (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1933).

wrote epistolary fiction between 1781 and 1790, 26 were men and 48 were women.⁶⁷

As Mary A. Favret has shown, whilst the letter form was an entertaining genre for fiction, it was also well-adapted to the purposes of propaganda.⁶⁸ This included, particularly, the dissemination of educational theories. Through the epistolary form, the personal anecdotes of educationalists could be made palatable to a wide audience whom, it was hoped, would incorporate what they read into their own private experience of teaching. The published letter, therefore, allowed women to negotiate the tricky boundaries between private experience and public utility, a negotiation which was particularly difficult for middle-class females in this period and one which was at the heart of educational thinking. Moreover, the convention of letter-writing allowed advice writers to put forward several contrasting philosophies at once.⁶⁹ In this way, the writer herself was freed from the exigency of synthesising educational problems, and the final judgement of character motives, and behaviour lay with the reader whose own moral education was effected through the experience of reading itself. Moreover, the economy of epistolary correspondence was one which would have been familiar to young readers; letter-writing was a skill taught to young women and "letter-writers" were popular

⁶⁷ Frank Gees Black, The Epistolary Novel, 5. Black goes on to comment that "it is safe to say that between two thirds and three fourths of the total product from 1760-1790 was by ladies."

⁶⁸ Mary A. Favret, Romantic Correspondence: Women, Politics and the Fiction of Letters (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). Favret looks particularly at the epistolary writings of Helen Maria Williams, Mary Wollstonecraft, Jane Austen and Mary Shelley. She considers the importance of the role of the Post Office in the late eighteenth century alongside a more literary evaluation of epistolary discourse. See also Elizabeth Goldsmith, ed., Writing the Female Voice: Essays in Epistolary Literature (Boston: North-Eastern University Press, 1987); Janet Gurkin Altman, Epistolarity: Approaches to a Form (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1982) and Ruth Perry, Women, Letters and the Novel (New York: AMS Press, 1980).

⁶⁹ Favret refers to the "democratising power of correspondence". It might be argued that the possibility for divergent viewpoints allowed by the letter form in some ways created as much as it reflected the interest in instruction in the period. Frank Gees Black, The Epistolary Novel, "Many of the novels with theses and many of the stories based on elaborate contrast bear essentially on the processes of instruction. Several fictional correspondences... are mainly interesting as educational documents," 36-37.

handbooks. The style, composition and use of vocabulary contained in the letters of advice books could be used to denote many aspects of the character and education of the correspondents.

Such letters were written between tutors, between parents and their offspring, between governesses and their charges and between the pupils themselves. In educational texts for girls, the most common device was the juxtaposition of two female friends or sisters whose lives were improved or ruined by their education. Typical of such texts was the anonymously published The Twin Sisters or the Effects of Education (1789).⁷⁰ The epistolary form allowed for the expression of contrasts: the differences, for example, between age and youth, males and females, old-fashioned views and progressive ones, the moral and the immoral, the town and the country, and the merely "accomplished" and the truly virtuous. Educational epistles were also popular in France where several works, including Madame de Genlis's Adèle et Théodore (1782), were frequently translated and reprinted.

Writers from the enlightened traditions I have outlined often used the epistolary form to convey educational advice.⁷¹ Mary Wollstonecraft's final unfinished work was, for example, an epistolary text entitled Letters on the Management of Children (1797).⁷² Elizabeth Hamilton's Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education, and Letters to

⁷⁰ A Lady, The Twin Sisters: or, the Effects of Education (London: T. Hookham, 1788).

⁷¹ Madame Stéphanie Félicité Comtesse de Genlis, Adèle et Théodore: ou, lettres sur l'éducation contenant tous les principes relatifs aux trois différens plans d'éducation des princes, des jeunes personnes et des hommes, 3 tom. (Paris: n.p., 1782).

⁷² Mary Wollstonecraft, Letters on the Management of Infants (begun 1797) in Posthumous Works of the Author of a Vindication of the Rights of Woman, ed. William Godwin, 4 vols. (London: J. Johnson, 1798), 4:55-7.

the Daughter of a Nobleman are one-sided epistolary conversations, the latter to the daughter of a real family with whom she had stayed. Clara Reeve's connected epistolary texts, Plans for Education (1791) and The School for Widows (1792), chart the changing fortunes of three female friends, and in The Two Mentors (1783) Reeve contrasts the views of two tutors, one debauched and the other respectable, in their letters to a young man.⁷³ The epistolary technique, with its "feminine" traits and its aptitude for disseminating theory, was thus a key component of the late eighteenth-century feminisation of educational advice.

3) Parodying Prescription: Maria Edgeworth's Letters for Literary Ladies (1795).

I have argued that stylistic techniques such as the use of letter-writing ensured that the very organisation of advice works drew attention to issues of gender. At the same time, the genre drew attention to the importance of gender in the construction of authority and the authorial voice. Fathers were constrained and mothers affirmed in the advice that they could offer to daughters. However, whilst middle-class mothers and their elected surrogates represented a powerful didactic presence, other kinds of women and other femininities posed a threat to ideals of domesticity. Even within enlightened educational discourse, various ideals of womanhood were contrasted and pitted against each other. Focusing on Maria Edgeworth's epistolary advice work, Letters for Literary Ladies (1795), I shall show, in this section, how she manipulated the familiar gendered conventions of educational advice to her own instructive purposes and offered ways of blending prescription and fiction.⁷⁴

⁷³ Clara Reeve, Plans for Education and The School for Widows (London: T. Hookham and J. Carpenter, 1791), and The Two Mentors: A Modern Story (London: Charles Dilly, 1783).

⁷⁴ Maria Edgeworth, Letters for Literary Ladies (1993). This edition points out the scarcity of critical commentary on Edgeworth's text. Contemporary reviews include The Analytical Review, 23 (1796): 524-527; and The Critical Review 19 (1797): 170-174.

The biographical context of Maria Edgeworth's work illuminates the place of Letters for Literary Ladies in a career that consistently blended literary and educational aims.⁷⁵ By 1795, when Letters for Literary Ladies was published, the Edgeworths had developed a view of education as a practical necessity for both sexes, best carried out in the home environment under the constant supervision and guidance of a real father or mother: their books were derived from records of the lessons taught to Maria Edgeworth's numerous brothers and sisters. Though they did not suppose that boys and girls should receive an identical education, the Edgeworths saw great potential for the improvement of society in the training of girls. Maria Edgeworth's first literary venture was, significantly, a translation of Madame de Genlis's Adèle et Théodore, a well-respected example of the epistolary educational novel in which two noble women sent each other advice on the education of their children.⁷⁶ With her father, Edgeworth later published the textbook Practical Education (1798) which detailed the actual processes of teaching various subjects, including science and mathematics.⁷⁷ Later she was to write numerous tales for children in which morals were conveyed through simple realism. Her novels Belinda (1801), Leonore (1806) and the later Helen (1834) described the

⁷⁵ The definitive biography of Maria Edgeworth remains Marilyn Butler's Maria Edgeworth: A Literary Biography (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972). See also Frances Anne Edgeworth, A Memoir of Maria Edgeworth with Selections from her Letters, 3 vols. (London: privately printed, 1867) and Isabel Constance Clarke, Maria Edgeworth, her Family and Friends (London: Hutchinson, 1950). More interest has recently been shown in Maria Edgeworth both as a novelist and as an educationalist. See, for example, Twila Yates Papay, "Defining the Educative Process: Maria Edgeworth's Belinda," in Eighteenth-Century Women and the Arts, eds. Frederick M. Keener and Susan E. Lorsch (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), 141-149. Papay examines the connections between Edgeworth's Belinda (1801) and her earlier tales for children.

⁷⁶ Madame de Genlis, Adèle et Théodore. Janet Todd states that this translation was completed but later recalled before publication in 1783, A Dictionary of British and American, 1660-1800, (London: Methuen, 1987), 110-111. De Genlis's book was later translated by an anonymous translator, Adelaide and Theodore: or, Letters on Education: Containing all the Principles Relative to Three Different Plans of Education, 3 vols. 3rd ed. (London: C. Bathurst and T. Cadell, 1783).

⁷⁷ For a close analysis of the gendered notions of education at work in Practical Education, see Greg Myers, "Science for Women and Children: The Dialogue of Popular Science in the Nineteenth Century," in Nature Transfigured: Science and Literature, 1700-1900, eds. John Christie and Sally Shuttleworth (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), 171-200.

consequences of various educational programmes on the sensibilities of young women.⁷⁸

Letters for Literary Ladies marks the moment at which Edgeworth's prolific writing career began in public. Modesty and a liberal upbringing coupled with the discouragement of her father's friend, Thomas Day, meant that Edgeworth was unwilling, in this period, to write anything that might be regarded as a novel. The book's indeterminate generic status - somewhere between a work of advice and a novel - reveals an advice-writer caught in the well-worn paradox of aiming to warn women against certain kinds of literary pursuit whilst herself indulging in producing a semi-fictional work, an author who is shy of the implications of the "literary." Letters for Literary Ladies seeks a way out of this moral puzzle by fusing prescription and fiction in ways which are educative for the reader.

The book considers the education of young ladies and, in particular, the *difficult position* of "literary ladies": a term which Edgeworth uses variously to designate learned women, women who write and the representations of women in literature.⁷⁹ It has been described by Edgeworth's best-known biographer, Marilyn Butler, as an "immature" work of "uneven quality and disparate nature," and certainly, by comparison with

⁷⁸ Maria Edgeworth, Belinda, 3 vols. (London: J. Johnson, 1801), Leonore (London: n.p., 1806), and Helen: A Tale, 3 vols. (London: n.p., 1834).

⁷⁹ Autobiographical considerations inform the pages of Letters for Literary Ladies. Marilyn Butler has pointed out the similarities between the letters of a gentleman and his friend and the real correspondence of Thomas Day and Richard Lovell Edgeworth. The newly-born daughter who is the subject of the debate might therefore represent Maria herself, who ironically publishes the letters as a "literary lady" later in life. Links have also been suggested between Julia, the flighty romantic writer of the second set of letters, and Maria's childhood friend, Fanny Robinson, who became the fashionable Mrs Charles Hoare. In this debate, Caroline would therefore represent Maria herself. Marilyn Butler, Maria Edgeworth: A Literary Biography, 173.

Edgeworth's later educational work - her clearly-plotted moral tales and novels - it is something of a hotchpotch of narratorial styles and concerns.⁸⁰ In this case-study, however, I challenge Butler's view of inconsistency by suggesting that Letters for Literary Ladies makes sense if it is considered as a site in which several prescriptive traditions are actively compared and contrasted.

Letters for Literary Ladies consists of three separate, though related, pieces of writing on the subject of female education and in particular on the relationship between the ideal of domestic womanhood and women's desire to learn. The first and second pieces are epistolary conversations similar to those in the advice tradition that I have documented above. The first correspondence consists of two lengthy letters, "Letter from a Gentleman to his Friend upon the Birth of a Daughter" and "Answer to the Preceding Letter," between mature, male friends on the education of a newly-born daughter. The second, "Letters of Julia and Caroline," is a correspondence over several years between two younger middle-class female friends. The final piece, "An Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification," instructs young women in unscrupulous ways of obtaining influence over a husband and is in the form of a lecture delivered by a single anonymous, and ungendered, mentor figure.

In "Letter from a Gentleman to his Friend on the Birth of a Daughter", and the reply it elicits, Edgeworth sets in opposition two supposedly logical, and internally consistent, narratives on the education of women written by men. The two advice-givers share a "gentrified" social and intellectual background. The second letter is carefully constructed to mirror the reasoning of the first and the language of both pieces is erudite and

⁸⁰ Butler's comments are a rare piece of criticism of Letters for Literary Ladies, *ibid.*, 173.

philosophical, drawing on contemporary views of the past and on literature concerning the position of women.⁸¹ The first gentleman, who argues against an equal education for women, suggests that intelligent women are "prodigies" and "monsters". His objections range from the practical consideration that women have less time and opportunity than men to learn because of their domestic duties, to considerations for the supposed good of women themselves; learning will make them unattractive, unable to make friends, unable to find a husband, and open to slights on their reputation. He suggests that husbands of learned wives will suffer from the lack of attention paid to domestic affairs. With reference to examples from recent European history, he argues that the learned women of the French and British courts have, in the past, brought about political disaster. He turns to the contemporary context to show that women writers have published nothing of utility, and that they have contributed nothing to science or to any other learned pursuit. In the opinion of the first gentleman, therefore, the ideal of domestic womanhood is entirely incompatible with serious learning.

The real father (the second gentleman), on the other hand, responds by countering each of his friend's arguments, sometimes by direct refutation, sometimes by qualification, sometimes by reversing the cause and effect pattern which has been suggested and by making it clear that he is not concerned with prodigious intelligence in women but with normal understanding. As readers we are encouraged to take his part. His counterarguments are straightforward: it is not true, for example, that women have less time than men, for in fact they have more time. They have fewer opportunities to learn

⁸¹ For Edgeworth's male correspondents, the history of women is of central importance to women's current status. A preoccupation with the history of women was a common feature of philosophical, prescriptive and history writing in the period. See Jane Rendall, "Introduction" to William Alexander's History of Women from the Earliest Antiquity to the Present Time Giving Some Account of Almost Every Particular Concerning that Sex, Among All Nations, Ancient and Modern (1779), 2 vols. 3rd ed. (Bristol: reprint Thoemmes Press, 1994).

because men have created the conditions of their learning. Far from making women less attractive, intelligence can make them beautiful. Moreover, there are enough intelligent women available to ensure that learned ladies need never be lonely and the best marriages are made between men and women of equal understanding. Rational women will make better wives because they will have a more astute understanding of how the domestic economy works and single women may also be usefully employed in literary pursuits. The political havoc supposedly wreaked by learned women in the past is an irrelevant argument, according to the father, since it does not take into account the neglect of women's education in the past.

For the father, then, domestic womanhood could and should be augmented by moderate learning. To the arguments of the first gentleman, he counters a very specific analysis of the contemporary historical moment and recent developments in female education. "Ladies" have become "more ambitious to superintend the education of their children" and "the mother, who now aspires to be the beloved instructress of her children, must have a considerable portion of knowledge." The art of teaching, he writes, has been carried to such perfection "that a degree of knowledge may now with ease be acquired in the course of a few years, which formerly it was the business of a life to attain."⁸² This has made it easier for women to study. Some subjects, such as botany, chemistry and arithmetic, have been adapted particularly to suit the needs of women in the sense that they are tailored to fit their domestic duties. In short, learned women and their educational history have been misunderstood by men. The father concludes with an appeal to the example of other contemporary male writers, including Dr Gregory, whose learned wives have been an asset rather than a liability. To sum up, the father not only

⁸² Maria Edgeworth, Letters for Literary Ladies (1993), 20.

advocates the compatibility of domesticity and learning but also recognises the importance of women as educators.

As may be apparent, the two letters gather together many of the concerns of educational advice texts for women in this period. Moreover, they enact a satirical parley with each other and with contemporary advice literature. The letters are characterised by a superfluity of scholarly trappings, and it is apparent that one of Edgeworth's targets is the tradition of that paternalist school of advice which has perpetrated a false idea of women's academic and literary achievement by drawing on skewed examples from history and by misusing classical scholarship. Male advice to women may be skilful, but it can also be dishonest, self-delusory and riddled with bias, contradiction and misapprehension. By these means, Edgeworth provides a battery of counterargument for anyone facing conventional misogynistic opposition.

In contrast with the weighty deliberations of the two gentlemen, "Letters of Julia and Caroline", the second piece in Letters for Literary Ladies, engages with a less erudite, more popular, debate about women and education. Here the issues are battled out in a fictional correspondence over several years between two middle-class women. Again, Edgeworth plays with the connections between gender and genre already well-established in advice writing, and the correspondence imitates the informal, confidential epistolary style of many female-authored advice works.

"Letters of Julia and Caroline" deals with the familiar debate between the opposing claims of "reason" and "imagination" on the vulnerable female mind. The contrast between Julia and Caroline is typical of that embodied in other epistolary advice works

in the period. Julia's flighty reading habits in girlhood lead to her misguided choice of a husband, to the collapse of her marriage, morals and health and finally to her death. Indeed, Julia's life becomes a re-enactment of the kinds of narrative that she reads, and her moral laxness is implied by her own loose, fanciful, epistolary style.⁸³ Crucial to her ultimate downfall is her failure to act as pedagogue to her children. Having decided to marry the aristocratic and lavish Lord V rather than Caroline's less affluent, but more respectable brother, Julia finds herself with no time to take care of her children and is forced to hire a governess to educate them. When her marriage falls apart, Caroline advises her to make amends for her own shortcomings by teaching her children:

Dear Julia, whilst it is yet in your power, secure to yourself a happier fate; retire to the bosom of your own family; prepare for yourself a new society; perform the duties and you shall soon enjoy the pleasures of domestic life; educate your children; whilst they are young, it shall be your occupation; as they grow up, it shall be your glory. Let me anticipate your future success, when they shall appear such as you can make them; when the world shall ask who educated these amiable young women? Who formed their character? Who formed the talents of this promising young man? Why does this whole family live together in such perfect union? With one voice dear Julia, your children shall name their mother; she who in the bloom of youth checked herself in the career of dissipation, and turned all the ability and energy of her mind to their education.⁸⁴

But Julia fails to take up the mantle of education. In her last moments she arrives at Caroline's house and is reunited on her deathbed with her daughter. This narrative of flawed motherhood and neglected pedagogy is the tragic centre of the tale and reinforces one of the most significant educational themes of Letters for Literary Ladies: that the destiny and goal of married women lies in the education of their children. By contrast with Julia, Caroline's philosophical reading and sensible education, her espousal of reason rather than imagination, lead to a model marital life of domestic bliss - a life heralded in the sober prescriptive tones of her letters. She comments that she believes

⁸³ A later work by Maria Edgeworth, "Angelina or L'Ami Inconnue," develops this very theme of misguided sensibility, in Moral Tales for Young People, 5 vols. (London: J. Johnson, 1801).

⁸⁴ Maria Edgeworth, Letters for Literary Ladies (1993), 53.

that "the powers of [Julia's] reason had been declining, and those of [her] imagination rapidly increasing; the boundaries of right and wrong seemed to be no longer marked in [her] mind."⁸⁵ Caroline's reason makes her the perfect wife and mother, a role in which domesticity and pedagogy go hand in hand.

The first and second pieces of Letters for Literary Ladies are chiefly connected by their juxtaposition of rational and irrational views of women's education, with both sets of views inflected by issues of gender. There are evident contrasts between them based on the gender of the writers and the correspondingly "masculine" or "feminine" style of their discourse. The third section, "An Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification", on the other hand, offers no such dialogue of views. The gender of the speaker is not announced, though the terse foolhardiness of some of the statements recalls the misogynist viewpoint of the first gentleman. The piece purports to be a serious lecture on female education to an audience of young brides, but is, in fact, both a facetious satire on undisciplined femininity within marriage and another swipe at the conventions of pedagogical advice itself. The imagined reader is endlessly addressed as: "candid pupil", "fair pupil", "reasonable pupil", and so on while the overuse of recognised pedagogical terms, "precept", "practice", "axiom", "maxims", "principles", "study", "argument", "debate", "opinions", and "lesson" points to the narrator's limitations. The imperative mood maintained throughout is a deliberate sally at the remorselessness of some educational texts for girls.

Despite its strict, hectoring tone, the essay is highly ironic, begging the reader to read between the lines and in many cases to understand the exact opposite of what is being

⁸⁵ Ibid., 56.

proposed. A few examples will suffice to illustrate its humorous flavour. The educator's first axiom, for example, is that women should expect and endeavour to obtain men's submission to their authority. A young woman should develop a loud voice in order to override her husband; she should study his weaknesses so that she might "break his spirit with perpetual petty skirmishes." Women must learn to express their opinions by opposing authority to argument and assertion to proof; they must learn to deny their own faults, and blame other people. The "art of reasoning" may be used to counteract the opinions of a reasonable husband. In discussion the wife must learn to talk in general rather than specific terms in order to foster ambiguity; she must shun definitions, go over the same ground many times, wander from the point and use weapons that her adversary cannot use. If she cannot reason like her husband, she should adopt wit, and if she is not witty, she should flounce out of the room or provoke her husband by changing the subject in the midst of his arguments. According to the essay, in fact, women should adopt all the characteristics that are the antithesis of those displayed by rational wives. Though the essay is one-sided, the earlier pieces have prepared the reader to recognise weak and ludicrous arguments. As a result, the essay effectively enters into a dialogue with the reasoning skills of its readership.

Though each section of Letters for Literary Ladies might stand alone, the three are linked in numerous ways. Each, for example, is based on the premise that a sound education for women involves a training in reason and judgement, and that domesticity is enhanced by a degree of learning. The first and second sections of Letters for Literary Ladies are linked chronologically; it might be argued that Julia is the daughter created by the first gentleman in the earlier set of letters, whilst Caroline, in her domestic happiness founded on reason, is the woman described by the father. In her depiction of

Caroline and the father, Edgeworth posits a thoughtful rationalism that is shown to be within the capacities of both males and females. By the third piece the reader is equipped to challenge the ridiculous claims of the narrator.

Letters for Literary Ladies could therefore be termed a textbook as much as a work of advice in that it trains the reader to reason through its clever manipulation of the familiar epistolary form. Edgeworth teaches the reader to recognise obscure logic and faulty reasoning, to compare and evaluate viewpoints, and to appreciate irony. The reader learns to discriminate between different narrative styles and different didactic voices. Rather than simply imbibing the conclusions of a straightforward didactic voice, the reader learns the principles of a good moral education by developing a wariness of the text itself.

Contrary to Marilyn Butler's claims of inconsistency, then, Letters for Literary Ladies is a cohesive piece of writing: the three sections being most fruitfully read in the light of the others. Letters for Literary Ladies assumes a critical understanding of at least three genres of advice: the works of male advice writers from the rationalist tradition; the more recent epistolary advice by women and the one-sided lecture. Most crucially, the book engages with several different models of female educability and several different plans for education in quick succession. The audience is invited to judge the educators as much as the subjects of education; and to pay attention to the processes by which Edgeworth, as writer-mentor, achieves her effects and by which they, as readers, learn from their own reading.

4) Prescription and the Novel of Education

In the last decades of the eighteenth and first decade of the nineteenth centuries, a number of women educationalists from the liberal and enlightened traditions I have identified turned their attention to novel-writing, significantly adding prescriptive ideas about female education to the themes of female subjectivity that had already been adumbrated in a number of different kinds of fiction from Richardson onwards. Scholars of the late eighteenth century have identified an openly didactic impulse as an important development in the novel as the century drew to a close. Of course, readers had been asked to adduce serious lessons from comic narratives throughout the eighteenth century: in Moll Flanders, for example, Defoe asks the reader to judge Moll's life for him or herself.⁸⁶ Moreover, as Jane Spencer has shown, a significant didactic tradition had already been established by earlier eighteenth-century writers such as Mary Davys (1674-1732) and Eliza Haywood (1690/3-1756).⁸⁷ The educational novels produced at the end of the century, however, in drawing upon advice texts and popular representations of pedagogy which were not available earlier in the century, treat the reader as a pupil and direct him or her much more rigorously. As Frank Gees Black has pointed out, the author of the "problem" novels of the late eighteenth century guides the reader firmly towards the correct moral conclusions.⁸⁸

My survey of the rational development of prescriptive writing by and for women shows

⁸⁶ Daniel Defoe, Moll Flanders (1722) (London: The New English Library Ltd., 1964). Defoe's relaxed approach to the response of his readers is signalled in his preface where he addresses his novel to "those who know how to read it", vi.

⁸⁷ Jane Spencer, The Rise of the Woman Novelist: From Aphra Behn to Jane Austen (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 140-144.

⁸⁸ On the epistolary novels of the period 1791-1800, Frank Gees Black comments, "the author is at pains to leave no possibility of the reader missing the point or giving consideration to the opposing argument," The Epistolary Novel, 80.

that this development in fiction was the result of an exchange of techniques and conventions between the genres. This exchange was the result of a number of factors. In the first instance several women writers at the turn of the century, including Mary Wollstonecraft and Elizabeth Hamilton, published works of advice alongside their educational fiction.⁸⁹ Others, such as Fanny Burney and Jane Austen drew on their childhood reading of advice works, making explicit references in their novels to advice works and borrowing from the themes and conventions of educational advice for their characters and plots.⁹⁰ The mutual influence of prescription and fiction was further enhanced by the epistolary technique common to both genres. By the end of the eighteenth century, the dialogue between fiction and prescription was so well-established that some novels of education were indistinguishable from advice works.⁹¹ As Thomas H. Kavanagh has argued, fiction and prescription in this period are united by their concentration on and handling of the relationship between the sexes to the extent that the rhetorical differences between the genres might be ignored.⁹²

The complexities of advice works, such as those I have demonstrated in Letters for

⁸⁹ Mary Wollstonecraft's Thoughts on the Education of Daughters (1787) and A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792) precede her novel, The Wrongs of Woman: or, Maria (1798). Elizabeth Hamilton's novels were Memoirs of Modern Philosophers, 3 vols. (Bath: R. Cruthwell, 1800) and The Cottagers of Glenburnie: A Tale for The Farmer's Inglenook (Edinburgh: Manners, Miller and S. Cheyne, 1808).

⁹⁰ The most famous example of this appears, of course, in Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice, (1811) when Mr Collins reads to the Bennet girls from Dr Fordyce's Sermons on Young Women (1766). Chapter 5 of this thesis deals in more detail with the connections between Jane Austen's Emma and prescriptive advice.

⁹¹ This scenario led to a favourite paradox of advice texts and educational novels: the recommendation in works which were themselves structured along the lines of fiction that women should not read novels. One result of this paradox was a hierarchising of novels within educational writing. Educational novelists claimed that they were writing something morally superior to other kinds of novel.

⁹² Thomas H. Kavanagh, "Educating Women: Laclos and the Conduct of Sexuality," in The Ideology of Conduct: Essays in Literature and the History of Society, eds. Nancy Armstrong and Lennard Tennenhouse, 142-159.

Literary Ladies, were developed in equally complicated ways in the novels of education of the late eighteenth century. The educational scenarios described in advice literature provided novelists sympathetic to the ideals of these works with ready-made plots for fiction.⁹³ There was enormous scope for authorial experimentation, for example, in the prospect of young girls ignoring advice, following the wrong advice or taking advice too literally.⁹⁴ Moreover, there was great potential for romance, tragedy and comedy in the gap between prescriptive ideals and real life. The device of dichotomous female figures, the representatives of reason and imagination, was a common feature of such novels. Fiction, like advice literature, invoked and interrogated alternative versions of femininity and especially described women in terms of the way in which they matched, or failed to live up to, the ideal blend of domesticity, learning and aptitude for pedagogy. Finally the novelist used the readers' familiarity with prescriptive literature to develop subtler possibilities for the authorial voice. In educational novels, authorial authority and what was expected of the reader developed, to some extent, out of the flexibility accorded to such roles in contemporary works of advice.

In Chapter 5, I shall show how Jane Austen manipulated the conventions and assumptions of advice literature in Emma (1816) to produce a highly skilful narrative in which definitions of womanhood - and particularly ideas about female pedagogy -

⁹³ Jane Rendall has suggested that the theme of self-mastery - a rational control of female emotions so common in prescriptive educational works - was often the key to the plot in late eighteenth-century novels of education. Rendall also suggests that novels served to popularise the ideas that educationalists had made elsewhere in advice literature. Jane Rendall, "Educating Hearts and Minds," chap. in The Origins of Modern Feminism: Women in Britain, France and the United States, 1780-1860 (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1985), 108-149, here 111-112. In a similar vein, Joyce Hemlow has made thematic connections between contemporary advice literature and Fanny Burney's novels, "Fanny Burney and the Courtesy Books," PMLA.

⁹⁴ In her novel, Discipline (1815), for example, Mary Brunton suggests that the lack of a mother's clear moral guidance is one of the causes of the heroine's later misadventures. See Discipline (1815) with an introduction by Fay Weldon (London: Pandora Press, 1986).

competed for attention and in which the narrator exploited her own role as female mentor. My analysis of Emma confirms Nancy Armstrong's suggestion that advice literature provided a "grammar" which "awaited the substance of the novel and its readers."⁹⁵ However, whilst Armstrong's argument, and my consolidation of it in Chapter 5, imply that it was left to the "superior" genre of the novel to give substance and complexity to the prescriptive discourse of earlier advice works, this chapter has shown that advice works themselves by no means constituted an unchanging or homogenous genre. Prescription had a dynamic history of its own: a fact which might be demonstrated by the developments which had occurred in the twenty years between Dr Gregory's A Father's Legacy to his Daughters (1775) and Maria Edgeworth's Letter for Literary Ladies (1795). Whilst Gregory's text is a relatively straightforward prescriptive work which maps out the contours of bourgeois domesticity and the place of the domestic woman within the home, Edgeworth's stretches the limits of educational advice to accommodate a range of alternative femininities within a number of competing discourses. In content and in style Letters for Literary Ladies is a far more subtle work than A Father's Legacy, but its subtlety is dependent on its historical moment. Edgeworth could only write Letters for Literary Ladies in the full knowledge that her audience would be familiar with the body of middle-class educational advice that preceded it.

As I have shown, prescriptive literature in the last twenty-five years of the eighteenth century and early years of the nineteenth century, took many discursive forms, and grappled with many representations of femininity. Crucially it engaged with the contradictions implied by the combination of domesticity and learning in middle-class

⁹⁵ Nancy Armstrong, Desire and Domestic Fiction, 60.

women. These contradictions, which characterised representations of women writers themselves, were embodied and temporarily resolved in the figure of the rational female mentor.

Chapter 3

"A Judicious Person with Some Turn for Humour":

The Preceptress as Literary Critic

As these volumes are so frequently put into the hands of young people, I have taken more notice of them than, strictly speaking, they deserve; but as they have contributed to vitiate the taste, and enervate the understandings of many of my fellow creatures, I could not pass them silently over.

Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792).¹

While Maria Edgeworth was drawing attention to the implicit assumptions of advice literature by stretching its rhetorical limits, her politically belligerent contemporary, Mary Wollstonecraft, was more forthright in her condemnation of advice books.² In A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792) Wollstonecraft derides prescriptive writing on the grounds of both its style and its content, considering these features to be related. She censures Dr Fordyce's Sermons on Young Women (1766), for example, both for caricaturing women as "angels" or "asses", and for the writer's "parade of sensibility", his "florid appeals to heaven" and his "idle empty words".³ Female advice writers fare little better and are accused of "argu[ing] in the same track as men, and adopt[ing] the

¹ Mary Wollstonecraft, "Animadversions on Some of The Writers Who Have Rendered Women The Objects of Pity," chap. in A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (London: J. Johnson, 1792). Here I refer to the edition introduced by Miriam Kramnick (London: Penguin, 1975), 173-218, 196.

² Maria Edgeworth, Letters for Literary Ladies to which is Added an Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification (London: J. Johnson, 1795). See Section 3 above "Parodying Prescription: Maria Edgeworth's Letters for Literary Ladies."

³ Dr James Fordyce (1720-96), Sermons on Young Women, 2 vols. (London: A. Millar, T. Cadell and others, 1766) and The Character and Conduct of the Female Sex and the Advantages to be Derived by Young Men from the Society of Virtuous Women (London: T. Cadell, 1766).

sentiments that brutalise them, with all the pertinacy of ignorance."⁴ The French educationalist Madame de Genlis is alternately praised for her ability to entertain and accused of contradicting herself, while Mrs Piozzi and Madame de Staël are criticised for their lengthy sentences. Earlier comments in the Vindication of the Rights of Woman make it clear that Wollstonecraft scorns such "flowery" traits in writing and seeks to avoid them in her own style. Moreover and more particularly, it is apparent that she considers styles of writing, like many other aspects of the social world, to be definable in terms of gendered characteristics; the weaknesses of style exhibited by prescriptive writers are, according to Wollstonecraft's gendered aesthetics, decidedly figured as "feminine".⁵

In Wollstonecraft's chapter on advice books, Catharine Macaulay alone escapes censure and is praised for her style of writing in which "indeed no sex appears, for it is, like the sense it conveys, strong and clear." Despite Wollstonecraft's disclaimer that "no sex appears", however, it is evident that the good qualities of Macaulay's writing are those which she perceives as "masculine". The terminology is, of course, not merely accidental. Masculinity and femininity are counters in Wollstonecraft's larger political and educational argument for a more equal society, a society in which women have access to some of the same advantages as men. By scrutinising the intricacies of literary style, as she does frequently throughout The Vindication of the Rights of Woman, Wollstonecraft entertains the reader, prepares the ground for her "feminist" views and reveals the extent to which gendered assumptions infiltrate many aspects of social

⁴ Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, 202.

⁵ See Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, "I shall be employed about things and not words and anxious to render my sex more respectable members of society, I shall try to avoid that flowery diction which has slid from essays into novels, and from novels into familiar letters and conversations," 82.

experience.⁶ Given her belief in the profound influence of texts (especially prescriptive texts) - a belief shared by her contemporaries - it would seem that her interest in aesthetics is not additional, but is rather substantive to her political project. For Wollstonecraft, texts, like women, may fall foul of systems of value. Beyond this, analysing texts is a potential mode of female agency: a talent within the capabilities of female readers and one transmittable by female educators. Literary criticism is one means, perhaps, of rectifying the misogyny of contemporary culture.

Whilst this chapter recognises the important political implications and possibilities of Wollstonecraft's technique, it concentrates on constructing the context of literary-critical activity by women which surrounds and underlies The Vindication of the Rights of Woman. This context is, I suggest, intimately bound up with ideas about female education. My chapter also draws on the connections between literary criticism and female pedagogy which I established in Chapter 1. Openly to criticize prescriptive literature, as Wollstonecraft does, at such length and with such a sweeping sense of certainty, is an unambiguously political act and a rare one in late eighteenth-century writing by women. In this chapter, I show how women writers were much more prolifically (and perhaps, by extension, politically) involved in the critique of more "fictional" genres. This critique, which focused on the genres of romance and the novel, is succinctly epitomised in the work which forms this chapter's main case-study: Clara Reeve's The Progress of Romance through Times, Countries and Manners: with Remarks on the Good and Bad Effects of it, on them Respectively, in the Course of

⁶ The interplay between gender and genre in Wollstonecraft's writings has been examined elsewhere. See Mary Poovey, "Uncrafting Wollstonecraft: Mary Wollstonecraft: The Gender of Genres in Late Eighteenth-Century England," Novel: A Forum on Fiction 15:2 (1982): 111-126. See also Jane Moore, "Promises, Promises: The Fictional Philosophy of Mary Wollstonecraft's Vindication of the Rights of Woman," in The Feminist Reader: Essays in Gender and the Politics of Literary Criticism, eds. Catherine Belsey and Jane Moore (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989), 155-173.

Evening Conversations (1785).⁷

1) Women, Literary Criticism and the Late Eighteenth-Century Context

Dale Spender recently envisaged a world in which women might go to the shelves of a library and trace a lineage of literary criticism by women.⁸ Her contention is that women's literary criticism is a category of writing that has been ignored by the twentieth-century academic establishment. The place of women as literary critics in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries has not been systematically investigated in recent scholarship, though there have been studies of individual contributions.⁹ Between 1780 and 1820, however, women certainly commented profusely on the subject of books and their readers (and indeed on other related cultural activities, such as theatre-going). How this body of work - which combined technical analysis with an awareness of the demands of a good moral education - both resembled and contended with better-known literary-critical texts of the period is one of my subjects of investigation in this chapter. It would, however, be impossible straightforwardly to collect this commentary by women as Spender suggests. While the great critical tomes

⁷ Clara Reeve, The Progress of Romance through Times, Countries and Manners: with Remarks on the Good and Bad Effects of it, on them Respectively, in the Course of Evening Conversations, 2 vols. (Colchester: W. Keymer, 1785). The edition that I will refer to throughout is Clara Reeve, The Progress of Romance with an introduction by Suzi Halimi (London: British Library Facsimile, 1980). Another useful edition is The Progress of Romance and the History of Charoba, Queen of Aegypt, reproduced from the Colchester edition of 1785, with a bibliographical note by Esther M. McGill (New York: The Facsimile Text Society, 1930).

⁸ Dale Spender, The Writing or the Sex? or, Why You Don't Have to Read Women's Writing to Know it's No Good (New York: Pergamon Press, 1989), 24-39.

⁹ See for example, Sally Stewart Ferrer, "The Literary Criticism of Mary Wollstonecraft" (Ph.D. diss.: University of Colorado-at-Boulder, 1979) and Catherine E. Moore, "Ladies Taking the Pen in Hand: Mrs Barbauld's Criticism of Eighteenth-Century Women Novelists," in Fetter'd or Free?: British Women Novelists, 1670-1815, eds. Mary Ann Schofield and Cecilia Macheski (London: Ohio University Press, 1986), 383-397. See also Ellen Argyros, "Intruding Herself into the Chair of Criticism": Elizabeth Griffin and The Morality of Shakespeare's Drama: Illustrated, in Eighteenth-Century Women and The Arts, eds. Frederick M. Keener and Susan E. Lorsch (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), 283-289.

of the eighteenth century were written by men including Henry Home, Lord Kames (1696-1792) and Hugh Blair (1718-1800), literary criticism by women rarely occupied whole volumes in the period.¹⁰ Instead, critical commentary is to be found embedded within other works: in advice manuals to girls and young women, in sections of autobiography enumerating books read, in lectures from governesses in stories for children, and within the pages of fiction itself.¹¹ In addition to these scattered but significant fragments, a number of full-length literary-critical texts were penned by women. These included Mary Hays's Letters and Essays, Moral and Miscellaneous (1793) and Joanna Baillie's "Introductory Discourse" to Plays on the Passions (1798).¹² In the early years of the nineteenth century, Elizabeth Inchbald was employed by the publisher Longman to write critical prefaces to his edition of The British Theatre (1806-9) and Mrs Barbauld edited and wrote introductory prefaces to a fifty-volume work entitled The British Novelists (1810).¹³

This chapter will suggest that literary-critical and educational ideas came to be fused together in writing by middle-class women in the period 1780-1820. Women writers,

¹⁰ Henry Home, Lord Kames, Elements of Criticism (1762), 2 vols. 6th ed. (Edinburgh: John Bell and William Creech, 1785) and see also the recent edition with a new introduction by John Valdimir Price (London: Routledge, Thoemmes Press, 1993); Hugh Blair, Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres (Dublin: Messrs Whittlestone, Collier and others, 1783).

¹¹ Dale Spender objects to the way in which such texts have escaped the definition of literary criticism: "When women engage in critical activity it is - predictably - called by another name: literary biography, sociology, history, memoirs, notes, thoughts, opinions -- in fact, almost anything but literary criticism," The Writing or the Sex?, 33-34.

¹² Mary Hays, Letters and Essays: Moral and Miscellaneous, 2 vols. (London: T. Nott, 1793) and Joanna Baillie, "Introductory Discourse" to Plays on the Passions: A Series of Plays in which it is Attempted to Delineate the Stronger Passions of the Mind - Each Passion Being the Subject of a Tragedy or a Comedy, 3 vols. (London: T. Cadell and W. Davis, 1798).

¹³ Elizabeth Inchbald, prefaces to The British Theatre: or, A Collection of Plays Acted at the Theatres Royal Printed from the Prompt Books with Biographical and Critical Remarks, 25 vols. (London: Longman and Co., 1806-1809) and Mrs Anna Laetitia Barbauld, The British Novelists: with an Essay and Prefaces Biographical and Critical, 50 vols. (London: F.C. and J. Rivington, 1810).

especially those who, in common with the male literary theorists, had inherited the enlightened spirit of critical enquiry fostered by rational dissent and moderate Scots Presbyterianism, brought the tenets, techniques and research of contemporary literary criticism to their wider concerns about middle-class women's education. It will be apparent that such writers paid particular attention to those aspects of criticism which took gender into account. Their activity had the effect of consolidating the position of women as the arbiters and disseminators of culture.

Criticism by women in this period tended to concentrate on the prose genres, old and new - the romance and the novel - rather than on classical poetry or drama. These prose genres, written in the vernacular and increasingly obtainable from the circulating library, were popularly believed to be those read most commonly by women. As this chapter will show, there were a number of other reasons why such genres had become fashionably identified as "feminine," and, by implication, inferior by the last two decades of the eighteenth century. The "feminine" genres did not respond easily to that kind of literary analysis (of which male critics were the chief exponents) which evaluated works by testing their adherence to neo-classical rules. Criticism by women placed its emphasis differently, typically adopting as its gauge social attitudes towards middle-class women's conversation and behaviour. But critical commentary by women did build to some extent upon the theoretical premises provided by the better-known male writers. Lord Kames's Lockean postulation that "we must try to unfold the means that give fiction such influence over the mind" left the way open for women educators (commonly represented in educational writing as having most access to, and, therefore, most influence over young minds) to become literary critics. ¹⁴

¹⁴ Henry Homes, Lord Kames, Elements of Criticism, 104.

Critical activity by women was governed by considerations of what might constitute proper reading material for a middle-class female. It was therefore a kind of writing inseparable from the emergent discourse on education. If women's commentary on books seems to lack "aesthetic" sensitivity in this period it is because it is geared towards a different system of evaluation - a pedagogical system. Many comments by female writers on reading and writing acknowledge gender as an important aspect of criticism. Late eighteenth-century women writers consider not only the differences between "feminine" and "masculine" writing styles, as illustrated by Wollstonecraft in A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, but also the depiction of female lives within texts, the implications and consequences of the sex of different writers and the particular vulnerabilities of females as the readers of literature. Most importantly perhaps they consider genre - so potent within standard eighteenth-century literary criticism - as a system with inherent gendered characteristics. The relative importance of these features of criticism fluctuated over the course of the eighteenth century as women's status as writers changed. In general terms, it appears that by the end of the century, women's role as writers of educational texts, at least, was assured and their works could expect a fairer hearing.¹⁵ It was what women read more than what women wrote that exercised critics in the last two decades of the century. In this period, as I have intimated, an additional gendered feature came into play: middle-class women, as rational mentor figures, were called upon to stand between the world of literature and the minds of the vulnerable. In other words, educational texts aimed to foster in their adult female readers the talent for selecting, criticising and relating literature to the young in their charge. Mothers themselves had become duty-bound to be the critics of literature.

¹⁵ Roger Lonsdale suggests that women's writing was more favourably received towards the end of the eighteenth century, Eighteenth-Century Women Poets (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), xxxvii.

Whilst literary-critical commentary by women circulated around a number of interrelated issues, it was, at its most basic, a practical policing of what young women actually read. In her analysis of the reading activities of women in the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Kate Flint has enumerated a number of concerns, including the paradoxical relationship between women's reading activity and the developing ideology of domesticity; women as consumers and their effect on the composition, distribution and marketing of literature; and the importance of women's reading to debates about class formation.¹⁶ Such themes also inform my study though in this earlier period the autonomy of women readers and writers, the ideology of domesticity and the distinctions within the class system itself were less well-established. As I have indicated in the introduction, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century middle-class women writers and readers were enjoying a relatively new freedom with regard to the publishing and purchasing of texts. The book business in the late eighteenth century thus provided kinds of autonomy for certain groups of middle-class women that had perhaps disappeared by the mid nineteenth century.¹⁷ There was also a sense of the very active construction of domestic middle-class values in the earlier period. Several concerns seem to have been particularly prominent: the effect of women's reading on their conversation

¹⁶ Kate Flint has recently considered the later history of women's reading activity as it was both practised and represented, The Woman Reader, 1837-1914 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993). Before embarking on her close analysis of the Victorian and Edwardian periods, Flint makes a quick detour through the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, citing examples of commentary on women's reading. She suggests a continuity of ideas about women and reading, particularly between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, arguing that the texts of the mid-eighteenth century "consolidate [] the grounds on which Victorian attitudes to women were to be based." Flint does, however, note a change in the late eighteenth century when she suggests, "a new apprehension appears; that reading might teach politically seditious issues, especially but not exclusively, challenging the role of the family and the position of women in relation to authority," 24. On the audience for books in this period, see Isabel Rivers, Books and Their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1982) and Jon P. Klancher, The Making of English Reading Audiences, 1790-1832 (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987).

¹⁷ On the possibilities afforded to women who wrote for publication in this period, see Jan Fergus and Janice Farrar Thaddeus, "Women, Publishers and Money, 1790-1820," Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture 17 (1987): 191-207.

(and the class connotations of this), and on how, when, where, and indeed whether, women should ever discuss what they had read; the cultivation of the "understanding" as a means of enhancing the domestic role; the propriety of certain genres (especially romance and novels) as reading material for young women; the attendant responsibilities of writers; and the difficulties of producing a style that both amused and instructed. Finally, as I have indicated, in the last decades of the eighteenth century there was an emphasis on the role of the woman educator as the supervisor of reading and the mother/mentor/writer as a critic of literature.

A great deal of energy was devoted to the kind of prescriptive writing which used recommendations for women's reading as a kind of shorthand for political and religious views. The aesthetics governing a mother's choice and selection of books tended to circulate around such vague, though generally apprehended, concepts as "understanding", "propriety" and "virtue". The evangelical Hannah More (1745-1833), for example, advised women to use "the best books" to "rectify principles", "form habits", "regulate the mind" and "be useful to others".¹⁸ The more liberal writers such as Maria Edgeworth, on the other hand, saw the benefits of entering into a dialogue with and about texts. Edgeworth championed the mother figure as discussant of texts and guardian of the bookcase. In one of her most popular and most frequently reprinted tales for children, "The Good French Governess," Madame de Rosier demonstrates her skill at defining, evaluating and recommending suitable reading material for her young female charges and makes thoughtful comparisons between different kinds of novel (see

¹⁸ Hannah More, Strictures on Female Education with a View of the Principles and Conduct Prevalent Among Women of Rank and Fortune, 2 vols. (London: T. Cadell Jun. and W. Davis, 1799), 322.

appendix D).¹⁹ In Practical Education (1798), Edgeworth affirms the common view that, "by caution, unremitting, scrupulous caution in the choice of books which are placed into the hands of girls, a mother or preceptress may fully occupy and entertain [her] pupils, and excite in their minds a taste for propriety as well as a taste for literature." Beyond this, Edgeworth saw the socio-economic value of books as a daughter's marriage ticket: "A mother ought to be answerable to her daughter's husband for the books her daughter had read, as well as for the company she had kept."²⁰

Edgeworth's contemporary, the Scottish educationalist Elizabeth Hamilton, saw the benefits of allowing a child to read a variety of material provided (as Wollstonecraft had also suggested) that he or she were accompanied by an informed and articulate mother figure:

Rather would I permit a child to peruse the most foolish storybook that ever the wildest fancy formed, and trust to my own endeavours for counteracting its tendency, either by reason or ridicule, than hazard the consequences of betraying my anxiety in such a manner as must inevitably excite curiosity and suspicion.²¹

Whilst Edgeworth had recommended the most practical of approaches to practical criticism - that of obliterating offending lines or cutting whole pages out of books -

Hamilton proposed a more moderate approach:

Where whole pages of a book are improper for a child's perusal, the book ought to be entirely withheld; and where we observe words or sentences liable to misconstruction in a book that we think otherwise unexceptionable, would it not be better to mark them with a pencil, so as afterwards to examine the child upon them, in order to correct any erroneous opinion they may have conveyed, than to

¹⁹ Compare also the reading material recommended by the educators in Maria Edgeworth's "The Good French Governess" and "Madame Panache", in Moral Tales for Young People, 5 vols. (London: J. Johnson, 1801).

²⁰ Maria and Richard Lovell Edgeworth, Practical Education (London: J. Johnson, 1798), 2:550.

²¹ Elizabeth Hamilton, Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education (1801), 2 vols. 2nd ed. (Bath: R. Cruthwell, 1801), 1:410.

leave him to the full chasm of conjecture?²²

For Hamilton, mothers were to be guides through literature rather than a cultural patrol.²³

In prescriptive texts, then, the monitoring of reading material appears to have been fundamental to the concept and definition of female education. More ephemeral works by women writers consolidate this view and also reveal that keeping a record of one's own reading activity was integral to a sense of a writer's own self-definition. In 1813, whilst working as a governess in Yorkshire, Ellen Weeton kept a list of her reading with comments on individual works. Those sections of this list which have been reproduced by her editor, Edward Hall, in the published version of her Journal, reveal a variety of interests from novels to prescriptive works. Weeton's observations vary from summaries of the plot, through moral judgements, ("it is a story which cannot have the slightest tendency to injure the morals of any reader"), to enthusiastic comments about the way in which she has incorporated the ideas she has read into her own teaching programme.²⁴ In the same vein, the memoirist Catharine Cappe (the subject of Chapter 4), otherwise undistinguished for her interest in literature, felt compelled in 1814 to describe an enjoyable trip to the theatre using the language of educational texts. She makes the conventional dichotomous contrast between fairyland and the ordinary occurrences of life and reinforces the dangers of "habit" (a key word in educational

²² Ibid., vol. 1, 413.

²³ Some of the original eighteenth-century prescriptive texts available in the British Library, bear witness to this practice of adulteration of books in the service of education. Their margins are littered with pencilled comments and emendations.

²⁴ See Ellen Weeton, The Journals of Ellen Weeton, 1807-1825, ed. Edward Hall with a new introduction by J. J. Bagley, 2 vols. (Newton Abbot: David and Charles Reprints, 1969), 2:77-79. Weeton's first editor, Edward Hall, is infuriatingly intrusive at the point where the reading lists are included in the text and they do not appear in their complete form in the published version of the text.

texts):

At first, to the youthful imagination all is fairy-land; the deception is kept up by variety, till the habit is formed; and afterwards although the original spell is broken, yet excitement of one form or another, beyond what is yielded by the ordinary occurrences of life, becomes necessary to happiness.²⁵

As I have illustrated, commentary on the arts through the language of education was a familiar component of women's autobiographical discourse in the period. I shall deal more fully with the way in which educational principles were shaped to autobiographical ends in Chapter 4.

In this chapter I concentrate on The Progress of Romance, a work of criticism by the scholar and educationalist Clara Reeve (1729-1807). Here, what begins as a literary-critical account of romance - part of a debate with contemporary male scholarship - is actively harnessed to a tradition of writing on female education. Like Mary Wollstonecraft, though less outspokenly, Clara Reeve elucidates the connections between a gendered aesthetics and a gendered politics through the mechanics of her text.

2) "Strong Markings of the Female Mind": Clara Reeve: Literary Critic and Educationalist (1729-1807)

Reeve's life history has been poorly documented.²⁶ In the words of Sir Walter Scott, who wrote the only early biographical sketch in Lives of the Novelists (1825), she "left no materials for biography." In the few extant newspaper and periodical articles her dates are confused, but archival records confirm that she was born at Ipswich in 1729.

As the eldest daughter of an Anglican minister, Reeve was granted a classical education

²⁵ Catharine Cappe, Memoirs of the Life of the Late Mrs Catharine Cappe (1822), 2nd ed. (London: Longman, Hall, Hurst, Rees and Orme, 1823), 73-74. The play, The Desert Island: A Dramatic Poem in Three Acts by Arthur Murphy (London: Paul Vaillard, 1760), was shown in York in the winter of 1762.

²⁶ I obtained most of the biographical information on Clara Reeve from Ipswich Archives, Suffolk. J.J. Muskett gives a pedigree of the Reeve family of Ipswich in Suffolk Manorial Families, 3 vols. (Exeter: privately printed, 1900) 3:16; A brief biography of Reeve does appear in Sir Walter Scott, Lives of the Novelists (Paris: A. and W. Galigani, 1825).

along with her brothers and read parliamentary debates and some Greek and Roman History. As in the works of Catharine Cappe and Ellen Weeton, Reeve's brief recorded comments on her childhood reading reveal something of her autobiography:

My father was an Old Whig; from him I have learned all that I know; he was my oracle; he used to make me read the parliamentary debates while he smoked his pipe after supper. I gaped and yawned over them at the time, but, unawares to myself, they fixed my principles once and forever. He made me read Rapin's History of England; the information it gave made amends for its dryness. I read Cato's letters, by Trenchard and Gordon; I read the Greek and Roman Histories, and Plutarch's Lives; all these at an age when few people of either sex can read their names.²⁷

From this fairly untypical reading list, it is possible to sketch something of Reeve's educational and political milieu.²⁸ An Anglican of somewhat gentrified origins, she had considerable skills in classical scholarship and, through her reading of histories of Greece and Rome, would have encountered contemporary political debate including those debates on the position of women in civilized society.²⁹ It is clear that Reeve was conscious of both the singularity of her own position as a classically-educated female and the importance of informed debate on books within a domestic environment. Like Lady Eleanor Fenn and Elizabeth Hamilton, Reeve enjoyed a "gentrified" upbringing in which females were accorded an important pedagogical role.

²⁷ Reeve's father was the Reverend William Reeve, rector of Freston and Kerton, Suffolk and the perpetual curate of St. Nicholas, Ipswich. Her mother, Hannah Smythies was the daughter of William Smythies, the jeweller and goldsmith to George III. This passage is quoted from unknown sources by Scott in Lives of the Novelists, 10. Reeve never married and travelled little. After her father's death in 1755, she moved to Colchester with her mother and two sisters and it was at this point that she began to write. It is not clear how far she depended upon writing for her living but her list of subscribers to her first published book of poetry included members of the aristocracy, many of whom were from East Anglia. Towards the end of her life, Reeve moved back to Ipswich, where she died in 1807.

²⁸ It is interesting to note that Reeve's own recommended reading list (Appendix F) betokens quite a different education from that which she herself enjoyed. Classical works are not, for example, included.

²⁹ Her Latin, for instance, was good enough to allow her to translate later in life, Barclay's Argenis: The Adventures of Polyarchus and Argenis (Paris: N. Buon, 1621). See Clara Reeve, ed., The Phoenix: or, the History of Polyarchus and Argenis translated from the Latin by a Lady, 4 vols. (London: John Bell, 1772).

Reeve's oeuvre covers a range of genres typical of women writers in this period, consisting chronologically of translation work, a literary-critical history, a number of epistolary novels, gothic fiction and a plan of education.³⁰ In several of these works, illuminative prefaces reveal Reeve's recognition of the connections between critical activity and educational activity. Reeve also displays a sociological interest in the fortunes of women writers and educators. Reeve's interest in women's relationship to culture is apparent from her earliest published work, Original Poems (1769). In the preface, she comments on the way in which male attitudes towards women's writing have changed for the better during her lifetime.³¹ In the same volume, she makes clear her own role as a middle-class female arbiter of culture. These are her comments on the music that might accompany her libretto:

I have a natural affection for music, I say affection rather than passion, because I am not intoxicated by it, but can reduce the pleasure arising from it, under the regulation of reason; I am indeed too apt to moralise away all my pleasures, and whilst I enjoy them am always investigating the subject, and endeavouring to find out why I am pleased or displeased. [emphasis mine]³²

³⁰ Clara Reeve, Original Poems on Several Occasions (1756), 2nd ed. (London: T. and J. W. Pasham in Blackfriars for W. Harris, St Paul's Churchyard, 1769). Her novels include: The Old English Baron: or, The Champion of Virtue: A Gothic Story (Colchester: W. Keymer, 1777); The Exiles: or, The Memoirs of the Count de Cronstadt (London: T. Hookham, 1788); Memoirs of Sir Roger de Clarendon, the Natural Son of Edward, Prince of Wales (London: T. Hookham and J. Carpenter, 1793) and The Two Mentors: A Modern Story (London: Charles Dilly, 1783). On the subject of single and widowed women, see particularly her last two novels, The School for Widows (London: T. Hookham and J. Carpenter, 1791) and Plans for Education with Remarks on the System of Other Writers: in a Series of Letters between Mrs Darnford and her Friends (London: T. Hookham and J. Carpenter, 1792). For an analysis of Reeve's epistolary technique in her novel The School for Widows see Frank Gees Black, The Epistolary Novel in the Late Eighteenth Century: A Descriptive and Bibliographical Study (Oregon: Oregon University Press, 1940): 55-57.

³¹ "I formerly believed, that I ought not to let myself be known for a scribbler, that my sex was an insuperable objection, that mankind in general were prejudiced against its pretensions to literary merit; but I am now convinced of the mistake, by daily examples to the contrary. I see many female writers favourably received, admitted into the rank of authors, and amply rewarded by the public; I have been encouraged by their success, to offer myself as a candidate for the same advantages," Clara Reeve, Original Poems on Several Occasions, 7. This is quoted in Jane Spencer, The Rise of the Woman Novelist: From Aphra Behn to Jane Austen (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 91-92. Spencer agrees with Roger Lonsdale who comments that "there was a noticeable change in some quarters at least in male attitudes towards women writers at mid-century." Eighteenth-Century Women Poets, xxix.

³² Clara Reeve, Original Poems, xii. This comment prefixes Reeve's libretto.

It is this refusal to be intoxicated, this desire to regulate her pleasures with reason, tempered with a fear of moralising them away altogether, that characterises the whole of Reeve's oeuvre. As I have begun to show in Chapters 1 and 2, the rational regulation of pleasure is typical of that exercised by female mentor figures elsewhere in the literature of this period.

But Reeve's cultural intervention was also actively contentious. In her poem "To my Friend Mrs X. on her Holding an Argument in Favour of the Natural Equality of Both Sexes" (reproduced in full in appendix E) she entered into her first debate with the male critical canon and critical establishment.³³ Crude and unpolished though the poem undoubtedly is, it is also a clever satire. As in an earlier poem by Pope, "The Temple of Fame," the unworthy are spurned by Fate.³⁴ In Reeve's poem, however, it is the women writers who are cast aside ostensibly because their writing bears "strong markings of the female mind / still superficial, light and various; / loose, unconnected and precarious." Though Reeve grants women writers "life and vivacity" she suggests that they lack "weight and energy / that strength that fills the manly page, and bids it live to future age."³⁵ Reeve adopts a jocular manner and ostentatiously displays her own mastery of classical themes and of earlier eighteenth-century satirical verse even

³³ Clara Reeve, "To My Friend Mrs X. On her Holding an Argument in Favour of the Natural Equality of Both Sexes" (1756) in Original Poems, 4-11. See Appendix E.

³⁴ The poem resembles (in many respects) Pope's "The Temple of Fame" written in 1711. This also begins with a classical allegory and ends with a personal appeal by the poet to Fame to judge him fairly. Reeve's poem adopts the same satirical tone and verse form but adds the issue of gender. Pope, was, of course, known for his misogyny attested in numerous other poems, see Alexander Pope, Collected Poems: Pope's Epistles and Satires, with an introduction by Ernest Rhys (London: J.M. Dent, 1944), 36-48. Roger Lonsdale comments that "the fact that until the later decades of the century, women poets usually adopted styles that were being replaced by new fashions... meant that it was all the easier to underestimate their achievements," Eighteenth-Century Women Poets, xxv.

³⁵ Clara Reeve, "To my Friend Mrs X.", 6.

as she claims that women are capable only of the "weaker" genres.

Reeve's reworking of Pope is a deliberate attempt to demonstrate how his concerns about literary worth need modifying in the light of gender. The poem prefigures her later concerns about the evaluation and conflation of gender and genre, the prejudices of the classical literary canon and the demands of a male-biased critical public. Several of Reeve's later works deal with issues of gender but in the following section, I will be concerned exclusively with her two-volume work of literary criticism, The Progress of Romance (1785), an historical and geographical survey of the genre of romance and the rise of the novel.

The book consists of a sequence of twelve dialogues between Euphrasia, a woman of superior education who champions the cause of romance; Hortensius, a man of learning who believes romances to be contemptible and dangerous; and Sophronia, an impressionable young female and reader of romances.³⁶ The three interlocutors meet each week in each others' homes to discuss the development of the genre of "romance" from early times and its relationship with the novel. Though superficially a work of literary commentary in which gender plays a significant part, The Progress of Romance bears many similarities to contemporary pedagogical works. The female character Euphrasia, for example, plays the part of the mentor figure whilst the other two

³⁶ Those critics who have used The Progress of Romance to help explain the development of narrative in the eighteenth century make only the most general references to its interest in gender. See Gillian Beer, The Romance (London: Methuen, 1970). Also see Ioan Williams, Novel and Romance, 1700-1800: A Documentary Record (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970). More recently Ros Ballaster has made connections between Reeve's examination of literary-critical issues and her concern with gender, "Romancing the Novel: Gender and Genre in Early Theories of Narrative," in Living By the Pen: Early British Women Writers, ed. Dale Spender (New York: Teachers' College Press, Athene Press, 1992), 188-200. Ballaster uses The Progress of Romance to examine the gendered characteristics of different kinds of narrative in the eighteenth century.

characters learn through conversations with her. It is with the connections between Euphrasia's role as female literary critic and her role as mentor that the following section will ultimately be concerned.

3) The Progress of Romance (1785): From Literary Criticism to Pedagogical Project

The Progress of Romance engages with a contemporary debate on the origins, definition and value of the much maligned and "feminine" genre of romance and its "masculine" counterpart, the epic.³⁷ In doing so, it both builds on and reworks the findings of contemporary male critics on romance and inscribes gender as a category of literary analysis. I consider first how Reeve re-evaluates romance and considers its place within the contemporary practice of women's reading, hence connecting her literary-critical debate to continuing educational concerns. Secondly, I ask how the form of the Progress of Romance contributes to its overall argument.

"Romance", as a genre, was largely overlooked in early to mid eighteenth-century literary criticism. Even in the later part of the century, the most highly esteemed critics, such as Lord Kames, paid it scant attention.³⁸ Part of the reason for the neglect of romance in critical tomes was its dubious geographical origin. The mid-seventeenth century influx into Britain of translations of French romances, such as those by the demoiselles Scudéry, had aroused some hostility towards the genre.³⁹ Thomas Warton's

³⁷ See Margaret Mary Rubel, "Some Aspects of the Criticism of Homer and Ossian, 1760-1800," chap. in Savage and Barbarian: Historical Attitudes in the Criticism of Homer and Ossian in Britain, 1760-1800 (Amsterdam: North Holland Publishing Co. 1978), 70-102. This chapter considers certain aspects of epic which are relevant to Reeve's study including the debate over whether it depicts truth or fiction.

³⁸ Kames in Elements of Criticism does not refer to the genre of romance and makes only minimal reference to fiction.

³⁹ See for example, Madelène Scudéry, Clelia: An Excellent New Romance, trans. J. Davies (London: n.p., 1656-1661).

History of English Poetry (1774-81), suggested (in some editions) that the first romances were tales brought back from Arabia by the crusaders.⁴⁰ Such eastern genealogies of romance, in an age of growing nationalist feeling, tended to confirm the view that the genre was rooted in fancy and lacked moral substance.⁴¹

From the middle of the eighteenth century, a quest began among commentators to discover the national origins of romance.⁴² In the 1760s, for example, a renewed interest in mediaeval European romances was precipitated by the rediscovery of certain mediaeval texts, including those by La Curne de Sainte-Palaye. Literary historians looked further back to the traditions of the Northern tribes, the Goths and the Anglo-Saxons to find the roots of British romance. In particular, Richard Hurd and Paul-Henri Mallet attempted to reinstate romance by claiming the genre as an important part of a specifically North European heritage.⁴³

The new literary histories contended that romance had had an important civilising influence on the barbaric Northern nations. The romance genre was seen as polite,

⁴⁰ Thomas Warton, "Of the Origin of Romantic Fiction in Europe" prefixed to History of English Poetry from the Close of the Eleventh to the Commencement of the Eighteenth Century, 2nd ed. (London: J. Dodsley and others, 1775).

⁴¹ On the conflicting responses to Eastern tales in the period, see Martha Pike Conant, The Oriental Tale in England in the Eighteenth Century (New York: Columbia University Press, 1908).

⁴² For more on the construction of national identity in this period and especially on the development of the British woman, see Linda Colley, "Womanpower," chap. in Britons: Forging The Nation, 1707-1837 (London: Yale University Press, 1992), 237-273.

⁴³ The debate over the origins and merits of romance was waged between Richard Hurd, Letters on Chivalry and Romance (Dublin: Richard Watts in Skinner Row, 1762); Thomas Warton, History of English Poetry; and Paul-Henri Mallet, Northern Antiquities: or, a Description of the Manners, Customs, Religion and Laws of the Ancient Danes and other Northern Nations: Including those of our own Saxon Ancestors, trans. Thomas Percy (London: T. Carnan and Co., 1770). Hugh Blair had also attempted a similar brief résumé of romance in his Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres as had Dr James Beattie, "Essay on Fable and Romance," in Dissertations Moral and Critical (London: W. Strahan, and T. Cadell, 1783).

chivalrous and "feminine" and it was cited as one of the reasons why the nations of northern Europe were more "civilised" than their southern European counterparts. On the other hand, it was also suggested by Hurd that the chivalry of the old romances had diminished into mere gallantry in the romances and novels of eighteenth-century Britain and that the "femininity" of romance was not therefore necessarily a factor in its favour.⁴⁴

Other features of romance - its predominance of female characters and its "love" content - meant that it was fashionably considered a "feminine" genre. Written in the vernacular, romances were popular with home-educated women. Increasingly, the terminology used to describe romance took a "feminine" turn. Romance, like the female sex, was considered fanciful, irrational, conversational, lacking in purpose, and educationally lightweight. Until Reeve's Progress of Romance the multiple associations of romance with women had rarely been theorised in positive terms.

In addition to its alleged foreign ancestry and its connection with women, the romance was popularly denigrated through comparison with the "epic," a genre considered to be altogether truer, finer and implicitly, more "masculine".⁴⁵ Whilst classical epic had been passed down through the ages in the form of written verse studied by males of the upper

⁴⁴ Commentators differed on when and how chivalry had become important. Some saw the beginnings of chivalry (including a veneration for women) in ancient Britain, but believed that it had received a new vigour in mediaeval feudal society. Romance literature was thought to be a part of this process. Samuel Klinger has pointed out that the Goths (the early Northern nations) were attributed with feminism by eighteenth-century theorists, The Goths in England: A Study in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Thought (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1952), 210. Klinger comments on Clara Reeve as a theorist of the origin of romance fiction. Jane Rendall has developed the theme of eighteenth-century commentary on Gothic feminism in "Tacitus Engendered: Gothic Feminism, Nationality and Domesticity," (unpublished paper, 1993).

⁴⁵ Gillian Beer, The Romance, describes how in the mid-eighteenth century, romance was "considered to be barbarous, a part of the infancy of the world now replaced by more civilised genres", 50.

classes, romance was a prose genre (or oral folk tradition) with few rules of composition, read by women. Romance, unlike epic, did not yield to the rigorous methods of neo-classical criticism and therefore tended to escape serious critical attention. The genre also suffered because of its similarities with the new and much detested novel form. As Ros Ballaster has explained, novel and romance were sometimes "presented as two conflicting fields of narrative prose at war with each other for both popularity and literary supremacy and (sometimes) dismissed as equally degenerate forms of fictional seduction on young minds."⁴⁶

For these reasons, romance continued to be held in disdain until the mid 1780s despite the valiant efforts of the critics Hurd and Warton. Just before Reeve wrote her study of romance, for example, Dr Beattie commented, in the concluding remarks to his "Essay on Fable and Romance" (1783):

Romances are a dangerous recreation. A few, no doubt, of the best may be friendly to good taste and good morals; but the greater part are unskilfully written and tend to corrupt the heart and stimulate the passions. A habit of reading them breeds dislike to history, and all the substantial parts of knowledge, withdraws the attention from nature and truth, and fills the mind with extravagant thoughts, and too often with criminal propensities. I would therefore caution my young reader against them, or, if he must for the sake of amusement, and that he may have something to say on the subject, indulge himself in this way now and then, let it be sparingly and seldom.⁴⁷

In 1785, there was evidently still some way to go to restore the good name of romance, and The Progress of Romance set out to complete this task. Debates about the genre would have been familiar to Clara Reeve, and her book is in some respects a response to earlier critical works. Reeve adopts the tenets of the contemporary debate and

⁴⁶ Ros Ballaster, "Romancing the Novel", Ballaster suggests that the battle between romance and novel was portrayed in terms of their respectively masculine and feminine characteristics, 189.

⁴⁷ Dr James Beattie, "Essay on Fable and Romance," in Dissertations Moral and Critical, 573.

accentuates its gendered characteristics: women's historical alliance with romance, the predominance of women as the writers and readers of romance, the role of romance in the education of women and the capabilities of women for intelligent criticism of the genre.

The Progress of Romance wends its way through literary history and across continents, championing the potential of romance as an instructive as well as an amusing genre. A comparison of Reeve's book with that of other contemporary commentators reveals the full extent of both its borrowing from, and its challenge to, *contemporary literary-critical* thinking.⁴⁸ Where Hurd begins his examination of romance at the time of the crusades and Beattie traces a separate history for the genre back to Arabia, Reeve delineates an extended history starting in classical times and linking the emergence of romance to the rise of the classical epic. Meanwhile, where Hurd insists that romance was forced to ally itself to reason in the seventeenth century and therefore died out, and Beattie sees the end of romance in Cervantes' Don Quixote (1605-1615), Reeve denies that the age of romance is over and claims that the novel is infusing it with new possibilities.⁴⁹

Moreover, Reeve objects to certain characteristics of the literary criticism of the period, particularly the rigid definition of genres and the equally rigid ascription of values to

⁴⁸ In the preface to The Progress of Romance, Reeve says that she did not actually read Dr Beattie's work on romance until after she had completed her book, but their shared discursive milieu is everywhere apparent.

⁴⁹ Richard Hurd, Letters on Chivalry and Romance. "But reason in the end... drove [romances] off the scene and would endure these lying wonders, neither in their own proper shape, nor as masked in figures". Hurd is not utterly opposed to romance, however, "What we have gotten by this revolution you will say, is a great deal of good sense. What we have lost, is a world of fine fabling...", 63.

those genres.⁵⁰ Dr Beattie had defined "romance" straightforwardly as deriving from the Spanish for "vernacular language".⁵¹ He suggested that "romance" became accepted as the term for any story in the vernacular tongue which dealt with love, adventure and the fabulous. By contrast, Reeve's Euphrasia, on the one hand, calls for a better classification of romance, suggesting that it needs to be "methodised, separated, classed and regulated," and, on the other hand, insists on the capriciousness of romance as a literary category. All kinds of great works, including epic poetry, might be said to be encompassed by it:

Romances, or heroic fables are of very ancient and I may say universal origin. We find traces of them in all times and in all countries; they have always been the favourite entertainment of the most savage as well as the most civilised people. (1:13).

It is the commonality of the experience of reading romance across different countries and classes that Euphrasia is most at pains to explain.

The Progress of Romance overturns a number of suppositions about romance. It subverts the binary opposition that has divided romance from the more "serious" literary genres, while erecting new distinctions between novel and romance. Furthermore, Reeve, in the person of Euphrasia, challenges the traditional position of texts within hierarchies of value. The value of texts, whether they are called "epics" or "romances" has, she says, depended upon the "different circumstances of the author's genius or situation." Such circumstances have helped to disguise the fact that:

⁵⁰ See John Reichart, "More than Kin and Less than Kind: The Limits of Genre Theory," in Theories of Literary Genre, ed. Joseph P. Strelka (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1978), 57-79. Strelka comments that "the closest link between genres and genuine evaluation was established by neo-classical critics... For them, membership of a genre was related to value because the genres themselves were ranked and described according to their merits, and proper arguments about the worth of a genre lay behind the assessment of an individual work," 62.

⁵¹ Dr James Beattie, "Essay on Fable and Romance," in Dissertations Moral and Critical.

there is frequently a striking resemblance between works of high and low estimation, which prejudice only hinders us from discerning, and which when seen, we do not care to acknowledge. (1:24)

Euphrasia thus challenges, and in some cases succeeds in discrediting to her interlocutors the scholarship of her male contemporaries, but she also supplements their work by accentuating the importance of issues of gender in the tortuous history of romance. In the first of the twelve dialogues, Sophronia asserts that she is anxious about the propriety of Hortensius, a man, talking to women on the subject of romances:

(To Hortensius) What would your neighbour Ergastus say, if he should hear that you met weekly two women to talk of Romances? (1: 27)

Sophronia invokes the critical tradition which has supposed romances to be risqué, part of the feminine sphere and unsuitable for discussion. This statement ushers in a series of conversations predicated on the close connections between literary matters and the relationship between the sexes.

As I have intimated, the low status of romance, particularly when compared to its classical rival, "epic", placed it on the weaker side of a critical binary division within eighteenth-century thought.⁵² In this respect the romance genre held in the literary-critical world a status analogous to that of women in the social world. In The Progress of Romance, Reeve makes this connection between romance and women explicit. She points out that romances have been wrongly judged by scholars who:

having seen a few of the worst or dullest among them, have judged of all the rest by them; just as some men affect to despise our sex, because they have only conversed with the worst part of it, (1:112).

To rectify this prejudice, Reeve allows Euphrasia to speak on behalf of women writers

⁵² For more on philosophical binarisms and how women writers have challenged them, see Toril Moi, Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory (London: Routledge, 1988), 104-105; and Mary Poovey, Uneven Developments: The Ideological Work of Gender in Mid-Victorian England (London: Virago, 1989), 6.

and readers of romance. Euphrasia makes a point, for example, of referring to the gender of authors and comments specifically on the treatment of women in various texts. She maintains that the cause of women is "the cause of virtue" and that many writers have set out to champion it. In her preface, Reeve does not hide her delight in bringing writing by women into the public eye:

It is with sincere pleasure I add a name that will not disgrace the list, a writer of my own sex, Mrs Dobson, the elegant writer of the History of the Troubadours and the Memoirs of Ancient Chivalry. (1:xii)⁵³

This blatant favouritism towards female writers earns her Hortensius's disapproval and is part of the humour of the Progress of Romance.

The Progress of Romance reappraises the common association between romance and femininity, considering the connection a strength rather a weakness. Romances, including and particularly those written and read by women, Reeve proposes, may be as historically true and as skilfully executed as epic. The genre need no longer be "looked upon as proper furniture only for a lady's library", though the lady's library itself takes on new significance within the pages of Reeve's book.

This reinstatement of romance inscribes it as an educative rather than simply an amusing or entertaining genre. By a literary-critical route, Reeve develops prescriptive recommendations for the use of romances in the education of young people and particularly girls and young women. From the start of the second volume it is made clear that an important and final section will be devoted to "draw[ing] inferences from the effects of novel-reading upon the manners" and indeed, the list of eighteenth-century

⁵³ For biographical details of the scholar Susannah Dobson (b. unknown - 1795), see Janet Todd, ed. A Dictionary of British and American Women Writers, 1660-1800 (London: Methuen, 1987), 104. Dobson translated Sainte-Palaye's Memoirs of Ancient Chivalry in 1784.

works through which Euphrasia, with an unfailingly critical eye, guides her audience is no more than a prologue to her discussion of the effects of novels on young people and particularly on women. The educational importance of romance was not entirely new to Reeve. Susannah Dobson, praised by Reeve in the Progress of Romance, had very recently translated Sainte-Palaye's Memoirs of Ancient Chivalry (1783) and had commented on the educative effects of romances.⁵⁴ Reeve built on the potential of romance for pedagogical purposes, though she continued to discriminate worthwhile romances from sillier works given the same name.

In general, The Progress of Romance ascribes the recent improvement in the education of women to the number of "good" romances available for them to read. Though Sophronia and Euphrasia speak of the paucity of good fiction in their grandmothers' youths, their mothers and aunts, they say, were more fortunate and locked themselves in the parlour to read Richardson's Pamela (1740), a novel with strong links to romance traditions. As Euphrasia gets nearer to the present day in her historical survey, her comments on individual texts become more morally discriminating and blend aesthetic and educational aims. Of Rousseau's Julie or La Nouvelle Héloïse (1761), for example, she says:

It is a dangerous book to put into the hands of youth, it awakens and nourishes those passions which it is the exercise of Reason and of Religion also to regulate, and to keep within their true limits. On this account, I have often wished that the

⁵⁴ Jean Baptiste de la Curne de Sainte-Palaye, Memoirs of Ancient Chivalry to which are Added the Anecdotes of the Times from the Romance Writers and Historians of those Ages, trans. and with a preface by Susannah Dobson (London: J. Dodsley, 1784), xviii-xix, "Women in particular ought to hold these ancient writers in high esteem, for the deference they paid to modesty, and the fame they so liberally bestowed on virtue. They taught generous firmness, judicious observance of superiors, and constant love, to unite in the same hearts: they taught to honour the valiant, to attend the wounded, to relieve the distressed and to dispense the sweet solace of cheerful [sic] and gentle manners to all around them; they taught them to respect themselves, and to prefer others; to be silent, observant and industrious in youth, graceful and dignified in maturity, venerable in age and lamented at death. Had I not been fully persuaded that the following work was fruitful of instruction to all, but particularly to the youth of both sexes, I would not have undertaken the translation of it."

first two volumes of Eloise could be abridged and altered so as to render them with the unexceptionable morals of the last two. (2:17-18)

In the concluding pages of The Progress of Romance Hortensius expands on the deleterious effects of romances, commenting that they sow the seeds of vice and folly in the human heart. Young women who read romances, he suggests, expect to meet a romantic hero and are no longer interested in the "plain man" who addresses them in rational terms. Euphrasia does not contradict him. For once the two protagonists are in agreement and quibble only over what might be done to counteract the problem of lax reading habits. Whilst Hortensius, in his rather impetuous style - a style which the reader has come to associate with the "doughty" reasoning of male critics - suggests burning all romances or at least preventing children from reading them, Euphrasia opts for a more discreet approach to the monitoring of reading activity: a process of selection and surveillance by the parent leading to the instilling of reason in a child. In the manner popularly adopted by middle-class female educationalists in prescriptive texts, Euphrasia concludes:

If any method can be found to alleviate these evils, it must be lenient, gradual and practicable -- Let us then try to find out some expedient, with respect to those kinds of books which are our proper subject. As this kind of reading is so common, and so much in everybody's power, it is the more incumbent on parents and guardians to give young people a taste for reading, and above all to lay the foundation of good principles from their very infancy; to make them read what is really good, and by forming their taste teach them to despise paltry books of every kind.-- When they come to maturity of reason, they will scorn to run over a circulating library, but will naturally aspire to read the best books of all kinds...In every rank and situation, people may superintend the education of their children, and train them up in the way they should go. (83-84)

This statement is entirely in keeping with the prescriptive monitoring of the reading activity of young people I have delineated earlier in this chapter.

To sum up, The Progress of Romance brings a literary-critical discussion into the

domestic arena of contemporary educational debate. It shows how, in the education of women, pedagogical discourse shapes what it is possible to say about books, and conversely that the demands of a good moral female education are crucial to the shaping of a new kind of aesthetic theory. Reeve's educational interest is displayed as much on the level of form as on the level of content, and the following section examines how The Progress of Romance is skilfully related through the dialogue/conversation form to educational discourse.

i) 'To Talk of Romance': Some Notes on Form

As we have seen, Reeve's debate on romance is figured as an argument between Euphrasia (who argues for the respectability of romance) and Hortensius (who is the representative of the bias of male criticism) in the home environment. Reeve's introductory remarks attest to the book's origins in educational conversations similar to those described in popular educational works:

While I was collecting materials for this work, I held many conversations with some ingenious friends upon the various subjects, which offered to be investigated or explained. This circumstance naturally suggested to me the idea of the dialogue form; in which opposite sentiments would admit of a more full and accurate examination, arguments and objections might be more clearly stated and discussed, than in a regular series of Essays, or even letters, not to mention that the variety and contrast which naturally arise out of the Dialogue, might enliven a work of rather dry deduction, and render it more entertaining to the reader, and not the less useful or instructive. In this idea, I was confirmed by the great success of some late writers in this way, particularly of Madame de Genlis, in her excellent work called The Theatre of Education (1: vi-vii)

By shaping her ideas according to the contours of contemporary educational dialogues, Reeve might be considered to have deliberately subverted and "feminised" the conventional form of literary-critical histories, which were generally narrated in authoritative tomes organised around aesthetic criteria. Certainly, the interlocking question-and-answer format of The Progress of Romance is similar to, though rather

more animated than, that which characterises many contemporary textbooks for children. The arrangement of characters in The Progress of Romance also follows the pattern of contemporary educational discourse. Hortensius and Sophronia learn from Euphrasia's arguments, which are better researched and more balanced than their own. Confirming the educational value of conversation, Euphrasia comments to Hortensius:

I shall depend on you for encouragement when deserved, - correction where I am mistaken, and allowance where wanted. (1:10)

In the manner of contemporary educational texts which style themselves "conversations" or "dialogues", Reeve's text is a dramatic encounter of minds in which opinions are constantly conceded, modified and reformulated.

Dena Goodman and Lawrence E. Klein have delineated the development of a domestic sphere of polite discussion, such as that inhabited by Hortensius, Euphrasia and Sophronia, within eighteenth-century culture.⁵⁵ In this sphere, both men and women were considered necessary to "substantive and sociable" conversation. The importance of women to such ideals of conversation, Goodman and Klein argue, increased as the eighteenth century progressed. Middle-class women were seen as "the agents of politeness and refinement" in conversation. There were, however, strict codes about the kinds of literary conversations thought suitable for women. The conservative Hannah More, for example, maintained that women should not talk about the books they read. Mary Wollstonecraft, by contrast, despised, not so much the practice of literary

⁵⁵ Dena Goodman, "Enlightened Salons: The Convergence of Female and Philosophic Ambition," History and Theory 31 (1992): 1-20 and Lawrence E. Klein, "Gender, Conversation and the Public Sphere in Early Eighteenth-Century England," in Textuality and Sexuality: Reading Theories and Practices, eds. Judith Still and Michael Worton (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), 100-115.

discussion, as the kinds of conversations women tended to have about books.⁵⁶ The habit of dropping the names of famous writers into conversations along with glib critiques of their works were reminders of the aristocratic superficiality from which many women writers hoped to free their middle-class readers. Some of these ideas about conversation are played out in Reeve's Progress of Romance. Euphrasia, a well-read middle-class woman of mature understanding, oils the wheels of conversation between herself and her two, very different, companions. The conversation is heated, though consistently polite, and all the participants admit their own fallibility. Moreover, the discussion is crammed with factual information and reasoned commentary rather than facile opinion.

The location of the conversation is intrinsic to its intended effect as an educational device. The debate takes place in the homes of each of the interlocutors in turn revealing that there were advantages to be had from discussing issues of public interest and utility within the private, domestic environment. The very nature of domesticity allowed for relaxed yet informed discussion and the debate reinforces the importance of the domestic realm in the dissemination and evaluation of culture whilst reminding the reader that it is in the home that most female education is carried out. The public world of books is regularly addressed; Euphrasia's own well-stocked and well-organised domestic library is frequently contrasted with the "chaos of the circulating library," for example.

⁵⁶ Hannah More, Strictures on Female Education, I: 322. Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of The Rights of Woman (1975), "The reading of novels makes women, and particularly ladies of fashion, very fond of using strong expressions and superlatives in conversations; and, though the dissipated artificial life which they lead prevents their cherishing any strong legitimate passion, the language of passion in affected tones slips forever from their glib tongues, and every trifle produces those phosphoric outbursts which only mimic in the dark the flame of passion," 309.

Published literary reviews are likewise condemned.⁵⁷ Euphrasia sees the public world of criticism as potentially fallible and considers informed domestic debate on books to be more reliable.

As we have seen, the argument of The Progress of Romance is drawn as a battle between the sexes. It is also strewn with humorous, but rhetorically important, allusions to gender. When accused by Hortensius, for example, of omitting "no less a man than Tristram Shandy, Gent," from her list of great books, Euphrasia provocatively declines to comment on the grounds that it "is not a woman's book" (2:30). Moreover, a debate on the books taught in schools is curtailed when Euphrasia, as a woman taught at home, pleads her lack of knowledge averring, "as a woman I cannot give this argument its full weight" (2:81).

In fact Euphrasia's rational womanhood allows her to utilize gender for her own ends. The methods of argument employed by the interlocutors are likened to the masculine techniques of warfare:

Hortensius: I find you are making great preparations against me, you are coming upon me armed with your paper and extracts--- artillery and fire-arms against the small sword, the tongue.

Euphrasia: A most warlike allusion! and the comparison holds good; for if I should come to a close engagement, the small sword will destroy what may escape the artillery. (1:5)

But Euphrasia also teasingly makes use of her femininity. On the second evening when Hortensius reiterates the battle metaphor, Euphrasia responds by using her femininity as

⁵⁷ Reeve devotes several pages to a recent review of her own translation of Barclay's Argenis. This review denigrated the text as a "romance" and unfairly criticised Reeve for passing the work off as her own. It is quite apparent, Euphrasia says, that the reviewer had not even read the preface and had passed off the text as a "romance" simply because the author was female. In fact, Reeve's preface to The Phoenix describes the work as "a romance, an allegory and a system of politics," a statement which confirms Reeve's belief in the ability of romance to mix instructively with other, more serious forms of literature.

a loophole:

Hortensius: I see Euphrasia has brought her artillery and is placing it to advantage.

Euphrasia: You know your advantages, and that a woman is your opponent.

Hortensius: Whether you mean me a compliment or reproof is not clear. But I will not reply to it, lest it should hinder business. (1:12)

This weaving in and out of "masculine" and "feminine" styles of argumentation to suit one's artistic purpose might remind us of more sophisticated use of such techniques by Maria Edgeworth in Letters for Literary Ladies (1795) and, of course, of Mary Wollstonecraft's political use of the same technique in A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792). The form of the Progress of Romance - its use of domestic dialogue and of speakers who comment on their own gender - demonstrates its exploration of the gendered aspects of culture at the level of style and reinforces the key connections between literary-critical activity and education.

ii) 'The Regulation of Reason': Some Recommended Reading

At the end of The Progress of Romance, Reeve seals her argument about the educational benefits of some kinds of romance by providing an appendix of books suitable for children and for young ladies (appendix F). Politely circumventing the charge of usurping the role of parents, she claims to provide the lists "only for those who have not thought much on the subject themselves." Moving away from the erudition of scholarly and literary-critical debate on texts, Reeve adopts the familiar language of prescriptive texts:

It is certainly the duty of every Mother to consider seriously, the consequences of suffering children to read all the books that fall in their way indiscriminately. It is also a very bad and too frequent practice, to give them books above their years and understandings, by the reading of which they seem to the partial parent to acquire a prematurity of knowledge; while in reality, they are far more ignorant than those who advance slowly and surely, - whose understandings are gradually cultivated, without being overloaded, - and whose reason is assisted gently and carefully, till it attains full maturity.(2:83)

Reeve's bibliography balances informative works, religious texts, educational stories and amusement. There are elementary history books of the question-and-answer variety, the History of England, Roman and Greek History, several books of fables by Dodsley, Lessing and Gay, some skills books (spellers and readers), and a number of educational stories including Sarah Fielding's well-known The Governess: or, Little Female Academy.⁵⁸ Religious knowledge is provided by Mrs Trimmer's Scripture Lessons.⁵⁹

The books for young ladies are similarly diverse. There are a number of works on etiquette and elocution, a selection of grammars, some newspapers and several prescriptive books including those by Dr Percival and Dr Gregory discussed in Chapter 2.⁶⁰ The religious input is provided by the established women writers on education, Mrs Chapone and Hannah More. There are also more fictional works: the educational stories of Madame de Genlis, for example, and Richardson's novels.

The new-found authority of middle-class women to judge literature, confirmed here by Clara Reeve, had several reverberations. To recommend texts, women needed to have read them. Thus, in expecting women to take charge of texts, educationalists were furthering the arguments for women's self-education whilst purporting to support the "education for others" argument. Moreover, in their selection and rejection of texts, female mentors, it might be assumed, wielded some commercial authority. Books for

⁵⁸ Sarah Fielding, The Governess: or, The Little Female Academy: Calculated for the Entertainment and Instruction of Young Ladies in their Education (London: A. Millar, 1749).

⁵⁹ Mrs Trimmer, Scripture Lessons Designed to Accompany a Series of Prints from the Old Testament (London: J. Marshall, 1797).

⁶⁰ Dr John Gregory, A Father's Legacy to His Daughters (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1774) and Dr Thomas Percival, A Father's Instructions to His Children: Consisting of Tales, Fables and Reflections Designed to Promote the Love of Virtue, A Taste for Knowledge and an Early Acquaintance with the Works of Nature, 2 vols. (London: J. Johnson, 1776).

young people in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were popular, partly because they had been approved by middle-class female mentors. In turn, the writers of such books were under an obligation to direct their texts towards middle-class female audiences. In this period, the opinions of women as women may significantly have guided the production and dissemination of certain kinds of literature.

By extension, the preoccupations of women's educational discourse and the sheer volume of material written on the subject, came to shape the literary-critical responses of men and women to texts in reviews and in other scholarly appreciations in the period. Mid-eighteenth-century literary-critical preoccupations with aesthetics, "taste," and conformity to neo-classical rules, were increasingly supplemented in the late eighteenth century by ideas about the socialising and moralising aspects of literature, and by an examination of how the manners and morals of readers might be affected by reading practices. This impetus was derived in part, I would suggest, from the growth in commentary on literary texts by women in educational works.

4) Conclusion

In The Progress of Romance, a discussion in which both female naïvety and male ignorance played a part was moderated by the activities of the rational female mentor figure. Her challenge to tradition and authority through a polite domestic conversation with friends overturned a number of well-established assumptions about women and literature. By redefining romance and treating the reader to a rigorous examination of a subject that had long been associated with women, Reeve created, in The Progress of Romance, the possibility of a reappraisal of ingrained beliefs.

In effect, the text's final message is moderate, but its questioning of literary-critical practice may have paved the way for other kinds of enquiry into the construction of femininity. The discourse of literary-criticism, because it allowed for informed debate, for analysis and for reassessment of ideas about definition and value, came to be used figuratively by women writers as a means of challenging certain deeply-held prejudices about the position of women in society.

In the light of Reeve's Progress of Romance, it becomes apparent that Mary Wollstonecraft's remarks on literary style in A Vindication of the Rights of Woman are not simply colourful additions to her political message, but integral to it. Like Clara Reeve, Wollstonecraft considered style to be inflected by gender. This discourse, which was available to female readers in the domestic environment, could be manipulated to tease out the misogynies of contemporary culture. The critical practice of women, particularly in their role as educators, might allow them a kind of cultural authority through which they could challenge the restrictions imposed upon them by *prescriptive* and fictional literature alike. In the final pages of A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, Wollstonecraft points to the activity of reading and the intervention of the educator:

The best method, I believe, that can be adopted to correct a fondness for novels is to ridicule them: not indiscriminately for then it would have little effect; but, if a judicious person with some turn for humour, would read several to a young girl, and point out both by tones, and apt comparisons with pathetic characters and heroic incidents in history, how foolishly and ridiculously they caricatured human nature, just sentiments might be substituted instead of romantic sentiments. [emphasis mine] ⁶¹

One might consider this "judicious person," with her literary-critical skills, to be one and the same as the rational woman at the hub of Wollstonecraft's political manifesto: an

⁶¹ Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, 308.

insight which suggests links between middle-class women's emerging pedagogical role and their developing critique of society in this period.

Chapter 4

The Educative "I": The Preceptress as Self-Historian

It has generally been thought that old age and especially female old age, is a period to be looked forward to with the most painful anticipations as a dreary scene, affording nothing but the melancholy shadow of departed pleasure, reflected by the mirror of a too officious memory, and as bordering certainly, in common with the same period in the other sex, on the dark confines of the grave. But this depends almost entirely upon the way in which our youth and middle age have been spent; and upon the nature of the objects on which we have been accustomed to depend for our greatest enjoyment.(407)

Catharine Cappe, Memoir of the Life of the Late Mrs Catharine Cappe (1812) ¹

In 1812, a Unitarian woman from York, Catharine Cappe (1745-1821), contemplated her own "female old age" as she reached the final pages of a remarkable Memoir of her life.² The passage takes the form of a brief moral lesson: old age, Cappe tells us, need not be tormented by "the melancholy shadow of departed pleasure" provided one has been careful to lead a virtuous youth and middle age dependent on "proper objects". Cappe's two carefully balanced sentences share a common rhetoric with popular educational platitudes. Like countless female mentors in prescriptive texts, she generalises popular opinion and then corrects it. By virtue of her age and indeed of her sex (which, as she makes clear, is a relevant consideration), Cappe, as mature mentor figure, is able to survey the whole stretch of human life and to consider the educational

¹ Catharine Cappe, Memoir of the Life of the Late Mrs Catharine Cappe (1822), 2nd ed. (London: Longman, Hall, Hurst, Rees and Orme. 1823), 407. Reviews of Cappe's Memoir appear in The Monthly Repository 18 (1823): 163-167 and 238-241.

² Most of the Memoir was written in 1812; the appendices were added in 1818.

process, in retrospect. Where younger female mentors, as we have seen, encouraged children to behave well with the promise of a happier adulthood, the elderly Cappe can prove, by recourse to her own experience and that of those around her, that contentment in old age is indeed the result of previous good conduct. Cappe's comment evidently draws on the kinds of educational discourse we have seen in earlier chapters, but here it is fine-tuned to the demands of self-history.

Cappe's Memoir, mostly written in 1812 and published after her death in 1822, poses an interesting problem for historians of "autobiography." Its very existence challenges the way most historians of the genre chart its history. At the same time, its difference from contemporary works by male authors is suggestive of the gendered nature of autobiographical practice in the earlier years of the nineteenth century.³ In genealogies of the form, critics have typically located a shift, around this time, from understandings of self-history as a didactic genre based on fidelity to familiar types and patterns of behaviour and inviting imitation, to an awareness of its potential for original self-expression.⁴ By these criteria, Cappe's Memoir is undoubtedly old-fashioned: an

³ According to The Oxford English Dictionary, the term "autobiography" was first used by Robert Southey in 1809, Quarterly Review, 1:283. It is defined as "the writing of one's own history; the story of one's life written by himself." It was therefore a term used prior to the publication of Cappe's Memoir. I use it interchangeably with the eighteenth-century term "self-history", which I believe would have been the term familiar to Cappe herself. For a full discussion of the history of the terminology of autobiography, see Felicity Nussbaum, The Autobiographical Subject: Gender and Ideology in Eighteenth-Century England (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 7. During the period under study, "auto-biography" was being actively extruded from the mass of Memoirs, reminiscences and Lives as a qualitatively, and hence generically distinct form: its difference from "biography" was not, as it is now, taken for granted. Until well into the nineteenth century, reviewers and practitioners still routinely conflated third and first person narratives under the heading "biography".

⁴ Martin A. Danahay attributes this change to the development of copyright and the consequent emergence of the text as the property of a "single unique and identifiable individual", A Community of One: Masculine Autobiography and Autonomy in Nineteenth-Century Britain (New York: State University Press, 1993), 41. For a similar description of this transitional period in the history of autobiography see Linda Peterson, Victorian Autobiography: The Tradition of Self-Interpretation (London: Yale University Press, 1986); and Jerome Hamilton Buckley, The Turning Key: Autobiography and the Subjective Impulse since 1800 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984). Peterson argues for continuity between the spiritual and romantic modes.

eighteenth-century life published in the third decade of the nineteenth century. Cappe's invitation to others to emulate her has more in common with late eighteenth-century autobiographical modes than with the "romantic" or "literary" autobiographies usually associated with the nineteenth century.⁵ As this chapter will explain, Cappe's work is practical and pedagogical, casting education and self-history as functions of each other. As such it bears witness to a persistent rationalist - and female - presence in an increasingly Romantic and male-dominated genre.

In other ways too, Cappe presents an anomaly. Feminist critics have sketched a separate tradition of "autobiographical" writing by women.⁶ This tradition highlights the survival of the private writings of women, including diaries, journals and letters, and points to the cultural restrictions which held women back from more public self-history. Much of this criticism is simply not applicable to Cappe's Memoir, which, in its unapologetically formal and public nature, more closely resembles contemporaneous autobiography by men.⁷ Leaving aside this separatist vein of feminist work on autobiography, I would suggest, however, that patient attention to issues of gender can illuminate the construction of subjectivity in autobiography in general and in Cappe's

⁵ While it is difficult to generalise about the transition from rationalist to Romantic and Victorian autobiographical modes, one can detect a palpable generational gap, between say, Edward Gibbon's res gestae Memoirs of My Life (written 1788-1791) ed. Georges A. Bonnard (London: Nelson, 1968); and Thomas Carlyle's Sartor Resartus (first published 1833-1834 in Fraser's Magazine) ed. C. F. Harrold (New York: Odyssey Press, 1937).

⁶ See Domna Stanton, ed., The Female Autograph, gen. ed. Jeanine Parisier Plottel (New York: New York Literary Forum, 1984); Felicity A. Nussbaum, The Autobiographical Subject; Patricia Meyer Spacks, Imagining A Self: Autobiography and Novel in Eighteenth-Century England (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976); Estelle Jelinek, The Tradition of Women's Autobiography from Antiquity to the Present (Boston: Twayne and others, 1986); Estelle Jelinek, ed., Women's Autobiography: Essays in Theory and Criticism (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980); Gwenn Davis and Beverly A. Joyce, eds. Personal Writings by Women to 1800: A Bibliography of American and British Writers (London: Mansell, 1989); and Bella Brodski and Celeste Schenk, eds. Life/Lines: Theorizing Women's Autobiography (London: Cornell University Press, 1988).

⁷ See my later comments on male Unitarian autobiographers in the period, 229.

Memoir in particular. Martin A. Danahay has noted that in the classic Victorian autobiographies, creative autonomy and originality seem to have been the prerogative of male writers in the post-Romantic period.⁸ In this model, Cappe's predilection for imitation, didacticism and formality may be attributed to her location as a rational middle-class woman rather than to an outdated rationalism.

The publication of Cappe's Memoir was an unusual but not an unprecedented event for a woman in the early nineteenth century. Felicity Nussbaum has identified three distinct categories of autobiography by women of the eighteenth century: the spiritual self-histories of Quaker and Methodist women, so-called "scandalous" memoirs and domestic autobiographies.⁹ Cappe's account differs markedly from spiritual self-histories in which conversion is offered as the ultimate interpretative device.¹⁰ Though her Memoir is a

⁸ "It is precisely the opposite of autonomy, the insistence on the social conditions that inform the production of a text, that characterises women's and working-class autobiography in the nineteenth century," Martin A. Danahay, A Community of One, 3-4.

⁹ Felicity Nussbaum, The Autobiographical Subject, Chapters 7, 8 and 9. See also Margaret Ezell, Writing Women's Literary History (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993) and Cynthia Pomerleau, "The Emergence of Women's Autobiography in England," in Estelle Jelinek, ed., Women's Autobiography, 21-38. On spiritual autobiographies see Margaret Spufford, "First Steps in Literacy: the Reading and Writing Experiences of the Humblest Seventeenth-Century Spiritual Autobiographers," Social History 4 (1979): 407-435. Eighteenth-century spiritual autobiographies by women include, Elizabeth West, Memoirs or Spiritual Exercises of Elizabeth West: Written by her own Hand (Glasgow: John Bryce, 1766); Elizabeth Harper, An Extract from the Journal of Elizabeth Harper (London: n.p., 1769); and Jane Pearson, Sketches of Piety in the Life and Religious Experiences of Jane Pearson: Extracted from her own Memorandum (London: n.p., 1817). Scandalous memoirs include Laetitia Pilkington, Memoirs of Laetitia Pilkington, 1712-1750: Written by Herself (1748-1754), ed. Iris Barry (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1928); Charlotte Charke, A Narrative of the Life of Mrs Charlotte Charke: Written by Herself (1755) (Gainseville, Fla.: Scholar Facsimile and Reprints, 1969) and Hannah Snell, The Female Soldier...who Took upon Herself the Name of James Gray; and, being Deserted by her Husband, put on Men's Apparel, and Travelled to Coventry in Quest of Him, Where she Enlisted in Colonel Guise's Regiment of Foot (London: R. Walker, 1750). Domestic autobiographies include most significantly, Hester Thrale, Thraliana: the Diary of Mrs Hester Lynch Thrale (later Mrs Piozzi), 1776-1809, 2 vols. 2nd ed., ed. Katharine C. Balderston, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1942).

¹⁰ See, for example, William C. Spengemann, The Forms of Autobiography: Episodes in the History of a Literary Genre (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980); John Morris, Versions of the Self: Studies in English Autobiography from John Bunyan to John Stuart Mill (New York: Basic Books, 1966) and Wayne Schumaker, English Autobiography: Its Emergence, Materials and Form (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1954).

religious narrative with theological overtones - and as I shall show - forms part of a neglected tradition of self-history by Unitarians in the period, Cappe offers no passionate story of conversion, instead detailing a conscious secession from the Church of England in 1775 and a calm espousal of Unitarian beliefs. Nor is Cappe's narrative driven by the exhibitionism of the vie scandaleuse. Of Nussbaum's three categories, Cappe's Memoir most resembles the domestic narrative exemplified by Hester Thrale, in which contemporary definitions of womanhood, such as (in Thrale's case) those familiar from medical discourses, are explored and contested in the context of an individual life.¹¹ I share Nussbaum's interest in the interconnection between women's lived roles and the business of Life-writing. In the discussion of Catharine Cappe's Memoir which follows, I am specifically interested in the relationship between women's role as educator and the practice of autobiography.

1) "In Everything Follow My Example": Educational Discourse and Self-History: A Dialogue

As previous chapters in this thesis have indicated, there were many points of interconnection in the period 1780-1820 between educational discourse and the inscription and emplotment of women's lives. This dialogue manifested itself in a number of ways. In Chapter 1, we saw how the writers of children's books often inscribed their "selves" in prefaces and dedications, sometimes laboriously detailing their educational labours prior to publication. Practical experience of motherhood or of teaching was often cited as a justification for writing books for children, and the advantages of such life experience were promoted at the expense of the abstract reasoning of educational philosophers. In prescriptive texts as well as in children's

¹¹ Hester Thrale, Thraliana.

stories, personal or personalised anecdotes allowed the writer to negotiate the transition from precept to practice. In Practical Education (1798), Maria Edgeworth comments that for guidelines on education "we can appeal only to the recollection of individuals."¹² Elizabeth Hamilton's Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education is scattered with references to the educational activity of her friends and acquaintances.¹³ A lecture on parental authority, for example, is prefixed with the comment, "I was some years ago intimately acquainted with a respectable and happy family, where the behaviour of the children excited my admiration." From this statement Hamilton launches into a lengthy anecdote about the activities of this family.¹⁴ In common with other prescriptive writers, Hamilton frequently refers to her own experience and observation for confirmation or elucidation of educational principles. There is a sense of her watching, listening presence behind every page of the text. This feeling is accentuated in Letters to the Daughter of a Nobleman on the Formation of the Religious and of The Moral Principle (1806), in which Hamilton invokes her own experience and addresses her text to a former pupil.¹⁵

Mitzi Myers, commenting on the connection between self-expression and pedagogy in the period (a combination related to the one I am proposing between autobiography and pedagogy), asserts that, for women writers, an autobiographical impulse is effectively "disguised" in novels of education, children's books, and expository manuals of

¹² Maria and Richard Lovell Edgeworth, Practical Education (1798) (London: Garland Publishing Incorporated, 1974), 525. This quotation is taken from one of the chapters specifically contributed by Maria Edgeworth, "On Female Accomplishments, Masters and Mistresses," 519-553.

¹³ Elizabeth Hamilton, Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education, 6th ed. (London: Baldwin and others, 1818).

¹⁴ Ibid., 112-113.

¹⁵ Elizabeth Hamilton, Letters to the Daughter of a Nobleman on the Formation of Moral and Religious Principle, 2nd ed. (London: T. Cadell and W. Davis, 1806).

instruction and advice. The extent to which pedagogy can be said to act as a front for a 'prior' project of self-expression will be one of the problems addressed in this chapter. Myers remarks that "throughout her work [Mary Wollstonecraft] insistently refers to the image of life as education, and her literary production fuses personal event, female self-definition, and educational format."¹⁶ This observation confirms my own suspicion that, rather than simply providing a "mask" for self-history, educational discourse was more deeply implicated in the process of constructing selves in the period 1780-1820.

Generalised biographical sketches were a staple of prescriptive literature. Educational writers routinely illustrated their recommendations with reference to the life-histories of exemplary individuals, usually pairs of sisters, cousins or friends. These biographical vignettes assumed a causal relationship between educational upbringing and happiness in later life. Other writers noted the educational histories of real historical and contemporary characters such as Princess Charlotte, or of religious figures, including Christ Himself. They also designed educational biographies for their fictional characters. As Chapter 2 has shown, Maria Edgeworth charted the differing experiences of Julia and Caroline in Letters for Literary Ladies, showing how their education was the determinant of their fortunes and particularly of their choice of marriage partner.¹⁷ Such pairs of women, the one enjoying the benefits of a sound education and the other reaping the consequences of subjection to a remiss mentor, a faulty plan of education, or an ungovernable temperament, are common to many educational and fictional works.

¹⁶ Mitzi Myers, "Pedagogy as Self-Expression in Mary Wollstonecraft: Exorcising the Past, Finding a Voice," in The Private Self: Theory and Practice of Women's Autobiographical Writings, ed. Shari Benstock (London: Routledge, 1988), 192-210, 196.

¹⁷ Maria Edgeworth, Letters for Literary Ladies to which is Added an Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification (London: J. Johnson, 1795). See my case study in Chapter 2, 168.

Educating and life-writing were further linked. With the prevalent emphasis on experience over imagination and on fact rather than fantasy, 'real' life stories, or those such as 'moral tales' for children which purported to be 'true,' were a valuable educational resource. Life stories provided case-studies in education. In Sarah Fielding's The Governess: or, the Little Female Academy (1749), for example, the young girls each listen to fairy stories, then tell an autobiographical tale from which a moral is adduced by the listeners.¹⁸ Writers cited biographies, their own and those of other people, for details of educational programmes, successful and unsuccessful. But biographies also provided the material upon which educators exercised their powers of deduction. Ill-fortune in later life might, for example, have been caused by the deficiencies of education in youth and it was the task of the educator to identify and explain this pattern.

More generally, biographical information - especially details of education - could be disclosed by individual writers to mark their social status, intellectual capability and moral worth. As I noted in Chapter 3, women writers often cited the books they had read as a means of specifying their accomplishments and views, and such lists were a measure by which women could compare themselves with each other and with men.

Finally, there existed a well-developed metaphorical relationship between written advice and writers themselves. Educational texts were considered to embody and therefore substitute for the personal authority of their authors: in some senses, therefore, the writing of educational advice was the ultimate method of "self" representation. In

¹⁸ Sarah Fielding, The Governess: or, the Little Female Academy: Calculated for the Entertainment and Instruction of Young Ladies in their Education (London: A. Millar, 1749).

Chapter 2, I showed how Dr Gregory suggested that his words of wisdom might stand in for the presence of his wife. Many other educators used the same device. Ellen Weeton opened her Journal to her daughter with remarks which combined educational and autobiographical objectives:

In writing a History of my own life, some apology would be necessary if I intended it to be made public; but as I only intend it for the perusal of a few, and of my own child in particular, I shall say little more here than that all I write is simple and entire truth. It seems probable from present circumstances that my child will know no more of her mother than what she may learn from these pages... It is my earnest wish that as regards my conduct throughout a life of now near fifty years, she may in everything follow my example. And if the same Providence will but protect her as He has protected me, I will be satisfied; but I would desire that my sufferings might be deemed sufficient for us both.[emphasis mine] ¹⁹

Weeton writes ostensibly to provide an example for her daughter but the Journals that follow are far more than mere instruction. They provide a rich insight into her conception of her own life and the world in which she grew up.

In the same way Dr Percival opened his advice work with a declaration to posterity:

When you recollect these lessons of Wisdom and Virtue, I flatter myself you will associate with them the parental endearments with which they were delivered; and that I shall live with honour in your memories, when forgotten by the world, and mouldering in the dust. Such immortality I am more ambitious to obtain, than all the fame which learning and philosophy bestows. [emphasis mine]²⁰

Dr Percival's statement reveals the importance of educational literature as a means of achieving 'useful' rather than 'romantic' immortality through the transmission of advice to the younger generation. Here, Percival also gestures towards the theory of association which, as my Introduction and Chapter 1 have shown, was a key principle of education

¹⁹ Ellen Weeton, The Journals of Ellen Weeton, 1807-1825, 2 vols., ed. Edward Hall with a new introduction by J.J. Bagley (Newton Abbot: David and Charles Reprints, 1969), 3.

²⁰ Dr Thomas Percival, A Father's Instructions to his Children: Consisting of Tales, Fables and Reflections Designed to Promote the Love of Virtue, a Taste for Knowledge and an Early Acquaintance with the Works of Nature, 2 vols. (London: J. Johnson, 1776), 10-11.

in this period and one which was used to explain the fixing of educational precepts in young minds.

The construction and interpretation of educable selves, it would seem, is at the heart of educational methodology in the period 1780-1820 and, in this sense, pedagogy invoked the kinds of textual activity we now identify as autobiography. I have sketched this complex web of interconnections between the pedagogical and the autobiographical partly in order to point to the gendered world of middle-class pedagogy as a possible context for the self-histories written by women in the period 1780-1820, and partly to draw attention to the persistence of a rationalist vein in nineteenth-century life-writing.²¹ In what follows, I will ask how the full-length Memoir of Catharine Cappe uses pedagogical discourse as means of recounting self-history.

2) The Memoir of Catharine Cappe (1812)

Cappe's memoir describes a life of religious conviction and practical philanthropic enterprise as well as of substantial literary (though not fictional) endeavour. She was born in 1744, the daughter of the Reverend Jeremiah Harrison, an Anglican Minister at Long Preston, Craven and later Catterick-on-Tees. Her own education was somewhat paltry and she bitterly resented her father's preference for her brother:

He paid great attention to my brother whose scanty attainments he constantly lamented, but I do not recollect that he ever taught me a single lesson...if he saw in his daughter an early desire of mental improvement, and some capacity for making progress in it, it is probable that he might think it the more necessary not to encourage, but rather to restrain, the growing propensity. (18-19)

Cappe's earliest lessons were provided by a Mrs Maurice who "knew little of spelling,

²¹ How pedagogy and autobiography intersect in the works of evangelical writers in this period is an issue beyond the scope of this thesis but one which would repay further investigation.

and nothing of English grammar," but whose own education "appeared rather in the whole of her manner, and in the elevation of her sentiments." This "good old lady" taught Cappe to read, to sew, and to knit, and like the autobiographical Cappe herself "many an excellent maxim did [] rehearse, for the future guidance and conduct of my life." (17) Unlike other writers in this thesis, Cappe had little access to literary culture, though she does quote from Pope's works including the "Rape of the Lock," the "Essay on Criticism" and the "Essay on Man." She noted with regret, however, that her powers of expression were limited by her poor reading:

Persons who have enjoyed the benefits of a cultivated education, and have early been accustomed to composition, can have no idea how difficult an attainment it is to those who have not possessed these advantages.(343)

Cappe spent some time at a boarding school at York, where, in common with many literary women of the period, she claimed to be appalled by the showy 'accomplishments' and questionable values of her contemporaries. When she moved to York after the death of her father, she contemplated opening a school of her own, though she disliked the idea of teaching 'accomplishments'. The school scheme was, however, dismissed by her aunts who:

could not endure the thought, that a niece of theirs, who was well known to have been in the habit of associating with some of the first families, in the city where they lived, should engage in an undertaking, which, in their estimation, would remove her from the rank of a gentlewoman. (198)

Cappe was therefore prevented on the grounds of class from taking up pedagogy as a paid occupation.

But Cappe's interest in education and educating never waned. In her early life she opened a Sunday School in Bedale and suffered the ostracism of the female teacher:

I was regarded as a well-meaning young woman, but odd and singular; a fair mark

for the shafts of ridicule, and one whose society was rather to be avoided, than sought after and desired. (122)

She was also entrusted at various periods with the care of her friend's daughter, Miss Winn, whose educational progress in French, Italian and letter-writing she recounts with delight. In 1770 she helped to edit Jonas Hanway's prescriptive text, Advice from Farmer Trueman to his Daughter.²² Later she was on the board of several schools in York, including the Grey Coat School where she was responsible for the annual accounts. In 1783 she set up a spinning school in York for poor women. Cappe also published several texts about schools, including Observations on Charity Day Schools, described in the Memoir as "a little work on the comparative utility of educating poor female children in boarding schools contrasted with the advantages of charity dayschools." (420)²³

Cappe's interest in education was to some extent a personal dedication to the improvement of the young, but it was also inspired by her commitment to the theological and pedagogical ideals of the newly emergent Unitarian movement.²⁴ This movement developed, in Cappe's lifetime, as a result of the combination of two religious interests. Those rational Presbyterians who had gradually been drawn towards Socinianism from the 1720s onwards were joined, from the 1770s, by a number of

²² Jonas Hanway, Advice from Farmer Trueman to his Daughter, Mary: in a Series of Discourses, Calculated to Promote the Welfare and the True Interest of Servants with Reflexions of no Less Importance to Masters and Mistresses with Regard to Private Happiness and Public Tranquility (London: J. Dodsley and others, 1770).

²³ Catharine Cappe, Observations on Charity Schools, Female Friendly Societies and other Subjects Connected With the Views of the Ladies' Committee (York: William Blanchard, 1805).

²⁴ For a discussion of the importance of religion in the lives of women in this period and particularly on women's success as religious writers, see Deborah Valenze, Prophetic Sons and Daughters: Female Preaching and Popular Religion in Industrial England (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985); and Gail Malmgreen, ed., Religion in the Lives of English Women, 1760-1930 (London: Croom Helm, 1986), 1-10.

ministers of the Church of England who were no longer able to subscribe to the Thirty-Nine Articles. The Unitarians were led by Joseph Priestley and Theophilus Lindsey, both of whom Cappe knew personally.²⁵ Unitarian theology, as I shall explain in more detail later in this chapter, was steeped in an almost secular rationalism and rejected many of the doctrinal tenets of the Church of England including belief in the devil and evil. Crucial to Unitarian beliefs was a rejection of Christ as the second person of the Trinity: instead Christ was considered to have been a real man "commissioned by God" to help man to reason. In addition to its rigorous intellectualism, Unitarianism played a key role in the social life of the communities in which it took hold. The instigation of numerous philanthropic and educational projects made Unitarianism in some ways a liberating religion for middle-class women, whose voluntary participation in such activities was encouraged by writers such as Cappe. In her life-time, the Unitarian movement was at its height, making new converts predominantly in the Northern manufacturing towns.²⁶

Cappe's career became intimately connected to the development of Unitarianism. In her youth, she had been a friend of Theophilus Lindsey's wife, Hannah. Inspired by the Reverend Lindsey's Sunday School in Catterick-on-Tees, she started her own Sunday

²⁵ For the history of Unitarianism in the period, see Raymond V. Holt, The Story of Unitarianism (London: The Lindsey Press, 1931) and The Unitarian Contribution to Social Progress in England (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1938); J. Estlin Carpenter, Unitarianism: An Historic Survey (London: The Lindsey Press, 1922); David B. Parke, The Epic of Unitarianism: Original Writings from the History of Liberal Religion (Boston: Star King Press, 1957); John Seed, "The Role of Unitarianism in the Formation of Liberal Culture: A Social History" (Ph.D. diss.: University of Hull, 1984) and John Seed, "Theologies of Power: Unitarianism and the Social Relations of Religious Discourse, 1800-1850," in Class, Power and Social Structure in British Nineteenth-Century Towns, ed. R. J. Morris (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1986), 107-156.

²⁶ In 1791, The Unitarian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge was founded. In 1806 a fund was established to send Unitarian Missionaries throughout the country. In 1813, Unitarianism was made legal and in 1819, the Unitarian Movement for the Protection of the Civil Rights of Unitarians was founded. See Raymond Holt, The Story of Unitarianism, 4.

School in her kitchen at Bedale in 1766.²⁷ When Lindsey refused to submit to the Thirty-Nine articles, renounced his living in 1773, and moved to London to open the first Unitarian chapel in Essex Street, Cappe herself witnessed, applauded and aided the move.²⁸ In 1775, Cappe and her mother moved to live with her errant brother, a failed Anglican Minister and sometime farmer, just outside Leeds. It was at this point that Cappe herself seceded from the Church of England and became a regular worshipper at the famous Unitarian Chapel at Mill Hill. As a young woman, she was a frequent visitor to the Unitarian chapel in Essex Street and the Lindseys considered her their closest friend in the North.

Cappe's connection with the Unitarian Movement continued. In the year of Lindsey's resignation, she met the Reverend Newcombe Cappe, a widower with six children, minister to the very small Unitarian community in York and publisher of numerous dissenting writings. Later in 1788, she married him and took over the care of his children. Because of failing health, Newcombe Cappe was forced to retire early from his ministerial duties. During her husband's last illness, Cappe spent months helping him to transcribe his sermons from almost indecipherable shorthand into longhand for the purposes of publication.

Left a widow within a fairly short time, Cappe devoted the rest of her life to educational

²⁷ Neither school at this point was a recognised Unitarian establishment. In the Memoir, Cappe comments that she read "Doctor Watt's shorter catechism together with his Devotional Hymns" to her Sunday school class, 121.

²⁸ When Theophilus Lindsey resigned his living in 1773, owing to the failure of a petition to Parliament which might have led to greater tolerance for Unitarianism within the Established Church, Cappe was intimately acquainted with the mental anguish that the decision had caused him. "I am probably the only person now living, who was present during the whole of that heart-rending transition, and who was intimately acquainted with all the distressing circumstances by which it was preceded and accompanied and which followed in its train." Catharine Cappe, Memoir, 152.

and philanthropic activities and to writing. She continued to be involved with Unitarianism through her personal friendships with many leading Unitarian ministers of the day and she participated in the discussions surrounding the opening of the college at York for Dissenting ministers (1803-1840).²⁹ She visited and was visited by many leading Unitarians and certainly corresponded with others throughout England and America by letter and through her contributions to the two main Unitarian magazines, The Monthly Magazine and The Monthly Repository.³⁰

In writing her own *Life* Cappe not only recounts the theological aspects of the Unitarian controversy, but also tells the story of the movement from a perspective long since lost from Unitarian histories: that of a middle-class woman's domestic involvement in Unitarian philanthropic and educational projects.³¹ Conversely, Cappe's lifelong interest in education - informed as it is by her Unitarian theology - forms one important context for the understanding of her Memoir.

i) Unitarianism and Life-Writing

An examination of the history and principles of belief of early Unitarianism reveals a religion whose tenets are entirely consonant with, if perhaps more extreme expressions of, the rational cultures of Dissent familiar to the backgrounds of many of the writers examined in this thesis. The theological tenets of Unitarianism were distinctive. H.L.

²⁹ John Seed, "Theologies of Power," in Class, Power and Social Structure in British Nineteenth-Century Towns, ed. R. J. Morris, 109.

³⁰ The Monthly Magazine, begun 1792; The Monthly Repository, begun 1806. See also F. Minneka, The Dissidence of Dissent: The Monthly Repository, 1806-1838 (New York: Octagon Books, 1972).

³¹ Ruth Watts has made a rare study of the effect of Unitarianism on women's calls for an equal education, "Knowledge is Power - Unitarians, Gender and Education in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries," Gender and Education 1:1 (1989): 35-50.

Short describes the Unitarians as "completely Newtonian, determinist and materialist."³² John Seed describes the faith as "a bold project to square Christian religion with contemporary scientific knowledge." Seed also explains how Unitarians considered the divine scheme to constitute "a rational system of pains and pleasures, of rewards and punishments."³³ Such descriptions begin to reveal affinities between Unitarian theology and contemporary theories about education.³⁴ Unitarians were committed to the scientific study of the natural and social world, and were optimistic for future human progress in the spirit of enlightenment.

Life-writing of many kinds was a central feature of Unitarianism and there may be several reasons for this. There was certainly a feeling that the history of the movement could best be charted through the Lives of particularly courageous Unitarian ministers. Secondly, in Unitarian theology, Christ was considered human rather than divine. Biographies and self-histories were written both in imitation of the Life of Christ and to fulfil the same exemplary purpose.³⁵ For the Unitarians, life-writing was, moreover, a spiritual exercise: Cappe herself explains how working on her husband's biography was the only way she could console herself after his death.

³² H. L. Short, "Presbyterianism Under a New Name," in The English Presbyterians: From Elizabethan Puritanism to Modern Unitarianism, eds. C.G. Bolam, Jeremy Goring, H. L. Short, and Roger Thomas (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1968), 219-286, 229.

³³ John Seed, "The Role of Unitarianism in the Formation of Liberal Culture: A Social History," 1-4.

³⁴ Geoffrey Boyd Hilton points to the increasing perception of Christ as a man rather than as a lamb in evangelicalism in the early nineteenth century. Boyd Hilton, The Age of Atonement (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 5. Unitarianism went further in suggesting that Christ was a man with a divine mission rather than identical with God.

³⁵ Unitarian writers frequently refer to life as a stormy sea-journey on which many obstacles and dangers are encountered, and God is typically described as the light guiding sea-farers ashore.

Several Unitarian autobiographers and biographers, including Cappe herself, wrote their own lives of Christ.³⁶ Unitarians also practised their biographical skills in the many obituaries written for the Monthly Repository and the Monthly Review. Cappe was responsible for the obituary notice of Mrs Lindsey, her own mother, her husband's sister and many friends: some of these obituaries are reproduced in her Memoir.³⁷ Cappe also wrote a short life of the poet Charlotte Richardson, an "unlettered nurse" whom she had rescued from obscurity.³⁸ This formed a preface to Richardson's published poems and narrated an exemplary life of Christian piety pursued in the face of great odds. Finally, Cappe wrote a biographical sketch of her husband which was attached to the book of sermons she had transcribed from his notes and which was published after his death.³⁹

Cappe's Memoir was by no means, therefore, a spontaneous autobiographical effusion but was one of a number of biographical projects upon which she embarked during the course of her career. It may also be seen as an example, albeit a divergent one, of a small and newly developing genre of spiritual (auto)biography - the Unitarian memoir.

³⁶ Catharine Cappe, A Connected History of the Public Life and Divine Mission of Jesus Christ, as Recorded in the Four Evangelists, with Notes Selected from the Short-hand papers of the late Reverend Newcombe Cappe: to which are Added Reflections Arising From the Several Subjects of Each Section (York: T. Wilson and Sons, 1809).

³⁷ Cappe's mother's obituary appears in the Monthly Magazine for June 1805 and Mrs Lindsey's in the Monthly Repository for February 1812.

³⁸ Catharine Cappe, ed., Charlotte Richardson: Poems on Several Different Occasions (York: T. Wilson and R. Spence, 1806).

³⁹ The Reverend Newcombe Cappe, Discourses Chiefly on Devotional Subjects: to which are Prefixed Memoirs of his Life by Catharine Cappe with an Appendix Containing a Sermon Preached at the Interment of the Author by the Reverend William Wood and a Sermon on the Occasion of the Death of Robert Cappe, M.D. with Memoirs of His Life by the Reverend C. Wellbeloved (York: T. Wilson and R. Spence, 1805).

The biographical and autobiographical projects generated by Unitarian thinkers at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries have received little scholarly attention.⁴⁰ Among them are The Memoirs of Joseph Priestley, generally recognised as the founding father of the Unitarianism, a biographical account of the Reverend Theophilus Lindsey by the Reverend Thomas Belsham, and one of Belsham himself by John Williams. The Unitarian minister Gilbert Wakefield (a former student of Warrington Academy) also wrote a Life.⁴¹

A distinguishing characteristic of *Unitarian autobiographies written by men* is the emphasis on the life of the mind over the life of action. Unitarian autobiographers make a point of distinguishing themselves on these grounds from other life-writers such as great politicians or statesmen. John Williams, in his Memoirs of the Unitarian Minister, Thomas Belsham, concedes that "the life of the warrior, of the statesman, or of the man of the world, must furnish more amusing detail than that of the retired student, the character which most ministers of the gospel have to sustain," but it is evident that he considers the life of the mind preferable.⁴² Gilbert Wakefield's autobiography reiterates

⁴⁰ I have discovered some of these through primary research in the British Library - I am not aware of any secondary survey of such writings by women - though Catharine Cappe's Memoir may usefully be compared with the Autobiography of the later Harriet Martineau (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1877). See R. K. Webb, Harriet Martineau: A Radical Victorian (London: Heinemann, 1960).

⁴¹ Joseph Priestley, Memoirs of the Reverend Dr Joseph Priestley to the Year 1795 Written By Himself with a Continuation to the Time of his Decease by his Son, Joseph Priestley and Observations on his Writings by T. Cooper and W. Christie (1805) (London: J. Johnson, 1809) and see also Joseph Priestley, Autobiography of Joseph Priestley: Memoirs Written by Himself: An Account of Further Discoveries in Air, ed. Jack Lindsay (London: Adams and Dart, 1970). Thomas Belsham, Memoirs of the late Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, M.A., Including a Brief Analysis of his Works Together with Anecdotes and Letters of Eminent Persons, his Friends and Correspondents, (London: J. Johnson, 1812); John Williams, Memoirs of the Late Reverend Thomas Belsham Including a Brief Notice of his Published Writing and Copious Extracts from his Diary Together with Letters to and from his Correspondents (London: n.p., 1833) and Gilbert Wakefield, Memoirs of The Life of Gilbert Wakefield, B.A., Written by Himself (1792) (London: J. Johnson, 1804).

⁴² John Williams, Memoirs of the Late Reverend Thomas Belsham, v.

the distance of the autobiographer from the "solicitations of worldly interest" and points to educational motives for writing:

I am firmly persuaded that a life like mine, of which so large a portion has been employed in a vigorous pursuit of religious truth, and an undaunted profession of her dictates, in opposition to the sensibilities of domestic influence, the restraints of friendship, and the solicitations of worldly interest, in conjunction with such application to useful literature, as precarious health, embarrassed circumstances, perpetual change of residence, and numerous avocations, would allow: I am I say, firmly persuaded, that such a life, faithfully delineated, can hardly fail of a beneficial influence on the manners of the rising generation.⁴³

In keeping with such memoirs by men, Cappe's own preface, (which incidentally adopts the male pronoun when referring to the writer), rejects eminence as a criterion for the writing of self-history. She comments in her introduction that "it is not necessary in order to be useful... that the writer *should have filled any high or conspicuous station*, that he should have risen to eminence in the walks of literature or science, much less that he should have been the accomplished statesman, the profound politician, or the successful warrior..." (2-3) Instead ordinariness and assimilation to the lives of other people become the justification for self-history (see appendix G).

It is apparent, however, from Cappe's philanthropic writings that though she shares her male contemporaries' espousal of "ordinariness" over "eminence" and mind over action, her sense of difference is also rooted in her gender:

Our sex, my young friends, are happily exempt from the ceaseless anxieties of the conscientious legislator; the great fatigues and multiplied dangers of the military commander; the temptations, inquietudes and degrading compliances of the ambitious statesman. Our lot is happily cast in the more sequestered vales of life apart from the storms and tempests which so often convulse the political horizon, paralyze [sic] the best feelings of the human heart, and harden it against every noble, every disinterested enterprise. But does it therefore follow that we have no

⁴³ Gilbert Wakefield, Memoirs of the Life of Gilbert Wakefield. i.

important duties to fulfil, no subordinate part to act in the great universal drama?⁴⁴

The quieter, more restricted lives of women, Cappe implies, elevate them to a position of moral advantage. Cappe comments in her philanthropic writings that the higher moral conduct of women can excite no jealousy in men; sons and husbands will not complain about the exemplary conduct, affection, care or kind judicious treatment shown them by their wives and mothers. Through philanthropic and educational activity, the visiting of schools, hospitals, prisons and lunatic asylums - all promoted by Cappe in her philanthropic writings - middle-class women, including single women, can become "eminently useful and respectable."⁴⁵ In her Memoir, then, it is Cappe's position as a middle-class woman as much as her ordinariness that vindicates her efforts to educate others.

While, as I have explained, most Unitarian (auto)biographers assumed that experience, could be read straightforwardly as an illustration of how to cope morally with the vicissitudes of life, Catharine Cappe goes further in specifying the practical capabilities of middle-class British women (whom she refers to as "promoters, patronesses and conductors") for social regeneration through education.⁴⁶ Lower-class women who tend

⁴⁴ Catharine Cappe, Thoughts on Various Charitable and Other Important Institutions and on the Best Mode of Conducting them to which is Subjoined an Address to the Females of the Rising Generation Dedicated by Permission to William Wilberforce Esq. (York: Thomas Wilson and Sons, 1812), 99.

⁴⁵ Catharine Cappe, Thoughts on Various Charitable Institutions, iv. See F. K. Prochaska, Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth-Century England (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980). In his chapter on public and charitable institutions, Prochaska comments specifically on Cappe's work on hospitals, 141. As Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall have suggested, participation in such activities contributed to a sense of middle-class identity amongst women in the early years of the nineteenth century, Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850 (London: Hutchinson Education, 1987), passim. See also my Introduction, 53 where I consider the contribution of women's cultural activities as one method of assessing their sense of class belonging.

⁴⁶ Cappe, Thoughts on Various Charitable Institutions, 69.

the young may also be trained to fulfil the same purpose. Of nursery maids Cappe asks:

who shall calculate the evils that have resulted from this fruitful source, not only to the children thus corrupted, but through them to society at large? ⁴⁷

As may be seen, Cappe's belief in the important supervisory role of women of all kinds is a prominent theme in her writing. In her Memoir, her own talent and influence in this respect is implicitly transferred to the act of writing pedagogical self-history.

ii) Cappe's Memoir and Educational Discourse

As I have intimated, Cappe's life was involved with education in a number of practical ways. She had experienced the pitfalls of a badly-managed domestic education; knew the importance of published educational advice and the dangers and advantages of access to a well-stocked library. In her Memoir, she also berates the attractions of academies for girls and extols the virtues of village school-teachers. She recognises the loss of status involved for women in paid teaching. In the case of lower-class girls, she was instrumental in instigating the Sunday School system and had anticipated the benefits of schooling for lower-class women wishing to apply for domestic jobs.

In addition to her private interest in education, Cappe participated in a growing public debate on the subject amongst female Unitarian writers. Mrs Barbauld (1743-1825) and Lucy Aikin (1781-1864), for example, already mentioned as prolific writers for children in Chapter 1, participated in the Unitarian circle associated with Warrington Academy and their emphasis on the practicalities of education was similar to Cappe's. Cappe was evidently conversant with the educational texts of her age; her works mention both Hester Chapone's Letters on the Improvement of the Mind (1773) and Maria and

⁴⁷ Catharine Cappe, Observations on Charity Schools, 22.

Richard Lovell Edgeworth's Practical Education (1798).⁴⁸ In addition to her explicit interest in education, I suggest that Cappe's Memoir bears a number of structural and stylistic similarities to these prescriptive works. These similarities may be divided for ease into two categories: the pedagogical import of the Memoir - what Cappe describes as the "other end" kept in view as she wrote her self-history - and the Memoir's use of Hartley's theory of association.

a) "Another End in View"

In the preface to her Memoir, Cappe expounds the aims of her self-history at length. It is, she declares, not from any desire to have an "imaginary life in the fleeting breath of those who succeed her" that she has written this Memoir; rather, her aims are threefold and predominantly educational. First, she wants to guide ordinary people, like herself, past the pitfalls of life on their journey towards God; secondly, she desires to teach parents the best method of educating their own children by recounting her personal childhood experiences; and, thirdly, she will outline the histories of various people with whom she has been involved, again to the same instructive end.⁴⁹

At first glance, these three educational aims may seem like standard disclaimers against the autobiographical project: feigned rather than genuine objectives. Much recent criticism of female-authored autobiography has set out to unearth the "real" selves of

⁴⁸ Cappe refers to the Edgeworths' Practical Education (1798) in Thoughts on the Importance of Charitable and Other Institutions, 48, and Hester Mulso Chapone's Letters on the Improvement of the Mind: Addressed to a Young Lady, 2 vols. (London: J. Walter, 1773) in the Memoir, 53.

⁴⁹ Cappe, Memoir, 1-4. See also appendix G for a fuller extract from Cappe's preface.

female autobiographers behind such "conventional" formulae.⁵⁰ Indeed it seems clear that later nineteenth-century women writers in particular found it necessary to indulge in lengthy apologia which often contradicted or at least failed accurately to introduce the texts they prefixed. Such discrepancies seem to confirm that women were adopting disguises for writing the story of their own lives in periods when such an activity was restricted. But Cappe's preface yields more than the simple fact that it was difficult for women to write directly about themselves in this period: it is evidence of her very distinct conception of what constituted self-history and specifically of what constituted middle-class female selfhood.⁵¹ The pedagogical "excuses" are an integral part of Cappe's self-representation, and in her case, pedagogical motives for writing self-history construct the autobiographical subject rather than conceal it. As we shall see, many of Cappe's techniques for describing her own life are based on the connections between educating and Life-writing to which I have pointed in the first section of this chapter.

Because of her pedagogical role, Cappe necessarily describes a life implicated in the lives of others. Her promise to write usefully for the instruction of children and their parents and her concern to recount others' experience as well as her own, for example, are certainly answered during the course of her memoir. Many of Mrs Lindsey's letters to Cappe are included in the Memoir and the Lindseys' careers run alongside Cappe's

⁵⁰ Such works include Patricia Meyer Spacks, Imagining a Self; Linda Peterson, Victorian Autobiography, 124-5; Patricia Meyer Spacks "Selves in Hiding," in Women's Autobiography, ed. Estelle Jelinek, 112-132; and Valerie Sanders, The Private Lives of Victorian Women (Brighton: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989), "Those [Victorian Women] who did [write autobiography] were driven into a variety of rhetorical strategies which fulfilled their need to speak out while preserving their aura of reserve and selflessness," 7.

⁵¹ Felicity Nussbaum's work, which analyses eighteenth-century autobiographical writing by women in terms of discourses and subject positions, has been particularly helpful to me. See The Autobiographical Subject; and "Eighteenth-Century Women's Autobiographical Commonplaces," in The Private Self, ed. Shari Benstock, 147-171.

for much of the narrative, as do the fortunes of many other of Cappe's acquaintance, including her old schoolteacher, Mrs Maurice. She also adopts a teacher/pupil relationship with her readers, who are conceived as the parents and children who will benefit from her maxims. Unlike the memoirs of her male contemporaries, but in a manner very similar to contemporary educational texts for young girls, Cappe's Memoir is addressed to parents and their children. When recounting her own schooldays, she asks that her text be read by those in charge of schools:

In my thirteenth year, I was placed at a boarding school in York, of which I shall relate a few anecdotes, both in the hope of their supplying useful hints to parents, who send their children to such seminaries, and also to the persons themselves, to whose care the children are committed (45).

In keeping with contemporary advice books and writing for children, the key figures in the Memoir are mainly educators of one sort or another: Cappe's husband and Mr and Mrs Lindsey, for example. Important relationships are frequently those between teachers and pupils or those between friends of different generations who pass on lessons in life. Other minor characters are compared with each other in terms of their upbringing. In Chapter 8, for example, Cappe contrasts the lives of two sisters with whom she has been acquainted on the grounds of their differing education. Towards the end of the Memoir, she contrasts her own life history with that of "the elegant and enchanting Hannah... my contemporary, whose original situation, although different from mine (for her father was a merchant) did not in fact rank higher than my own and whose talents were probably of about the same class (393)." As in prescriptive educational texts, such as Maria Edgeworth's Letters for Literary Ladies, biographical anecdotes and paired life stories

provide material for moral commentary.⁵²

Recent theories of women's autobiography as the production of "relational selves" may be applicable here.⁵³ Educational discourse, of course, authorises this process of 'othering', for to teach one must have a learner. Pedagogy in this sense might be considered to have provided women writers with a model for the writing of self-history which assured intersubjectivity. By writing a self-history which systematically addressed the needs of others, including the reader, Cappe avoided the charges of pride or self-congratulation that hemmed in later female autobiographers.⁵⁴

b) Association and Autobiography

Chapter three of Cappe's Memoir opens with an analysis of her writing process:

It being one of my objects, as already mentioned, to throw some light, for the benefit of others, on what passes in the infant mind, as far as I can do it, by instances adduced from my own recollection, I will here put down as faithfully as it lies in my power, the effects which I remember to have been produced, whether by something original in my own disposition, or by very early associations arising from particular situations, from accidental occurrences, or from incidental conversations. [emphasis mine] (22)

In this passage, she is evidently using the language of association prominent in educational discourse in this period. Cappe's educational and autobiographical aims are one and the same: "associations" are used to furnish her explanation of the workings of

⁵² Maria Edgeworth, Letters for Literary Ladies to which is added an Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification (London: J. Johnson, 1795). In section II of this text, "Letters of Julia and Caroline," the education of two female friends is contrasted in similar ways. See Chapter 2, 168.

⁵³ Recent autobiographical criticism that looks at the female self in relation to others includes Mary Mason, "The Other Voice," in Life/Lines: Theorizing Women's Autobiography, eds. Bella Brodski and Celeste Schenk (London: Cornell University Press, 1988), 19-44.

⁵⁴ Valerie Sanders discusses the way in which Victorian women autobiographers often described their works in modest and self-effacing terms, see The Private Lives of Victorian Women: Autobiography in Nineteenth-Century England (Brighton: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989), 5-8.

the infant mind but are also the substance of her own individuated life-history. Cappe refers to Hartley's theory of association by name in the Memoir, and her frequent use of the term suggests that she was fully conversant with the theory.

In her study of Victorian autobiography, Linda Peterson has commented that there was a common belief from the late eighteenth-century onwards that women were less able to associate ideas and events than men, and therefore less likely to structure coherent autobiography, a genre of writing which, it was believed, required "precisely those qualities of mind" demanded by association.⁵⁵ Citing Hannah More's denigration of women's powers of association, Peterson regards the incoherence of autobiography by women in the Victorian period as directly related to their perceived inability to associate:

It is as if these autobiographers had read Hannah More - or some theorist of her ilk -- and had been convinced that they possessed no capacity for arrangement, no power to compare or analyse, no ability to shape their own lives or their family histories into a coherent pattern.⁵⁶

Unlike the memoirists in Peterson's study, Cappe repudiates these assertions by very consciously recognising the organisational potential of association for the construction of autobiography and by recognising the special capabilities of rational female educators for association. This section investigates the ways in which Cappe's Memoir is informed by the language of association, and suggests that she made connections between theological uses of the term and educational ones.

Association, as I have demonstrated, was a secular philosophy. It was adopted by

⁵⁵ Linda Peterson, Victorian Autobiography, 127.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 129-130.

theologians of rational religion, and especially by Unitarians in the late eighteenth century, to explain the "science of religion". At its simplest, this meant that events in God's world were perceived to be rationally linked by a great chain of cause and effect. Moral and religious feelings took on an analysable objectivity in this materialist view of the divine plan. The theory of association contended that people were not made up of God-implanted characteristics but were shaped by circumstances. This allowed for the idea of change and perfectibility, for a religion which allowed for people to be moulded by experience.

References to the theory of association are to be found in contemporary Unitarian theology. Association appealed, for instance, to Thomas Belsham, a prominent Unitarian thinker and correspondent of Cappe's, who commented in his Elements of the Philosophy of the Mind and of Moral Philosophy (1801) that:

the theory of morals defended in this work is that which necessarily follows from the Hartleyan Theory of the Mind and from the Doctrine of the Association of Ideas⁵⁷

Joseph Priestley in his autobiography likewise explained that:

It was a reference to Doctor Hartley's Observations on Man in the course of our lectures, that first brought me acquainted with the performance, which engaged my closest attention, and produced the greatest, and in my opinion, the most favourable effect on my turn of thinking throughout life.⁵⁸

Amongst Unitarians the theory of association evidently had widespread currency. Like Belsham and Priestley, Cappe's husband had been involved in the ongoing project of republishing and reinterpreting Hartley's works. He had made notes on the Observations

⁵⁷ Thomas Belsham, Elements of the Philosophy of the Mind and of Moral Philosophy to which is Prefixed a Compendium of Logic (London: J. Johnson, 1801), i.

⁵⁸ See Joseph Priestley, Autobiography of Joseph Priestley, ed. Jack Lindsay, 16.

on Man,- a work which, according to Cappe in her biographical sketch, "he had closely studied and estimated very highly, and of which it was his intention to have published a new edition."⁵⁹

In addition to its theological application, the theory of association was crucial importance to educational discourse in the period 1780-1820. In terms of teaching, middle-class women were to some extent differentiated from their lower-class counterparts by their perceived abilities to associate. Cappe was aware of the class and gender connotations of association and asks of middle-class women:

Upon whom, if not upon us, do the important duties devolve of forming the infant mind of both sexes; of guarding it from wrong impressions and erroneous associations; from delusions so confirmed "ere reason can assert her sway", that the utmost efforts of her feeble influence, through the whole of after-life, may be quite incapable of emancipating this happy victim? And does not the judgment, the self-government, the accurate discrimination necessary to execute ably this important labour, require a well-cultivated, well-regulated understanding? A mind not arrested by, and devoted to every passing folly, but calm, collected and composed, looking steadily forward, both for ourselves and our beloved offspring, to the desired attainment of true respectability in the present state, and "to glory, honour and immortality" in that which shall assuredly succeed. [emphasis mine].⁶⁰

It was the duty of these middle-class women, in Cappe's view, to confer on their offspring the ability to "associate" correctly.

Hence, Cappe's interest in association was twofold: as a theological writer, she considered association to be the key to interpreting the divine world in which all experiences were linked; as an educationalist, she saw its benefits as a teaching methodology which allowed morals to be adduced by educators and their pupils through

⁵⁹ Reverend Newcombe Cappe, Discourses Chiefly on Devotional Subjects, ed. Catharine Cappe, lxxiv.

⁶⁰ Catharine Cappe, Thoughts on Various Charitable and Other Important Institutions, 100.

an analysis of the connections between material objects and events.

The theory of association infiltrates Cappe's Memoir on several levels. It is used to explain both the logic of childhood experiences and the development of what we might now term "identity". At the same time, it helps to create a sense of Cappe herself as engineer of the text, as she makes new associations between childhood incidents and their larger moral and religious implications.

In the early part of the Memoir, Cappe reveals how her gender, her class status and her dissenting religious beliefs were all learnt through what she describes as "the irresistible power of vivid, early impressions, and strong subsequent associations (198-199)." These early impressions and associations stay with Cappe throughout her life. Indeed it is fundamental to her educational philosophy that childhood impressions provide and determine the associations that govern the rest of one's life.

Cappe builds up a picture of her identity with reference to these childhood associations and impressions. Her growing awareness of the expectations and limitations of being female, for example, is conveyed through associations produced by trivial remarks made by a servant when she was three years old. After Cappe's disfigurement from an attack of the smallpox the maid commented, "'Ah, miss, you should have been the boy and your pretty brother the girl'" (11). Cappe consoled herself; "knowing that I had not the least pretension to beauty, my mind was turned into quite another channel" (11). Her awareness of her disfigurement, her difference from "beautiful women", remains with her throughout her life. In terms of her class status, Cappe's early life is characterised by pecuniary hardship but social respectability, registered through the associations

engendered by minor events. She records, for example, how the local children called her "Miss of the Vicarage" and that this, coupled with some early impressions of her mother's wealthy origins, meant that she "harboured the expectation of becoming a person of some consequence" (22).

Cappe's religious identity is likewise recounted through remembered associations. She recalls "one important impression ... made on my mind about the universal presence and government of God ... as the sole author and controller of all events" (18). This is accompanied by an early conviction of the non-existence of the Trinity, a conviction which made her instantly, and though still a child of eleven or twelve, a High Arian.⁶¹ Cappe recounts a conversation overheard between her father and some of his friends in which they dismissed the idea of the Trinity. It is this incidental conversation she says, rather than any philosophical discussions on "essences, modes and substances" later in life, which confirmed her in her Unitarian beliefs.⁶²

In these ways, what we might call Cappe's "self" is constructed from the associations produced by numerous small episodes occurring in childhood. These tiny moments are, of course, entirely in keeping with the small-scale nature of her restricted and largely domestic experience. Association of this sort, may thus be seen as an appropriate method of reminiscence for the middle-class female autobiographer in this period.

⁶¹ According to John Seed, Arianism made a distinction between God and Christ without going so far as to say that Christ was human as Unitarianism suggested. John Seed, "The Role of Unitarianism in the Formation of Liberal Culture", 9.

⁶² Catharine Cappe, *Memoir*, 31 and 401. This early introduction to the theological arguments supporting Unitarianism is similar to Harriet Martineau's experience, *Autobiography*, 1:37. "One evening when I was a child, I entered the parlour when our Unitarian Minister, Mr Madge, was convicting of error (and what he called idiotcy) an orthodox schoolmaster who happened to be our visitor. 'Look here', said Mr Madge, seizing three wine glasses, and placing them in a row: 'here is the Father,-- here's the Son,-- and here's the Holy Ghost; do you mean to tell me that those three glasses can be in any case one? 'tis mere nonsense'. And so were we children taught that it was mere nonsense."

The manner in which 'associations' are made is shown to be as important as their content. Cappe describes the correct associations she made in childhood whilst well-supervised by caring parents, and the bad ones whilst supervised by maidservants who told "idle stories of enchantments, giants, ghosts and robbers." "Associations engendered by such stories," she tells the reader, meant that it was some time before she "could get the better of being left alone in the dark" (32-33).⁶³ Cappe stresses the impressionability and constant vulnerability of the infant mind, describing her childhood self as "extremely timid, possessing little courage or fortitude, and liable to be long and distressingly affected, by too vivid impressions on the imagination." (42) Bad schooling, she suggests, has a pernicious effect on children because it allows bad desires and habits to "take deep root in the youthful mind" (48) where there is little hope that they will be eradicated. The faults of Cappe's brother are partly attributed to a visit he paid when a child to the house of some rich relatives. Of her misguided parents she says, "Alas, little did they imagine how very pernicious this early association of respectability and happiness with great riches, would eventually prove to his future character!" (68) In the Memoir, then, association and those who facilitate its workings are treated with respect. As far as the self-historian is concerned, association is shown also to structure early experience and to facilitate the recollection of that experience.

As I have indicated, the theory of association facilitated a materialist concept of the operation of the mind and the world outside the mind. Cappe delights in the very tangibility of experiences. In the following passage, Cappe explains the mental processes

⁶³ Cappe, Thoughts on Various Charitable and Other Important Institutions, "Mr and Mrs Edgeworth in their treatise on Practical Education, have stated it as their opinion, that the prudence, intelligence and general good conduct of servants in the nursery, is a matter of so much importance as to lead to the suggestion that perhaps an institution for the express purpose of educating those who are to attend upon children would be productive of the greatest utility," 48.

which might lead to the composition of self-history:

I would here pause for a moment to remark, what must indeed be observed by everyone who is in the habit of paying the smallest attention to what passes, at different times, in his own mind, how much and deeply we are affected in our progress through life, but particularly, before our religious and moral principles are by long consistent practice, become settled habits, by the outward circumstances in which we are placed, and the different associations which in consequence we are led to form. So true it is, that religious and moral, as well as natural objects alter their size and colour, and change their apparent magnitude and character, according to the relative positions and different mediums, through which they are viewed. [emphasis mine]. (158-159)

According to Cappe, the prerequisites for autobiography - a habit of "paying attention" to what goes on in our own minds and an awareness that events may change size and significance according to the circumstances in which they are experienced and the associations which they engender - are available to any thinking person. Cappe uses language here that is based on a materialist epistemology: events have a "size" and "colour", a "magnitude" and "character". Time and experience are seen to alter perceptions, but there is a suggestion that the viewer may organise them in different positions and through different media. As self-historian, Cappe is able to rearrange the "religious", "moral" and "natural" components of her experience in ways that promote "useful" associations for her readers.

Drawing generously, as it does, on a well-wrought associationist epistemology, Cappe's Memoir is remarkably clear and candid.⁶⁴ In this it bears numerous resemblances to

⁶⁴ The term "candid" was frequently used by Unitarian autobiographers to describe the simplicity and straightforwardness of their writing. In addition to his theory of knowledge, Hartley had developed a theory of language and writing from his theory of association. This theory recommended a close association between impressions and their signs. The theory led to a condemnation, amongst Unitarians, of the polite arts, including all fanciful literature, and a corresponding approbation of plain and simple writing. It is hardly surprising then that Unitarian Memoirs are characterised by their "scientific" baldness of expression, their lack of flourish, digression or embellishment. Priestley's Memoirs are exemplary in this respect in that they contain no descriptions of places or feelings, but just a bare account of events, their causation and their results. Priestley's editor states: "The simple unaffected manner in which it is

educational advice works. The tempo of the narrative is controlled and slow, the detail predominantly domestic. There is a tight interlocking of event and interpretation. Incidents yield to generalisation and abstract remarks are always consolidated with reference to "real" events and people. Like prescriptive texts, the Memoir oscillates between detailed description of the events of Cappe's own life, chosen specifically to illustrate certain moral and religious precepts, and interpretation of those incidents and events.⁶⁵ Cappe combines incidents with a common educational thread taken from various sources: her own experience, the experience of others and stories she has obtained through hearsay. The reader's attention is constantly drawn to the reasonable connections between events, especially those that can be joined through visible cause and effect: the punishment that fits the crime, the disasters that befall the wicked, and the guilt that ensues from telling lies. By frequently stepping outside childhood to give her opinions on and deductions from events, Cappe is able to portray herself simultaneously as child and adult, as learner and teacher. In doing so, she is able productively to negotiate the autobiographical dilemma of the relationship between youthful self and the older writing self. In short, pedagogical themes might be said to provide the Memoir with both continuity and unity.

3) Conclusion

Cappe's autobiographical method allows her to be considered as another manifestation

written, will be deemed, I have no doubt, far more interesting, than if the narrative itself had been made the text of a more laboured composition," Joseph Priestley, Memoirs, 1.

⁶⁵ The importance of both reflection on and description of incidents to successful self-history are noted by Cappe's reviewer in the Monthly Repository (1823) who comments that "the qualifications for writing one's own life are self-knowledge, the result of self-examination and watchfulness, courage to expose one's own secret motives and failings; and such a degree of imagination as shall suffice to connect oneself intimately with persons, places and passing events. These endowments will appear to advantage in proportion to the number and importance of what are called incidents in the life described," 163.

of the rational female mentor, this time employed in attuning the principles and languages of educational discourse to the aims of a rationalist self-history. The Memoir points to the ongoing dialogue between educational discourse and self-history in writings by women in the early nineteenth century. Catharine Cappe, like Ellen Weeton, modelled her autobiographical persona on the popular representation of the mature female mentor figure and assumed that the process of writing autobiography was consonant with the act of educating. Analysing Cappe's autobiography in the light of educational writing recovers its philosophical dimension, a dimension recently reclaimed for eminent male autobiographers of the same period but often disregarded in accounts of autobiography by women.⁶⁶

Jerome Hamilton Buckley has dated the emergence of a Romantic autobiographical subjectivity from 1800, but Cappe's Memoir confirms that other kinds of selves were being constructed in the early years of the nineteenth century.⁶⁷ As I have suggested, Cappe's subjectivity is not the organic artistic self of Romantic poetry, but a scientifically constructed amalgam of reasonable associations: a self composed of multiple educational histories, including her own, her readers' and those of their offspring. Her autobiography, like the life she lived, remains anchored in the rational spirit of the late eighteenth century. Her Memoir, therefore, reminds us that rationalism did not die out as a "literary" mode at the turn of the eighteenth century but, through pedagogy and theology, continued to influence autobiographical writing, including that by women.

⁶⁶ See for example Jonathon Loesberg, Fictions of Consciousness: Mill, Newman and the Reading of Victorian Prose (London: Rutgers University Press, 1986).

⁶⁷ Jerome Hamilton Buckley, The Turning Key.

Finally, the development of the genre of autobiography in the late eighteenth century has been connected to the development of the kinds of subjectivity delineated in the novel. Though the intricacies of the debate need not concern us here, there are evident correlations between the educational aims of self-historians and novelists in this period.⁶⁸ In fiction, a genre frequently despised at the time for its moral laxity, however, the rational female mentor had different battles to fight. A minor incident in Cappe's Memoir serves to illustrate the tension between pedagogue and novelist.

Cappe relates an early love affair which proves disastrous. After a fleeting moment of mutual attraction, the lovers are forced to part. The suitor's proposal of marriage is rejected by Cappe's brother and he returns to Ireland to die of consumption. Cappe is left bereft and, for once, has difficulty adducing an educational precept from her experiences. In a striking passage, she struggles to reason the incident away, casting the tormented state of her mind as a debate between the parent or guardian figure with whom she has identified for most of the Memoir and the novelist whom she has elsewhere decried:

"Love at first sight!" says the parent or guardian, "the notion is ridiculous and the thing impossible." "So far otherwise" says the novel writer, "that it forms the criterion by which persons of refinement and genuine sensibility, are most strikingly characterised, and it is quite essential to a happy marriage." (132)

There is, it would appear, a deadlock here between the pedagogue and the novelist. Cappe wants to agree with the pedagogue but her experience of "love at first sight" means that she is forced to admit that the novelist may be right. Her depiction of a

⁶⁸ For more on connections between autobiography and the novel in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see Patricia Meyer Spacks, Imagining a Self.

dialogue between novelist and pedagogue suggests a rivalrous relationship between two of the most influential roles for women at the end of the eighteenth century. How did the novelist respond to the changing circumstances of women's education in this period? What themes and techniques did the writers of novels borrow from educational discourse? And in what ways did novelists adopt the voice of pedagogy? Chapter 5 is an attempt to answer these questions.

Chapter 5

"A More Perfect Plan" : Emma and the Preceptress in Fiction

"[Mrs Weston] has had the advantage you know of practising on me," she continued - "like La Baronne d'Almane on La Comtesse d'Ostalis, in Madame de Genlis' Adelaide and Theodore, and we shall now see her own little Adelaide educated on a more perfect plan."

Jane Austen, Emma (1816)¹

In the final pages of Jane Austen's Emma (1816), the eponymous heroine comments to her male mentor, Mr Knightley, on the suitability of her former governess, Mrs Weston, for motherhood and pedagogy. Her statement prompts Mr Knightley's warm approbation of Mrs Weston for having instilled "principle" in Emma. The conversation draws the reader's attention to the pedagogical axis on which Emma turns: Knightley, Mrs Weston and Emma herself are all educators whose teaching has powerful consequences for the plot. Emma's reference to Madame de Genlis's Adelaide and Theodore reminds us of the constant recourse to educational literature as a mode of cultural authority in this period, and the consolidation of the rational female ideal through appeals to her representatives in literature and history.² But, more importantly, the reference jolts us

¹ Jane Austen, Emma (London: Penguin, 1985), 444. Emma was composed between 1814 and 1815. The book was originally published as Jane Austen, Emma: A Novel, 3 vols. (London: T. Egerton, 1816). Contemporary Reviews of Emma include, The Augustan Review 2 (May 1816): 484-486; The British Critic 6 (July 1816): 96-98; The British Lady's Magazine 4 (Sept 1816): 96-98; Champion 31 (March 1816): 102-103; The Literary Panorama 6 (June 1817): 418-419; The Monthly Review 80 (July 1816): 370; The Quarterly Review 14 (Oct. 1815): 188-201.

² See Madame Stéphanie Félicité Comtesse de Genlis, Adèle et Théodore: ou, lettres sur l'éducation contenant tous les principes relatifs aux trois différens plans d'éducation des princes, des jeunes personnes, et des hommes, 3 tom. (Paris: n.p.1782) trans. as Adelaide and Theodore: or, Letters on Education Containing all the Principles Relative to Three Different Plans of Education, 3 vols., 3rd ed. (London: C. Bathurst and T. Cadell, 1783). Ellen Moers discusses this reference in her examination of Emma. "Educating Heroism: From Governess to Governor," chap. in Literary Women (London: The Women's Press, 1975), 211-242.

into a recognition of Emma's literary context: a context informed by popular educational discourse.

The debt to and interest in educational discourse which this seemingly casual allusion makes explicit is, I shall argue, implicit in the novel as a whole, and provides a key to understanding Austen's practice as a novelist. In this chapter I use this exchange between Emma and Knightley to open up a variety of connections, structural, linguistic and thematic, between the novel and its non-fictional educational context. Analysing Emma in this way will enable me to ask questions about the relationship between the forms of didacticism and literary subjectivity we associate with the eighteenth-century domestic novel and the educational discourses I have found in the non-fiction of the period. How were the concerns of the rational female mentor played out in the novel form? What were the effects of the pedagogical voice on Austen's narrative method? I will argue that Emma marks a point of transition between the depiction of female educators as autonomous, though relatively unpsychologised, subjectivities in eighteenth-century writing and the better-developed, often claustrophobic representations of the Victorian governess with which literary criticism is far more familiar.

Jane Austen's upbringing, which might be considered typical of that of a female member of the gentrified classes in this period, places her at the upper end of the class spectrum covered by this thesis. Austen was the daughter of a respectable country parson educated at Cambridge and as such her domestic education was similar to that described in many of the educational texts I have examined. Moreover, although Austen's staunch Anglicanism seems, at first glance, at odds with the religious temperaments of writers such as Wollstonecraft, Barbauld and Cappe, her early mistrust of the emotional and

spiritual dimensions of evangelicalism is entirely in keeping with theirs.

As I have discussed in the Introduction, Jane Austen's religious views have been extensively debated and her aversion to the excesses of evangelicalism is widely understood.³ Though she was not a scientific rationalist in the mode of Cappe and Barbauld nor a disaffected Anglican in the manner of Wollstonecraft, her faith bore strong resemblances to the rational morality embraced by some dissenting sects. If Austen does not share the sectarian interests of Cappe and Barbauld, she does share their realist and reasonable world picture and their focus on experience as the guide to moral principle. As Cecil explains, though Austen's father was a clergyman, his secular duties were similar to those of any other respectable country gentleman. He was seen "less as a dedicated priest than as an ordinary citizen whose profession it was to represent society in its moral and religious aspects."⁴ The same might be said of Austen herself: though she worshipped regularly as an Anglican, she seems to have been inspired by moral rather than religious discourse.

The extant details of Austen's own education reveal a plan of reading entirely consistent with that recommended by the other pedagogues in this thesis - though it also includes works which they professed to disdain. Taught at home by her father, Austen learnt principally by reading the books in his five-hundred volume library. Her early education included some familiarity with Pope and Shakespeare, but she was more conversant with the writings of her recent contemporaries, Addison, Steele, Dr Johnson and such moral

³ For a résumé of approaches to Jane Austen's religious views see the Introduction, 46. Lord David Cecil's biography of Austen seems to sum up the general view of critical opinion that "[Austen's] views were wholly if unobtrusively determined by the dictates of the Christian religion as interpreted by [the Anglican] Church." A Portrait of Jane Austen (London: Constable, 1978), 50.

⁴ Lord David Cecil, A Portrait of Jane Austen, 24.

novelists and novelists of manners as Richardson, Sterne, Fielding and Burney.⁵ She also delighted in the contemporary novels of sentiment and of terror, which she was to parody in Northanger Abbey. Austen also read several of the most popular educational works of the late eighteenth century, including, Halifax's Advice to a Daughter (1700), Chesterfield's Letters to his Son (1774), and Blair's Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres (1783).⁶ As I show in this chapter, her parodic range was not limited to sentimental and gothic works, but extended, as Maria Edgeworth's and Mary Wollstonecraft's had done, to a satirical exploitation of educational works as well.

The myth of spontaneous genesis that surrounds the whole Austen oeuvre is nowhere so carefully preserved as in connection with Emma. The isolation of Emma from the breadth of its contemporary textual milieu has been a continual feature of its critical appraisal. In 1929 C. Linklater Thomson confidently asserted that "Emma shows little trace of the influence of preceding writers."⁷ Later critics, even those sensitive to the importance of historical context in the study of fiction, have continued to single out Emma as a text that transcends time because of its important exploration of human psychology.⁸ Other literary critics with an interest in intertextuality have commented on the relationship between Austen's work and that of contemporary novelists such as

⁵ Jane Austen's education and reading habits are detailed in David Cecil, A Portrait of Jane Austen, 45-51.

⁶ Lord Halifax, The Complete Works of George Savile First Marquess of Halifax (including New Year's Day Gift: or, Advice to a Daughter (1700), 9th ed. (London: D. Midwinter, 1719); Lord Chesterfield's Letters Written by the Right Honourable Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, to His Son, Philip Stanhope, 2 vols. (Dublin: G. Faulkner, 1774) and Hugh Blair's Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres (Dublin: Messrs Whittlestone, Collier and others, 1783).

⁷ C. Linklater Thomson, Jane Austen: A Survey (London: Horace Marshall and Son, 1929), 172.

⁸ See for example, T. B. Tomlinson, "Jane Austen's Originality: Emma," Critical Review 9 (1966): 22-37; and Marilyn Butler, Jane Austen and the War of Ideas (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 3.

Jane West and Maria Edgeworth.⁹ More recently, feminist literary critics have sought to debunk "the myth of isolated achievement" that surrounds Austen's work and have traced a long tradition of fictional texts by women from the late seventeenth century, thus finding foremothers rather than siblings for Jane Austen.¹⁰ For different reasons, but with the same distorting results, each of these groups of critics has bypassed the body of "non-fictional" educational material by and about women produced immediately before and during the period in which Emma was written.

This chapter will suggest that Emma is not, as much Austen scholarship would have us believe, best read as a "unique" text divorced from its literary milieu and its socio-historical context. Rather, it is a sophisticated reworking of contemporary educational discourse by and about women. Emma maps out and compares, in ways singular to the developing novel form, the several alternative methods of education that were available to middle-class mothers, daughters, prospective pedagogues and writers in the period. As I shall show, Emma, in its charting of the social and emotional development of a heroine, belongs to the genre of the educational novel so popular in the late eighteenth century, but it also imitates and parodies other non-fictional forms of writing about education in this period, including moral tales, advice books and even school

⁹ See Valerie Grosvenor Myer, "Cara Sposa At the Ball: Jane West and Jane Austen's Emma," Notes and Queries, 29:3 (1982): 208. Kenneth L. Moler "Sense and Sensibility and its Sources," Review of English Studies 17:68 (Nov. 1966): 413-419 suggests that Maria Edgeworth's "Mademoiselle Panache" Part 1, The Parents' Assistant: or, Stories for Children (1795) (Cork: George Cherry, 1800) and Jane West's The Advantages of Education: or, the History of Maria Williams (London: n.p., 1793) share similarities of plot with Sense and Sensibility (1811).

¹⁰ Dale Spender, Mothers of the Novel: 100 Good Women Writers Before Jane Austen (London: Pandora, 1986). See also Dale Spender, "Women and Literary History," in The Feminist Reader: Essays in Gender and the Politics of Literary Criticism, eds. Catherine Belsey and Jane Moore (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989), 21-34, "Any portrayal of [Austen] which represents her as an originator and not as an inheritor of women's literary traditions is one which has strayed far from the facts of women's fiction writing," 22-23.

advertisements.¹¹

To consider Austen's Emma within the framework of contemporary educational discourse is not to detract from its literary value or to "flatten" it to the level of moral tale; it is, after all, an intricate and masterful examination of educational issues and techniques deployed less problematically in other texts. Rather my aim is to see Austen as an artist participating in and shaping a discourse that already carried a number of loaded messages about women, writing and education. My approach also places the novel at an historical moment which was, as my earlier chapters have proposed, rationalistic rather than romantic, at least as far as its middle-class female readers might have been concerned. Rather than considering Austen's style as a "return" to eighteenth-century values or a "reaction" to Romanticism, as many critics have done, I suggest that the context on which Austen draws was still vibrant and valuable, especially in the lives of women in the first decades of the nineteenth century.

I begin this chapter with a discussion of the ways in which education in Emma has formerly been examined by literary critics and with a suggestion for re-reading the "educational" content of the novel in ways more sensitive to issues of gender. Secondly, I examine the way in which several of the novel's key female figures are characterised in terms of their ability to educate as well as in terms of the education they have received. I consider how this emphasis on education allows us to evaluate Austen's own

¹¹ This would directly contradict the view of Donald Bush who suggests that in Emma, "literary irony or parody, of the kind exploited in Northanger Abbey, is almost invisible," Jane Austen (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1975), 137. For indications of the popularity and range of novels of education in the period, see Jane Spencer, The Rise of the Woman Novelist from Aphra Behn to Jane Austen (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986). Women writers of the novel of education in the same period include Fanny Burney (1752-1840), Susan Ferrier (1782-1854), Maria Edgeworth (1768-1849), Elisabeth Hamilton (1758-1816), and Mary Hays (1760-1843).

"voice" and finally I point to the evolution in nineteenth-century fiction of the mode of educative subjectivity adumbrated in Emma.

1) Educating Emma

Numerous critics have considered the education of Emma Woodhouse as a key theme of Emma.¹² A recent critic has commented that Emma "dismantles the novel of education" because it begins at the point where most novels of education finish - with the supposed completion of Emma's education.¹³ In Jane Austen and Education, David Douglas Devlin suggests that Austen has an interest in disentangling the inherited attributes of her characters from those brought about by socialisation or education.¹⁴ Emma's parentage has been deficient: her mother died when she was young and Mr Woodhouse is a good example of the over-affectionate and indulgent father condemned for short-sightedness in prescriptive texts such as Dr Gregory's.¹⁵ Emma's education is thus beyond parental influence.

Views of how Emma is educated have divided critics on philosophical grounds. Two main paradigms of tutelage have been suggested. Those critics who consider Austen as

¹² For example R. E. Hughes, "The Education of Emma Woodhouse," Nineteenth-Century Fiction 16:1 (June 1961): 69-74; Laura G. Mooneyham, "The Double Education of Emma," chap. in Romance, Language and Education in Jane Austen's Novels (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988), 107-45.

¹³ Catherine Parke, "Vision and Revision: A Model for Re-reading the Eighteenth-Century Novel of Education," Eighteenth-Century Studies 16:2 (1982-1983): 162-174, here 172. This article compares Emma and Fanny Burney's Evelina (1778).

¹⁴ Devlin suggests that Austen "wishes to play down the importance of heredity in shaping the disposition of her heroines", Jane Austen and Education (London: Macmillan Press, 1975), 18. By contrast, Julia Prewitt Brown, Jane Austen's Novels and Social Change (London: Harvard University Press, 1979) describes Austen's obsession with the shaping of personality by parents and others, 8.

¹⁵ See Dr John Gregory, A Father's Legacy to his Daughters (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1774) and my analysis of this text in Chapter 2.

a traditionalist adhering to eighteenth-century educational ideas of emulation and improvement have focused on the role of the male mentor figure and on the interconnectedness between sexual and paternal love and education. Emma is considered to move towards moral and intellectual as well as sexual unity with Mr Knightley, as female imagination is subdued by male rationalism.¹⁶ Those critics, on the other hand, who consider Emma to be an innovative work about self-development - an attempt to delineate the growth of a romantic subjectivity - describe Emma as an autodidact who develops morally by ruminating on her experiences over the course of the novel.¹⁷ According to this paradigm, Emma's learning takes place at those moments where she is alone, and is signalled in the text by the distinctive fragmentary sentences of her meditative moods and her consequent improvements in behaviour. Emma is ill-equipped to understand the world at the beginning of the novel, but by the end, by virtue of her own mistakes, but also through her own efforts, she has acquired an education.¹⁸ Feminist critics have taken up this notion of the self-educated Austen heroine fairly

¹⁶ See Thomas J. Collins "Some Mutual Sets of Friends: Moral Monitors in Emma and Our Mutual Friend," The Dickensian 65:357 (Jan. 1969): 32-34. See also Elaine Hoffman Baruch, "The Feminine 'Bildungsroman': Education Through Marriage," Monthly Review 22:2 (1981): 335-357. This argues that Emma among many other heroines of nineteenth-century novels seeks education and self-development through marriage. David Douglas Devlin, Jane Austen and Education sees this as an aspect of Jane Austen's classicism, and comments, "The relation of Jane Austen's individual talent to the tradition of the eighteenth-century novel is seldom more clearly seen than in her handling of the mentor figure. He is brought into the centre of the book, becomes in fact the hero. And if he succeeds (as he does) in educating the heroine, that (as we shall see) is not because of what he says, but because of what he is and because of his relationship with her," 16. Whilst Devlin does not rule out the mentorial role played by women, he describes "education" in Austen's novels as being conducted predominantly between fathers and daughters and prospective husbands and young girls.

¹⁷ Marilyn Butler describes Emma's task as twofold, "to survey society, distinguishing the true values from the false; and, in the light of this new knowledge of "reality" to school what is selfish, immature or fallible in herself," Jane Austen and The War of Ideas, 250. As I shall describe later in this chapter, however, Butler, comments on the importance of Mrs Weston and Mr Knightley as educators.

¹⁸ Devlin, Jane Austen and Education, "Education for the heroines, is the process through which they come clearly to see themselves and their conduct, and by this new insight become better people... Seeing clearly is ... both seeing one's self clearly (self-knowledge) and seeing other people and the external world as existing in their own right and independently of self," 1-2.

uncritically, using it to suggest an autonomous female mental life in the novel.¹⁹

The two paradigms of education offered by critics in their discussions of Emma - Mr Knightley's tutelage versus Emma's own development - are often discussed together as opposing or complementary narratives. But the apparent choice offered between them obscures the importance of a subplot about education that exists within and between the female characters in the novel: Emma's own education is only one strand in a novel plagued with the problem of female education. The importance of the "other" women in Emma has long been acknowledged, but the relevance of these women as educators has been neglected.²⁰ Ellen Moers's work on the educating heroine in literary history is an exception; she comments on Emma's "tight interlacings of women teaching women, their plans ever better, their results ever faulty."²¹ In Emma a network of female educators illustrates most of the possible permutations of female pedagogy - paid and unpaid, in schools or homes - that feature in earlier prescriptive works.

Towards the end of the novel, Emma ponders on the disparity between the lifestyles of Mrs Churchill, the rich, petulant, invalid aunt of Frank Churchill, and Jane Fairfax, the poor, unlucky governess-in-the-making:

The contrast between Mrs Churchill's importance in the world and Jane Fairfax's

¹⁹ Jane Spencer, The Rise of the Woman Novelist: from Aphra Behn to Jane Austen (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), "Reform has come from Emma herself, and through Austen's portrayal of her interior monologue we have witnessed the inner change," 175. Though few would suggest that Austen subscribed to Wollstonecraft's radical views on female education - that women were innately as rational as men - there are several who see reflections of Wollstonecraft in Austen's work. See for example Alison G. Sulloway, "Emma Woodhouse and A Vindication of the Rights of Woman", Wordsworth Circle 7:4 (Autumn 1976): 320-332.

²⁰ Susan Fraiman comments on "the female homosocial story whose underlying presence has disconcerted readers from Edmund Wilson onwards," Unbecoming Women: British Women Writers and the Novel of Development (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 68.

²¹ Ellen Moers, Literary Women, 216.

struck her; one was everything, the other nothing - and she sat musing on the difference of woman's destiny, and quite unconscious on what her eyes were fixed.²²

The novel spans a whole range of women between the two characters named in the passage whose "destinies" are "different". It has been a commonplace of Austen criticism to chart the domestic careers of the female characters, so that the notion of "woman's destiny" has become synonymous with their marital status and marital prospects in the novel. In Emma, however, "woman's destiny", is as much about the role of women as educators of one sort or another as it is about matrimony and motherhood.

Emma's "educating women", I contend, illuminate a number of themes familiar from other educational texts: the potentially devastating effects of the absence of mothers in the education of their daughters (Emma); conversely, the dangers of overwhelming motherly affection (Isabella and her children); the importance of marriage as a means of escaping the life of the governess (Jane Fairfax and Mrs Weston); the weaknesses and benefits of a modest boarding-school education (Mrs Goddard's Academy); schoolteaching and spinsterhood (Miss Price, Miss Nash and Miss Richardson, who teach at the Academy); the purposes of middle-class female education; and the dangers of education at the hands of bored middle-class females for their younger protégés (Emma and Harriet). This chapter will show how reading Emma with an eye to these "educating women" may alter assumptions about the themes of the novel, its status as a parody, how character is produced (and indeed which characters are important), how the plot "develops", how issues of class or status are constituted, how language functions and how irony operates.

²² Jane Austen, Emma, 376

Emma, I would suggest, marks a pivotal moment in the social history of women educators. The problems which had characterised debates on female education in the late eighteenth century - the controversial replacement of the mother or parent figure with the governess, the essential qualities of mind associated with governessing, and the debates over the relative merits of home and school education for middle-class girls - surface and contend with those problems which were to beset female pedagogues themselves later in the nineteenth century: the arduousness of governessing, the problems associated with middle-class women's employment and the increasing sexualisation of pedagogy as a profession for women. In Emma, unlike prescriptive educational texts and works for children, the reader is expected to sympathise not only with a society that is having trouble educating its daughters but also with the individual women whose fate it is to become paid educators.

Emma charts, in particular, a subtle shift in the class profile of the early nineteenth-century English preceptress: the replacement of one ideal of governessing - working as companion to a gentrified family, as in the case of Mrs Weston - with the increasingly "sordid" commercial business of governessing carried out in the service of a growing bourgeoisie, as in the case of Jane Fairfax. Furthermore, though Austen conventionally ridicules the shallow education provided by boarding schools for the lower middle-classes, she also reveals that far greater "dangers" and "evils" may attend the domestic education enjoyed by upper middle-class girls.

Although at first sight the class differences between the female characters in Emma are minimal, subtle distinctions bring about a fracturing of the ideal of the middle-class female pedagogue that had been elaborated in texts from 1780 onwards. The educating

women in Emma are distinguished by their positions within a complex pedagogical hierarchy where value and "class" are gauged less by wealth and status than by age, experience, gender, moral stature, manners and above all communicative ability. Pedagogical relationships in the novel are also judged on a scale of feminine intimacy and are compared and confused with familial relationships and friendships. In the character portraits that follow, I adopt the recent tendency within women's history of viewing language and communication, as demonstrated in the texts of particular periods, as a means by which gender, class and sexual identities were constructed. The importance of speech and letter-writing to Emma has long been noted by critics.²³ Nancy Armstrong has suggested a method of reading the class context of Emma through an examination of spoken language and letter-writing.²⁴ Pointing out that all the characters speak and write a similar polite language, Armstrong suggests that their differences are not so much to do with wealth and status or regional identity as with the communicative ability, which is necessary to maintain the stability of a particular middle-class way of life. This connection between speech, writing and social stability, is, I suggest, consolidated by the presence of the network of educating women in the novel - women whose unifying power of communication is reminiscent of that to be found in other kinds of educational writing. What educating women say and how they say it in Emma must be measured against contemporary notions of the powerful position of the preceptress in dialogue situations.

²³ Marilyn Butler has commented that speech in Emma, more than in any other of Austen's novels, creates the psychology of the characters, Jane Austen and the War of Ideas, "Emma is the greatest novel in the period because it puts to fullest use the period's interest in articulate, sophisticated characters, whose every movement of thought finds its verbal equivalent in a nuance of speech. The language of Emma is functional and related to the form, to a degree not found elsewhere even in Jane Austen," 250.

²⁴ Nancy Armstrong, "The Self Contained: Emma" in Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of The Novel (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 134-160.

2) Educating Women in Emma

Emma can be described as a web of narratives about women educating women. In this section, I disentangle these narratives and explain how each contributes to Austen's topology of female education in this period: a topology of plausible but imperfect plans of education which are contrasted to moral effect. At the same time, I show how each narrative experiments with what were the familiar features of educational discourse to produce humour, irony and moral instruction. In other words, I examine the characteristics of Austen's own educating authorship. All these matters remain hidden from critical enquiry unless Emma is considered in the light of its pedagogical influences.

i) Mrs Goddard's Academy

The description of Mrs Goddard's Academy which prefaces Harriet Smith's introduction to the novel marks the beginning of a narrative similar to those to be found in prescriptive texts about the education of lower-middle class women (the daughters, for example, of traders and gentlemen farmers) in boarding-schools. Mrs Goddard is a motherly kind of woman and learning at the Academy flourishes in the hands of single women.²⁵ Unlike the vitriolic descriptions of such schools by some contemporary writers, such as Thomas Gisborne, Austen's exposition is rather more complimentary - yet she draws on her reader's familiarity with such descriptions with masterful irony:

Mrs Goddard was the mistress of a School - not of a seminary, or an establishment, or anything which professed, in long sentences of refined nonsense,

²⁵ Mrs Goddard, described as "a plain motherly kind of woman", is nevertheless not a mother and no longer, it would seem, a wife. The spinster teachers, Miss Nash, Miss Richardson and Miss Price, may look longingly out of the window of the Academy at Mr Elton, but they seem destined to remain unmarried. These women reinforce what seems to be an underlying theme of Emma, that the educative life and the domestic life are difficult to combine.

to combine liberal acquirements with elegant morality upon new principles and new systems - and where young ladies for enormous pay might be screwed out of health and into vanity - but a real, honest, old-fashioned Boarding-School, where a reasonable quantity of accomplishments were sold at a reasonable price, and where girls might be sent to be out of the way and scramble themselves into a little education, without any danger of coming back prodigies.²⁶

The description of Mrs Goddard's Academy claims to differentiate between two types of school. The first, the expensive and fashionable establishment, is condemned for offering superficial knowledge and new trends in teaching. Yet Austen's criticism is not unequivocal here, for "liberal acquirements" - the smattering of foreign languages, geography and music - available at such an establishment are surely to be preferred to the type of "scrambled" education on offer at Mrs Goddard's, and "elegance" is usually a term of commendation in Austen. Mrs Goddard's Academy, with its emphasis on fresh air and good food, its lack of pretension and modest prices ought to be the more desirable establishment, yet Austen's choice of detail is not entirely reassuring. The Academy might give good value for money but its pupils "buy" accomplishments rather than acquire them; there is a suggestion that the school is a little too rough and ready and that the really intelligent girls are not encouraged to shine.

In this passage, Austen satirises not only the kinds of school on offer to young women but also the way in which they advertise themselves. The narrator purports to condemn the loquaciousness of modern educational jargon, yet her own description of Mrs Goddard's Academy is in itself "a long sentence of refined nonsense." Whilst criticising boarding schools in general, therefore, the narrator also mimics the practice of such criticism, what had become by the beginning of the nineteenth century the almost

²⁶ Jane Austen, *Emma*, 52. Satirical descriptions of female academies were plentiful in the period and appear in educational texts from all quarters.

formulaic dismissal of fashionable establishments.

The ironies of Harriet Smith's schooling reverberate long into the narrative, for though Harriet is naïve, she is not wilful, vain or unfeeling. It is Emma, the product of a domestic education, who displays these unattractive qualities. For all its faults, the Academy has, in some ways, provided a better moral education than the "gentrified" education of Emma herself.

ii) Mrs Weston: "Poor Miss Taylor That Was" ²⁷

If Harriet's behaviour can be attributed to her training at Mrs Goddard's Academy, Emma's is equally attributable to her upbringing at the hands of her governess, Miss Taylor. According to the conventions of contemporary moral tales and educational novels, an opening sequence establishing women's pedagogical relationships typically provides a reliable indicator of how the heroine will be likely to conduct herself and what might befall her as the text unfolds. In Maria Edgeworth's tale, "Madame Panache", for example, the faults of the French governess are held responsible for the unfortunate actions of her pupil.²⁸ The story is described by Richard Lovell Edgeworth in his preface as a sketch of "the necessary consequences of imprudently trusting the happiness of a daughter to the care of those who can teach nothing but accomplishments." Commentators who have taken the opening pages of Emma to

²⁷ According to C. Linklater Thomson, Jane Austen: A Survey, Mrs Weston is based on Anne Sharpe, "who had been Fanny Knight's governess, and to whom Miss Austen was much attached. There are many references to her in the correspondence, Miss Austen seems to have been much exercised about her future and to have vainly wished her a destiny like that of Miss Taylor, a marriage with a wealthy widower who would save her from all sordid care," 176.

²⁸ Richard Lovell Edgeworth, "Preface" to Maria Edgeworth, "Madame Panache" in Moral Tales for Young People, 5 vols. (London: J. Johnson, 1801).

represent the end of the pupil/governess relationship ignore the fact that Emma's relationship with Mrs Weston is maintained throughout the novel and is relevant to the development of Emma's character.²⁹ Mrs Weston is in fact a crucial determinant of the outcome of the novel.³⁰

It is soon apparent that Mrs Weston is not the purely wise and rational female mentor figure recommended in earlier prescriptive texts, nor the flighty, irrational governess of some stories for girls, but a much more subtly-worked character whose "excess of amiability" has moral implications. Emma's independence is concurrently introduced as something beyond Mrs Weston's control. In the early lines of the novel, it is suggested that the "danger" in which Emma finds herself is primarily attributable to the insufficiency of Mrs Weston as a pedagogue. Though the reader has entered into what appear to be tranquil waters in the opening passages of the novel, the reminder of flawed governesses from other educational works is unsettling. In its initial paragraphs, then, Emma has already astutely begun to manipulate the conventions of educational fiction by casting very gentle doubt on Mrs Weston as a governess and thus by opening up the narrative to ironic interpretation.

Prescriptive literature had conventionally presented a relatively static image of the female pedagogue. Governesses were described in maternal terms and distinctions of

²⁹ My reading of the important and lasting role of Mrs Weston challenges that of David Lodge, who, in his introduction to an edition of Emma comments, "Mrs Weston is a worthy woman, but since her story in a sense reaches its happy conclusion on the first page of the novel, she does not engage our interest very deeply," Emma, ed. and with an introduction by David Lodge (London: Open University Press, 1971).

³⁰ See Margaret Kirkham, Jane Austen, Feminism and Fiction (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1983), 121-143. Kirkham has suggested that Emma draws on the plot of a well-known contemporary play, The Heroine: or, Cherubina by Stonard Barrett (1813). This play attacks, amongst other things, ignorant and romantic governesses. Kirkham suggests that Austen's Mrs Weston is drawn in complete contrast to the burlesque stereotype and is shown as a woman of true sense and sensibility.

class between employer and employee were covered over. In Emma, descriptions of Mrs Weston gently point to the problems inherent in this ideal. The language of motherhood and kinship, for example, cannot adequately explain her situation; she is seen as standing in place of Emma's dead mother and yet as failing to uphold a motherly authority over her.³¹ Mr Knightley suggests that only Emma's real mother might have controlled her but he is also aware that Mrs Weston's surrogacy has its benefits; she "[stands] in a mother's place without a mother's affection to blind her."³² The language of the family is maintained. Mr Woodhouse hardly differentiates between his grief at Mrs Weston's marriage and his grief on the marriages of his own daughters, and there are loaded references to Mrs Weston as Emma's "friend". On the first page of Emma, it is announced that she and Emma have been "living together as friend and friend very mutually attached" and Emma later says that she cannot think of Mrs Weston as a governess but only as "my friend, my dearest friend."³³ Though it was sometimes recommended in educational texts that governesses became friends with their pupils as the latter reached maturity - Madame de Rosier and Isabella become friends in Maria Edgeworth's tale The Good French Governess, for example - such friendships were necessarily restricted by age and wisdom.³⁴ The friendship between Emma and Mrs Weston is not of this variety. In spite of Mrs Weston's superior age and wisdom, there is an intimacy between herself and Emma which is conveyed through their secret exchanges throughout the novel. It is in the course of Emma's friendly conversations

³¹ Norman Page, The Language of Jane Austen (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1972) describes Mrs Weston as a "mother-substitute", 42.

³² Jane Austen Emma, 16. This is the view put forward by Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792), ed. Margaret Kramnick (London: Penguin, 1975), 265.

³³ Jane Austen Emma, 212.

³⁴ Maria Edgeworth, "The Good French Governess," in Moral Tales for Young People.

with Mrs Weston that much of her miscalculation occurs.

As ex-governess, then, Mrs Weston crosses the boundaries of intimacy usually erected between governesses and their pupils. She also points to changing ideas about the status of governesses. In the following exchange between Mrs Elton and Emma on the subject of the former governess, the old gentrified ideal of the governess begins to be prised apart:

[Mrs Elton]"..She appears so truly good - there is something so motherly and kind-hearted about her, that it wins upon one directly. She was your governess, I think?"

Emma was almost too much astonished to answer; but Mrs Elton hardly waited for the affirmative before she went on.

"Having understood as much, I was rather astonished to find her so very ladylike! But she really is quite the gentlewoman."

"Mrs Weston's manners," said Emma, "were always particularly good. Their propriety, simplicity and elegance would make them the safest model for any young woman."³⁵

For Emma, the quality of Mrs Weston's manners is what it should be. In her "propriety, simplicity and elegance" she is the morally upright governesses of earlier prescriptive literature and consequently unlike the vulgar, nouveau-riche Mrs Elton.³⁶ For Mrs Elton, a woman familiar with new methods of hiring and firing governesses, however, Mrs Weston's manners make her "ladylike" and "quite the gentlewoman", descriptions Mrs Elton cannot reconcile with the life of a governess. Contemporary readers are likely to have found themselves more sympathetic to Emma's viewpoint, one in which Mrs Weston's marriage to the gentleman Mr Weston is entirely appropriate.³⁷

³⁵ Jane Austen, Emma, 280.

³⁶ For the social position of Mrs Weston and Emma's response to it see, Jane Nardin, "Charity in Emma," Studies in the Novel: Jane Austen: Special Number 7:1 (Spring 1975): 61-72.

³⁷ This view would contradict that of some critics who have suggested that Emma's attitude to Mrs Weston is indicative of her inconsistent class prejudice in the novel. Such prejudice was not a strong feature of earlier prescriptive works. See, for example, Jane Nardin, "Charity in Emma," Studies in the Novel.

The instability of kinship and class terminology as they apply to Mrs Weston contribute to the reader's sense of the dubious value of the education she has provided for Emma. In the initial description of the relationship between governess and pupil the reader is informed that Emma did "just what she liked; highly esteeming Miss Taylor's judgment, but directed chiefly by her own." Mrs Weston is criticised both because her judgement is occasionally at fault and because her influence over Emma is not sufficiently strong.³⁸ By the time Mr Knightley confidently refers to Mrs Weston as "a rational unaffected woman" at the end of the first chapter the reader is already unconvinced. What we have heard of Mrs Weston so far does not suggest the "rationality" demanded of the pedagogue by prescriptive texts.

During the course of the novel, there are indications that the teacher-pupil relationship between Mrs Weston and Emma has been reversed and that Emma has, in fact, governed Mrs Weston. Knightley comments to Mrs Weston:

You might not give Emma such a complete education as your powers would seem to promise; but you were receiving a very good education from her, on the very material matrimonial point of submitting your own will, and doing as you were bid; and if Weston had asked me to recommend him a wife, I should certainly have named Miss Taylor.³⁹

The reversal of subject and object positions - a perversion of what is recommended in prescriptive texts - is formulated in minor but telling exchanges. Emma comments, for example, on Mrs Weston's former "usefulness" as a walking companion and on her

³⁸ Marilyn Butler has usefully seen Emma as poised between two mentor figures, Mr Knightley and Mrs Weston. She blames Emma's wilfulness on the fact that she chooses to follow the path set down by Mrs Weston. *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas*, 252-253.

³⁹ Jane Austen, *Emma*, 66.

willingness to be painted whenever Emma asked.⁴⁰ In arguments, Emma is the more likely to win:

They combatted the point some time longer in the same way; Emma rather gaining ground over the mind of her friend; for Mrs Weston was the most used of the two to yield.⁴¹

Moreover, when Emma first meets Frank Churchill we learn that:

He got as near as he could to thanking her for Miss Taylor's merits, without seeming to remember that in the common course of things it was rather to be supposed that Miss Taylor had formed Miss Woodhouse's character, than Miss Woodhouse Miss Taylor's.⁴²

In addition to this dangerous transposition of roles, Mrs Weston's marriage leaves Emma unsupervised for much of the novel. Significantly, it is on one of the occasions when Mrs Weston is absent that Emma is rude to Miss Bates at Box Hill.

Despite her weaknesses and absences, however, Mrs Weston displays many of the positive qualities of a good preceptress and it is evident that on matters of "principle" she has influenced Emma greatly. Emma commends her good manners, for example, in the face of Mrs Elton's insults. Mrs Weston plays the piano well, reads more than Emma, has encouraged Emma to draw and has passed on to Emma her competence in organising and catering for large groups of people. Mrs Weston's educational role is maintained and developed by her control of language within the novel: she speaks with the authority, clarity and politeness of the preceptress. Mr Woodhouse comments to Emma that "Nobody speaks like you and poor Miss Taylor."⁴³ Mrs Weston's words also carry the moral weight of the good pedagogue and she frequently acts as advice-

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 56.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 235.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 204.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 281.

giver and moral arbiter. Where she is silent, her silence is borne out of good sense.⁴⁴ Mr Woodhouse comments that Mrs Weston writes "beautifully" and has taught Emma and Isabella to write in the same way. As a correspondent, she is much in evidence: she drops notes to Emma and frequently writes to and receives letters from Frank Churchill.

In Mrs Weston's speech and writing we are reminded of her former role as a governess, and through these talents, she plays a minor but significant political role in the novel. In general her communicative ability contributes much to the smooth running of Highbury society. She keeps information flowing freely amongst the main characters and sets the tone for polite dialogue, a tone which is friendly but respectful, interested but not curious, and which preserves the social distances between the characters whilst never allowing relationships to break down. Mrs Weston maintains social intercourse and upholds moral and social values in the manner prescribed for governesses in advice literature. She also intercedes on behalf of the narrator, being the source of the information which allows the plot to progress.

At the end of the novel, Knightley treats us to a fairer appraisal of Mrs Weston's powers as a pedagogue. Though he still notes Mrs Weston's indulgence of Emma and suggests that she will treat her new daughter in much the same way, he points out that it is her patient and long-term governessing that is mainly responsible for Emma's good qualities. He recognises the importance of "principle," the development of which requires time,

⁴⁴ When Mr Elton tries to stop Emma from visiting Harriet he "turn[s] to Mrs Weston to implore her assistance, Would she not give him her support? -- would she not add her persuasions to his, to induce Miss Woodhouse not to go to Mrs Goddard's..." (145). He later asks Mrs Weston to "judge between us" (145). Other characters demand her advice: Isabella, for example, turns "to Mrs Weston for her approbation of the plan" (147) and Miss Bates begs Mrs Weston "to come with us that I might be sure of succeeding." Emma too defers on occasion to her governess's better judgement, "Your argument weighs most with me" (289) and it is to Mrs Weston that Jane Fairfax finally makes her confession at the end of the novel.

affection and persistence. As Mr Knightley tells Emma, "Nature gave you understanding: Mrs Weston gave you principles."⁴⁵ Emma's faults in the novel have all been "of the moment" and Mr Knightley has curbed them as they have arisen, but that, according to contemporary educational discourse, is not the way to teach. In effect, Emma's education has been the result of a combination of influences, but the role of her governess has been the crucial one. According to most of the available criteria, one might say that it is to Mrs Weston rather than to Mr Knightley that Emma ought primarily to be thankful for her moral upbringing.

iii) Emma: "Mrs Weston's faithful pupil"

Within the logic of pedagogical discourse, Emma's imperfect education at the hands of Mrs Weston signals the possibility of tragic plot developments. But the real problems begin when Emma tries her own hand at teaching. Unlike Jane Fairfax, Emma has not been "educated for the education of others": and, as we have seen, her own education has been far from complete. In an early article on Emma, R. E. Hughes describes Emma's confusion about her own pedagogical role:

The underlying theme of this novel is the education of Emma Woodhouse; and the recurrent irony is that Emma, who must become pupil, insists on acting as teacher. Her mismanagement of Harriet, herself, Elton and Knightley (indeed of nearly every character in the novel) all come out of Emma's confusion between the two roles.⁴⁶

In the light of contemporary educational discourse, the contiguity, if not the confusion, of pedagogical roles is entirely typical. Emma's disastrous attempt to educate her protégé Harriet is a distorted mirror image of Mrs Weston's earlier contradictory relationship with Emma; this is one of the novel's key structuring motifs. The

⁴⁵ Jane Austen, Emma, 444.

⁴⁶ R. E. Hughes, "The Education of Emma Woodhouse," Nineteenth-Century Fiction, 69.

misconceptions of Mrs Weston are magnified in Emma and again magnified in Harriet, suggesting a continuing theme within the novel about the practical consequences of improper teaching amongst women.

Yet Emma is a different kind of pedagogue from either Mrs Weston or Jane Fairfax. The Woodhouses are members of the local gentry and Emma's position as mistress of Highbury allows her the leisure for unpaid and protracted educational pursuits. Emma's misuse of power in the novel, frequently mentioned by critics, may be seen in pedagogical terms.⁴⁷ As in the descriptions of Mrs Weston's relationship with Emma, the language of friendship is unhelpfully entangled with the language of pedagogy in descriptions of Emma's relationship with Harriet. The "friendship", under the auspices of which Emma receives Harriet, deteriorates into ill-informed instruction.

While Emma's "friendship" for Harriet results in her appointing herself "a judge of female right and refinement" over the younger woman, Harriet's "friendship" for Emma is conditioned by her "habits of dependence and imitation". As Knightley says, Emma has been "no friend to Harriet Smith" and though she has "cured her of her schoolgirl's giggle", she has also encouraged her to expect to marry "greatly" and has "taught" her to be satisfied with nothing less than a man of consequence and fortune.⁴⁸ "This very foolish intimacy," Knightley believes, will result in Harriet learning far more from Emma than vice versa. The language of friendship is thus undercut by Emma's insistence on acting as Harriet's mentor. Emma's pedagogy is all the more inappropriate because she is Harriet's social superior. She teaches attitudes and instils expectations

⁴⁷ For an analysis of the language of power within *Emma*, see Albert E. Wilhelm, "Three Word Clusters in *Emma*" in *Studies in the Novel: Jane Austen: Special Number 7:1* (Spring 1975): 49-60.

⁴⁸ Jane Austen, *Emma*, 90.

entirely above Harriet's rank. As earlier chapters have shown, for society to function correctly pedagogues needed to be drawn from similar ranks to their pupils. In a pedagogical discourse that considered teachers to instil ideas of status in their pupils, Emma's role as preceptress points to another flaw in the female pedagogical ideal - a paradox created by the increasing number and diversity of the middling ranks of society.

The relationship between Emma and Harriet humorously manipulates pedagogical discourse. The conversations in which Emma pronounces her opinions of the world and in which Harriet defers to her are ironic reworkings of teacher-pupil dialogues in other kinds of text.⁴⁹ Though Emma is authoritative, she is often wrong, while Harriet's passivity contradicts the spirit of rational enquiry fostered in pupils in many educational texts. Emma's pedagogical discernment is likewise guided by selfish motives: "Emma judged it best in every respect, safest and kindest to keep [Harriet] with them as much as possible just at present."⁵⁰ Emma's self-interest is at odds with the sharing required of the educative life. There are other ironies. The terminology of "usefulness", for example, which we have seen used with such conviction in the Memoir of Catharine Cappe, is employed playfully in Emma:

Harriet would be loved as one to whom she could be useful.... Her first attempts at usefulness were in an attempt to find out who were the parents; but Harriet could not tell.⁵¹

Moreover, the close connections between female pupils and their teachers - which meant

⁴⁹ Norman Page in The Language of Jane Austen suggests that Austen draws on the dramatic tradition for her dialogue but in Emma, certainly, there is much borrowing from the kinds of educational dialogue between teachers and their pupils described elsewhere in this thesis.

⁵⁰ Jane Austen, Emma, 84.

⁵¹ Ibid., 56.

that the one might be praised through praise of the other - is exploited to dramatic effect in Emma. It allows us retrospectively to explain all the ambiguities surrounding Mr Elton's behaviour towards Emma and Harriet in the first volume, for example.

Appearing to compliment Harriet, Mr Elton is in fact complimenting Emma :

"You have given Miss Smith all that she required," said he, "You have made her graceful and easy. She was a beautiful character when she came to you but, in my opinion, the attractions you have added are infinitely superior to what she received from nature."⁵²

This statement rings warning bells because, according to contemporary advice literature of the day, Emma, as educator, ought not to be "adding attractions" to her pupil, but rather schooling her nature; it is also, however, revealing as one of the many examples of the confusion in Mr Elton's mind.⁵³ In the same vein, it is Emma's artistic talents rather than Harriet's beauty that Mr Elton praises in the portrait-drawing scene. This ambiguity is made possible partly because of the close associations between female educators and their pupils which meant that the one might be described with reference to the other.⁵⁴

Emma's teaching of Harriet begins on a semi-formal basis, with Emma hoping to read to Harriet each day. The plan for reading, however, degenerates into the compiling of riddles and gossiping about Harriet's marriage prospects:

Her views of improving her little friend's mind by a great deal of useful reading or conversation, had never yet led to more than a first few chapters, and the

⁵² Ibid., 70.

⁵³ The difference between the pursuit of "accomplishments" and the reform of nature was a common dichotomy in educational writing and might remind us of the debate between Julia and Caroline in Maria Edgeworth's, "Letters of Julia and Caroline" in Letters for Literary Ladies to Which is Added an Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification (London: J. Johnson, 1795).

⁵⁴ This statement is equally applicable to Mr Knightley's comments on Mrs Weston throughout the novel. In his condemnation of her, he condemns Emma; in his praise of her Emma is complimented.

intention of going on tomorrow. It was much easier to chat than to study; much pleasanter to let her imagination range and work at Harriet's fortune, than be labouring to enlarge her comprehension or exercise it on sober facts.⁵⁵

Viewed in the light of the kinds of literary-critical passages in prescriptive texts which I have discussed in Chapter 3, these remarks are highly ironic. Faulty reading practices point to more serious problems of conduct. Emma's own neglect of reading pursuits and her failure to discourage Harriet from reading romances highlight the greater "evil" that she has embarked upon, that of encouraging Harriet to believe that she might marry above her social rank. In further parody of pedagogical discourse, Harriet's education also includes a humorous application of the laws of association. Whilst in love with Mr Elton she collects a small box of objects which have belonged to him. To these objects - "a court plaister" and a pencil stub - she attaches the most passionate and inappropriate associations. The humour here arises in part from her attribution of larger meanings to tiny objects in a manner entirely typical of the object lessons of the eighteenth-century schoolroom.

Though Emma feels that in her treatment of Harriet she has "done nothing which women's friendship and women's feelings would not justify", she has fallen short of the rational pedagogical ideal - an ideal not reducible to "friendship" and "feelings". Like the irrational female mentors in moral tales, Emma has proved herself an "imaginist" rather than a rational human being. Mr Knightley accuses her of "abusing the reason" she has.⁵⁶ It is only after Emma has divested herself of the role of mentor to Harriet that Knightley proposes to her.

⁵⁵ Jane Austen, Emma, 95.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 99.

Towards the end of the novel, Emma is remorseful about the ill-effects of her pedagogical role:

Harriet had done nothing to forfeit the regard and interest which had been so voluntarily formed and maintained - or to deserve to be slighted by the person whose counsels had never led her right.⁵⁷

Though Emma's irrationality has often been seen by literary critics as the fatal flaw in her character, it has seldom been examined as a contravention of a pedagogical ideal. Emma's "imaginism" is at odds with her role as a rational woman of the gentry but, given her adoption of the role of pedagogue, the quality is particularly insidious.

iv) Jane Fairfax: "Brought up for Educating Others"

In the pedagogical schema of Emma, Jane Fairfax signals the arduousness of the itinerant life of the nineteenth-century governess. She is typically contrasted with Emma on the grounds of their education. But the two are also compared as pedagogues: Jane's prospective role as paid educator to lower middle-class families is set against Emma's leisured and unpaid instruction of Harriet. As the adopted daughter of the Campbells, Jane, unlike Emma, has received an impeccable domestic education. She reveals none of Emma's tendency to romanticise or to act selfishly, and when her secret engagement to Frank Churchill is revealed she is most concerned that the Campbells are not criticised for providing her with a deficient education. But Jane Fairfax has "yet her bread to earn" and it is the plan that "she should be brought up for educating others."

As I have suggested, the kind of governessing contemplated by Jane Fairfax marks a transition from the genteel customs of Highbury with its old established families, into the urban homes of the bourgeoisie. When Frank Churchill and Emma discuss Jane's

⁵⁷ Ibid., 398.

prospects, Mrs Weston moves out of earshot and affects embarrassment because she sees the similarities between Jane Fairfax's proposed future and her own past. But in the subtly-graded society of Highbury there are enormous differences between the kinds of governessing represented by Mrs Weston and by Jane Fairfax.

Jane Fairfax's use of language, like that of Mrs Weston, provides clues to her moral, pedagogical and class status. Though she has the raw materials for good communication - clear speech and fine handwriting - she does not use them in ways conducive to productive social intercourse.⁵⁸ As a member of a community which, I have suggested, is defined through an exchange of information, Jane Fairfax opens up the possibility of destabilisation. Her silence, though partially explicable, is not commended. Emma describes her as "wrapt in a cloak of politeness." Such reticence would be problematic on the part of any character in the novel, but in Jane Fairfax, who is preparing, as far as most of the characters are concerned, for the educative life, it seems doubly ominous. Jane Fairfax does not have the talent for open communication that characterises the rational female mentor of the late eighteenth century: rather she is associated with a set of concerns about women and pedagogy which were to become more relevant in the mid-nineteenth century. Her identity is a complex one: she is apparently single and yet engaged to be married; she exudes a kind of purity, yet she may be the seductress of Mr Dixon; she is poor enough to contemplate governessing yet she will succeed to Mrs Churchill's fortune, and she is reticent yet a prolific writer. All these characteristics point to Jane Fairfax's difference from both Emma and Mrs Weston and prefigure the increasingly complex subjectivity of the governess in later nineteenth-century literature.

⁵⁸ Miss Bates tells us before we meet her that "Jane speaks so distinct", *ibid.*, 172.

Jane Fairfax's plight also looks forward to the later sexualisation of the governess.⁵⁹ The dubious class and sexual connotations of governessing are delineated most persuasively by Jane herself, who describes the inferior end of the "governess-trade":

There are places in town, offices, where enquiry would soon produce something -- Offices for the sale -- not quite of human flesh -- but of human intellect.⁶⁰

This statement reverberates with connotations both of prostitution and, as Mrs Elton points out, of the slave trade. It unsettles the essentially genteel world of Emma, yet in fact it merely evidences the most unsavoury of a number of different options open to the female educator in a novel preoccupied by issues of pedagogy. Jane Fairfax's escape from the life of the governess must be seen as one of the many acts of reconciliation that characterise Austen's novels, yet it remains a poignant narrative with reverberations both for the succeeding social history of the governess in nineteenth-century Britain and for her representation in literature.⁶¹

As I have shown through this character survey, the educational interest of Emma does not simply focus on the conflicting paradigms through which Emma herself is educated in the novel, though these paradigms are important and, as I have shown, historically nuanced. Rather, in its examination of and contrast between these female pedagogues, Emma investigates a number of issues surrounding women's education and reveals the subtle variations implicit in the ideal of the rational female mentor. The suggestion that Emma may be read as a "feminist" novel is not my concern here, though the novel

⁵⁹ This is best typified in Henry James's The Turn of the Screw (London: Dent, 1935). See also Shoshana Felman, "Turning the Screw of Interpretation," Yale French Studies 55:56 (1977): 94-207.

⁶⁰ Jane Austen, Emma, 300.

⁶¹ For an early appraisal of the role of Frank Churchill in rescuing Jane Fairfax from a life of governessing, see Arnold Kettle, "Emma," in Jane Austen: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Ian Watt (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1963), 112-123.

certainly shows an engagement with issues relevant to "the destiny of woman". Emma is not a political manifesto for changes in the education of women but an experiment in fiction about education. This experiment shows fiction both as an entertaining means of documenting the social history of education, and as the place in which, through the flexibilities of plot, character and language offered by the novel form, popular discourses such as that of pedagogy might be shown to be complex and unstable.

As I have established in earlier chapters, the figure of the female pedagogue, though beset with contradiction, was in many senses a unifying device in texts as diverse as stories for children and autobiography. Her presence in such texts assumed an identity of interests between all middle-class women and women of the lower gentry such as Austen herself. In Emma, the female educator appears, however, in the guise of several different characters: the ideal is dispersed and fractured. The certainties of stories for children and of the cruder variety of educational novels are abandoned for a more sophisticated depiction of the possible consequences of laxness in female education. Austen's female educators are neither paragons of rational virtue, nor silly sensationalists; instead they are merely too affectionate, too snobbish or too secretive.

To sum up, the assumption of the commonality and fixity of the experience of middle-class female pedagogy in non-fictional educational texts had suggested a number of cheerfully optimistic possibilities for women. Educational writers had, for example, designed a technology of motherhood in which all middle-class women were considered the best teachers of their own children; by extension, it was considered that there would be no difficulty in paid pedagogues becoming middle-class wives and mothers. Governesses may have been middle-class women who had fallen on hard times, but

governessing did not vulgarise them. In Emma, however, Mrs Weston's easy transition from governess to member of the lower gentry is revealed as a fading ideal. Similarly, whilst non-fictional texts had surmised a painless transmission of experience between generations within the middle classes, in Emma, Emma's instruction of Harriet is shown to be wholly inappropriate to Harriet's circumstances of birth. Moreover, whilst educational discourse had fancied that the politeness, articulateness and rationality of the female pedagogue alone could uphold the values of cultivated society, in Emma, the actions and words of faulty pedagogues are seen to have wide-ranging consequences for whole communities. Pedagogy in this novel is as much a source of disruption as of social cohesion.

3) Jane Austen as Educating Author

Emma's pedagogical themes are consonant with and serve to reinforce the novel's didactic impulse. The didacticism of the Georgian novel has often been noted though rarely theorised. This is because didacticism has been supposed a "lesser" literary impulse: a staple of respectable fiction of this period. As Marilyn Butler has explained:

Modern literary criticism, so often narrowly aesthetic, has patronised eighteenth-century didacticism, and in the process obscured the pressure of ideas that helped to give contemporary fiction its form,⁶²

Butler suggests that novelistic didacticism may have its roots in the moral philosophy of the late eighteenth century, in religious teaching or political discourse. I would suggest that in late eighteenth-century novels of education, the didactic narrative voice also, in part, derives from contemporary educational discourse. Considered in this way, didacticism in such texts becomes a feature with specific class and gender overtones; and in the case of the works I am describing, it affords a means of inscribing a

⁶² Marilyn Butler, Jane Austen and the War of Ideas, 3.

particular version of middle-class femininity.

In the Introduction I briefly suggested a relationship between the development of authorial didacticism and the rise of the preceptress in the late eighteenth-century novel. As I showed in Chapter 1, a feature of the mentor figure is her capacity for adducing moral lessons from the minor details of domestic existence; her ability to point to wider ethical debates with reference to the tiniest moments of conversation or the minutest observations. Such strategies were the techniques of a number of female novelists of education in this period, including Fanny Burney and Maria Edgeworth. There has been a tendency to view these writers as exponents of a particular kind of didactic narrative technique which depends upon (or at least gives the impression of depending upon) univocality.⁶³ In Camilla: or, a Picture of Youth, for example, numerous characters endorse the educational views of the narrator creating the sense of a strong novelistic didactic purpose.⁶⁴ Janet Todd has commented that the narrator in Fanny Burney's novels "gives advice and moral and social comment like a stern mother or aunt, directed to the characters in the story and to the girls outside" and goes on to describe Burney as "pedagogic, garrulous and moralistic".⁶⁵ Though this view of Burney does scant justice to her subtlety and verve as a story-teller or to her wit as a commentator, it is hard to resist making connections between the narrator of Camilla and the representations of the enlightened preceptress which form the novel's discursive context

⁶³ For a discussion of the differences between "univocality" and "multivocality" in the novel, see Sarah E. Parrot, "Escape from Didacticism: Art and Idea in the Novels of Jane Austen, Fanny Burney and Maria Edgeworth (Ph.D. diss.: York, 1993) and my introduction, 71.

⁶⁴ Fanny Burney, Camilla: or, A Picture of Youth, (1796) ed. E. A. Bloom and L.D. Bloom (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983) and Sarah E. Parrot, "Escape from Didacticism," 110-111.

⁶⁵ Janet Todd, The Sign of Angellica: Women, Writing and Fiction, 1660-1800 (London: Virago, 1989), 286-287.

in this period.⁶⁶

By contrast, the narrator in Emma is inescapably complex and multivocal, yet her function may also be related to that of the contemporary preceptress. As we have seen, the female educator embodied numerous contradictions and paradoxes. In Austen's irony, her careful modulations of tone, and her wry commentary, we sense an educational purpose that is distinct from and more subtle than overt moralising. It is a truism that one reads Emma several times before its "truth" is revealed. By planting her clues so carefully that they must remain largely undetected to a first-time reader, Austen teaches her audience to judge more discriminatingly, to reason more accurately and to associate more carefully. Indeed, Emma is littered with events and conversations that produce false associations in Emma herself and in the reader. Emma's misinterpretation, for example, first of Mr Elton, then of Frank Churchill and finally of Mr Knightley's behaviour towards Harriet is caused by her overactive imagination, her hasty and false associations between events and their meaning. The reader makes similar incorrect associations, particularly over the silence of Jane Fairfax and the behaviour of Frank Churchill towards Emma. It is the skill of the educative authorial voice that finally teaches the reader to analyse evidence carefully, not to jump to conclusions and not to force associations where none exists. In these ways it is possible to see Austen's narrative technique as an adaptation of the skills of the enlightened preceptress.

⁶⁶ See my Introduction 71 for an examination of recent responses to Burney, some of which challenge this view of simple didacticism.

4) Later Preceptresses in Fiction

I have suggested that the educational threads in Emma are indicative of a number of developments in fiction. In gaining a multi-faceted subjectivity, the educators in Emma lose their largely rhetorical function. They no longer stand for an intellectual and moral paradigm alone, but represent a social and economic contingency. Emma begins the process of creating both a temporal dimension for educating women and imbuing them with a psychological subjectivity. There were, of course, real educating women long before Jane Austen's Emma, but late eighteenth-century literature (in the widest sense of that term) did not concern itself much with their plight as individuals. The anxieties touched upon, though held at bay, in Emma came to fruition only in later nineteenth-century literary depictions of the governess.

Several recent critics have pointed out the contradictions inherent in the nineteenth-century governess and her expulsion from conventional gender and class boundaries: but, as this thesis has tried to suggest, she is also a figure with a long and complex genealogy.⁶⁷ Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* and *Lucy Snowe*, and Thackeray's *Becky Sharp* did not develop spontaneously in mid-nineteenth-century fiction, nor were they simply fictional responses to the supposed social "problem" of surplus middle-class females. They were also the reincarnation of a female pedagogical presence which had presided over educational and fictional discourse for some eighty years. Their problematic subjectivities are thus not, as some critics would have us believe, wholly explicable in terms of mid-nineteenth century class and gender configurations. Rather, we must understand *Jane Eyre*, *Lucy Snowe* and *Becky Sharp* as we must understand *Mrs Weston*, *Jane Fairfax* and *Emma* herself: in terms of their conformity to and

⁶⁷ See Introduction, 14, for a bibliography of texts relating to the nineteenth-century governess.

divergence from a cherished textual and pedagogical ideal. We must consider them in the light of educational ideologies and practices already familiar to generations of readers.

Conclusion

"Having Made Education My More Particular Study"

On April 9th, 1813, whilst working as a governess to the Armitage family in Honley, Yorkshire, Ellen Weeton, then aged thirty seven, addressed a letter to Ann Winkley, the sixteen-year-old daughter of her friend and herself a governess. The letter responds tartly to comments made by Ann in a previous letter on the methods of instruction practised by Miss Weeton:

After being a teacher in a school upwards of 20 years, and for more than 10 of them having made education my more particular study, I should not now have to learn from a girl so young as you. I am not apt to boast verbally of my knowledge, and a person must be intimately acquainted with me, before they know my acquirements. I know I appear more ignorant than I am; my brother has often told me so, for he thinks me wondrous clever, considering the opportunities I have had. When very young, I was disgusted with the pedantry of some girls, who pretended upon every occasion to a great deal more than they really knew. I saw how they were ridiculed, and secretly determined never to act like them. When a person is really possessed of knowledge, it will make its appearance without any pains taken by the possessor. But it only discovers itself to the knowing; the ignorant cannot find it.¹

In her letterbook Weeton's bold - if touchy - defence of her own "acquirements" draws on the rhetoric of contemporary educational texts and plays on familiar pedagogical dichotomies: between age and youth, between brothers and sisters, between the "ignorant" and the "clever" and between those girls who maintain a modest reserve about their knowledge and those who "pretend to a great deal more than they know."

¹ Ellen Weeton, The Journals of Ellen Weeton, 1807-1825, ed. Edward Hall and with a new introduction by J. J. Bagley, 2 vols. (Newton Abbot: David and Charles Reprints, 1969), 2: 86. See my Introduction, 10.

Like Catharine Cappe, Ellen Weeton to some extent deployed the familiar representation of the rational preceptress in her self-depiction. The "literary" flavour of her Journals derives, not only from her desire to play the sentimental heroine, but also from the innovative way in which she re-presents stock educational ideas.

The rhetoric of Weeton's obscure and, until 1936, unpublished, provincial Journals would imply that by 1820 the representation of the rational female mentor was a well-recognised stylistic feature of published texts. This thesis has identified some of the features that characterised the ideal of the preceptress among enlightened or liberal circles in the period 1780-1820. I have suggested that those women writers who documented the education of women often employed the persona of the rational and moral preceptress within their works, both as an embodiment of their own authorial voice and as a character in her own right. The portrait of the preceptress, though complex, had many recurrent features. Most commonly, she was described in educational texts as a mother whose pedagogy was part of her maternal role, but she also appeared as a governess in the homes of the wealthy. Alternative pedagogues might be aunts, temporary guardians, or, in the growing genre of school stories, schoolmistresses.² The range of positions was important: an English mother indicated different types of narrative possibility from a French governess, for example. Age, nationality, blood-ties, degree of affection, intelligence, good sense and moral stature were the indices of value used to represent and judge individual preceptresses. In the sketch below, I draw together some of the most frequently mentioned characteristics of

² For school stories in the period see Dorothy Kilner, Anecdotes of a Boarding School: or, an Antidote to the Vices of Those Establishments (London: n.p., 1783); Dorothy and Mary Kilner, The Village School: A Collection of Entertaining Histories For Children (1783), 2 vols. (London: J. Harris, 1828); and Mary and Charles Lamb, Mrs Leicester's School and Other Writings in Prose and Verse (1809) (London: Macmillan, 1885). See also Josephine Kamm, Hope Deferred: Girls' Education in English History (London: Methuen, 1965).

the preceptress in educational texts.

Depictions of the preceptress employed a repetitious vocabulary. In temperament, the preceptress was "calm, collected and composed"; if she had passions she was encouraged to hide them. Her principal qualities were those of "reason," "judgment" and "principle" tempered by "affection," and her influence was exercised on her charges over long periods of time. The preceptress was expected to be "useful" to her pupils and to those for whom she wrote. Though she had an autonomous mental existence, her knowledge was to be used in the service of others. There were also a series of qualities which the mentor was expected not to exhibit. She was not meant, for example, to be "witty" or "capricious", "silent", "over-affectionate", "romantic" or "visionary".

The ideal female preceptress was closely identified with language. She had a rich vocabulary and an awareness of the etymology of words. Often she could speak French or Italian with some fluency. Moreover, she was responsible for keeping information flowing freely in the educational environment. Unlike the emerging ideal of the demure and obedient middle-class wife, she was expected to speak clearly and authoritatively, voicing well-rehearsed precepts, maxims and examples. Listening patiently was also important. The female mentor asked incisive questions and gave astute answers: she actively engineered the dialogues and conversations characteristic of much of the teaching material available in this period. Moreover, the preceptress was described as an observer of experience. Often she was represented as an eye surveying the domestic scene, or as an ear listening sympathetically to the anecdotes of harrassed mothers.

The resources available to the mentor figure were fairly basic. As I showed in Chapter

1, she plundered the domestic environment and its immediate surroundings for instructive material that might be used to illustrate "larger" concepts. A preceptress might have read both English and French educational works, good fiction and rudimentary geography and history books. Only exceptionally would she be conversant with the classics. As Chapter 3 demonstrated, the preceptress selected, recommended, annotated and even altered the reading material of her pupils.

Popular belief in the importance of the experiences of early childhood invested the activities of the educator with particular significance. To her older male pupils, the female mentor was a source of advice and comfort when they returned home from their school education, and to her female pupils she was an example to emulate, a living text to read and follow. Sometimes, the female mentor even found herself pitted against male educational philosophers, standing for simplicity and practicality against their complexity and abstraction. She was also favourably contrasted with paternal educators whose instruction of young girls was sometimes considered inappropriate. The emphasis on the mental capacities of the preceptress meant, and this represents a significant difference from the later period, that she was rarely considered in terms of her sexuality. She was first and foremost an intellectual being, a mind rather than a body.

It was through her recognised mental attributes that we may link the educational activities of the preceptress with the techniques required of authorship. She was expected, for example, to be able to define words and to use specific examples in the service of generalisation. She was also responsible for transforming the abstract into the accessible and for describing experience in pictures or stories. She made comparisons between texts, and, more ambitiously, between what we might now consider disparate

realms of experience: poetry and botany for example. For her young pupils, the educator figure gave a shape to their experience and drew conclusions from it; she interpreted their dreams, rationalised their fears and conceded, modified or reformulated their observations.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the rational and moral female mentor had become a key figure in educational discourse mediating between the elements of several important cultural binarisms. She embodied, for example, both sentiment and reason, both homely simplicity and educated intellectualism, both the "natural" and the "cultural" world. At the same time, she policed the boundaries of imagination, fantasy, excess sentimentality, and, later, checked the stirrings of Romanticism.

A number of historians have suggested that the eighteenth century witnessed the "rise" of the domestic woman, a figure whom, they suggest played a key role in the development of middle-class identity in the period.³ My thesis has shown that the last two decades of the eighteenth century also witnessed the emergence of the representation of the preceptress, a figure who, I have argued, is to be found in literature characterising the lives of the gentry as much as the middle classes.⁴ The two figures of womanhood can be usefully considered in relation to one another and three aspects of that relationship have emerged in the course of this study. First, the preceptress in some

³ As I have discussed, this view has been forwarded by Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850 (London: Hutchinson Education, 1987), and has been substantiated by numerous subsequent articles on women's history in this period, many of which are noted in earlier chapters.

⁴ My study shares many of Nancy Armstong's assumptions about the relationship between literature and female authority in the eighteenth century, but I differ from her in that I suggest a modification of representations of the "domestic woman" in the last two decades of the eighteenth century. I contend also that the origins of this powerful cultural ideal lie beyond the compass of the middle classes alone. See Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

ways consolidated and enhanced the ideal of the domestic woman. Secondly and paradoxically, she showed the contradictions and weaknesses inherent in the ideal of domesticity, leaving the way open, in the nineteenth century, for more complex representations of female subjectivity in novels and non-literary texts. Thirdly, as I have shown, the period 1780-1820 witnessed a significant increase in published writing by women: I have suggested that the figure of the preceptress provided one model for the writing woman in this period.

These three claims require further elucidation. First, as numerous works for children and advice works testify, the late eighteenth-century preceptress was to some extent synonymous with the domestic mother. Pedagogy was represented as a key aspect of domestic responsibility, a duty which could not be delegated to servants, shared with husbands or left to philosophers. The teaching of children and young people constituted "proper" adult female behaviour. Pedagogy was an activity that enriched family life and, by extension, contributed to the stability of society in the widest sense. The representation of the preceptress stimulated, reinforced and preserved a sense of the intellectual, moral and religious values of a number of enlightened groups in Britain, including members of the gentry, of the middle classes and of the rational nonconformist élite in particular.⁵ Representations of the preceptress contributed to the delineation of a particular model of domestic womanhood, consolidated by its rhetorical exclusion of groups such as men, the ignorant, lower-class women, aristocratic women, the French, and the peoples of the East. In the years of political insecurity following the French Revolution, the sheer frequency and repetitiveness of representations of the preceptress made her a powerful symbol of national unity and, like the domestic woman, she came

⁵ The evangelical preceptress of the same period would repay further investigation.

to embody the reformatory spirit of the last decades of the eighteenth century. Her teaching was portrayed as a crucial feature of both the enduring stability of society and of its continued intellectual and spiritual progress.⁶

Secondly, however, and in contrast with her harmonising influence, the representation of the preceptress pointed to a fracturing of the domestic ideal of womanhood, opening up the possibility of contradictory models of femininity. There was, for example, a paradox implied in the suggestion that though mothers were the "natural" teachers of their children, they required an education in order to be able to teach properly. The notion that women might be trained and paid to teach, a notion which suggested some degree of academic competence for women, led, in the nineteenth century to an increasing anxiety about those women who failed to satisfy the domestic ideal: the single woman, the widow fallen on hard times, and the learned woman, each of whom might turn to teaching as an occupation.⁷ The increasing numbers of governesses working in middle-class homes in the early years of the nineteenth century meant that the paid pedagogue was frequently set in opposition to the domestic woman in nineteenth-century novels.⁸ This division between the domestic and the pedagogical was accentuated by

⁶ Though she appeared chiefly in the writings of those from the higher levels of society, changes in provision of education for the lower classes occurring in the early nineteenth century meant that a comparable image of the preceptress was increasingly employed in the teaching of those lower down the social hierarchy. Numerous women, for example, taught in the schools of the British and Foreign Schools Society (1814) and the National Society for the Promotion of the Education of the Poor (1811), and some of the books discussed in Chapter 1 were used in these schools. The work of female educators in these and other schools for the lower classes would require a different kind of analysis from the one presented in this thesis, and would, for example, take into account the disparity of class backgrounds between teachers and taught.

⁷ See Jane Rendall, "Educating Hearts and Minds," chap. in The Origins of Modern Feminism: Women in Britain, France and the United States, 1780-1860 (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1985), 108-149, especially 133-142 and my introduction, 14, 290. See also, Mary Poovey, "The Anathematized Race: The Governess and Jane Eyre," chap. in Uneven Developments: The Ideological Work of Gender in Mid-Victorian England (London: Virago, 1989), 126-163.

⁸ Scholarship on the nineteenth-century governess has been prolific. See the Introduction, 14 .

the changes in representations of the preceptress herself. In looking outside the domestic environment to gather information to impart to her young charges, the preceptress already stood in an uneasy relation to the ideologically-charged ideal of separate spheres. In the nineteenth century, the representation of the preceptress became steeped in the language of economics and sexuality and came to represent a threat to, rather than a consolidation of, the home and the ideology of domesticity.⁹

Thirdly, the representation of the preceptress provided a bridge between the self-effacing characteristics of the domestic woman and the characteristics of authority and persuasiveness required of published writers. Writers in the tradition I have identified exercised various key aspects of the domestic existence of women - conversation, letter-writing, and pedagogical expertise - in literary contexts. Pedagogy provided the themes, moral purpose and language for a variety of genres practised by women between 1780 and 1820. As previous chapters have shown, the pedagogical voice was not merely a disguise for the woman writer's literary ambitions: connections between pedagogy and authorship ran far deeper, to the extent that it is impossible to do justice to "literature" by women in the period without taking into account its resonances with educational writing.

My case-studies have shown that the relationships between teaching and writing were forged in various ways in different kinds of writing. In works for children, the preceptress shaped and transmitted knowledge through the filter of her own middle-class

⁹ See for example the governess in the Countess of Blessington, *The Governess*, 2 vols. (London: Longman, Orme, Browne, Green and Longman, 1839); the portrait of Becky Sharpe in William Makepeace Thackeray, *Vanity Fair: A Novel Without a Hero* (1848) (New York: Harper Bros, 1848); Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre: An Autobiography*, 3 vols. (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1847); Anne Brontë, *Agnes Grey* (1847) (London: Harmondsworth, 1987).

femininity and provided simple resolutions to wider intellectual debates such as the "uses" of imagination. In advice works, she lent an authoritative female voice to the prescriptive tradition and showed how women educationalists might rewrite and reinterpret advice to their own advantage. In literary commentaries, it was the voice of the preceptress that policed and evaluated reading materials for young women and that provided a vocabulary and a critical method which they might imitate in their own dealings with books. In self-history, the preceptress provided discourses through which a woman writer might acceptably tell the story of her own life and in doing so lent a practical, rational turn to the development of that genre. As a result of the widely-acknowledged presence of the preceptress in the discursive context, the voice of those female novelists working within rationalist circles was inevitably imbued both with pedagogical import and with ironic possibilities.

In the period 1780-1820, the literary preceptress emanated from the writings of certain "enlightened" groups of the middle and upper classes and was characterised by her moral and rational qualities. She throws light on contemporary representations of the domestic woman and of the woman writer in the specific ways that I have outlined above. But the representation of the woman educator has been a powerful cultural icon, subject to change over time and according to conditions. It is possible that a consideration of her representation and activities may therefore be a useful component in an examination of constructions of femininity and in analyses of women writers at other times in history.

Appendices

Appendix A:

Elizabeth Hamilton, Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education, 5th ed. Bath: R, Cruthwell, 1816. 12-21.

Upon the direction given to desire and aversion, the whole of moral conduct entirely depends. And if it be by means of early and powerful associations, that the desires and aversions of the soul are principally excited; it necessarily follows, that to watch over the associations which are formed by the tender mind, becomes a duty of the first importance.

The effects of association are daily experienced by us all; but as the term made use of to explain these effects may not be familiar to every reader of my own sex, a few observations upon it may not be unacceptable. This was omitted in the former edition, from a confidence that the application of the term would sufficiently explain its meaning. But in this, I find, I have been mistaken. A lady whose powers of wit and judgment can be excelled by nothing but her own candour and benevolence, has convinced me of my error, by assuring me that, however familiar the philosophical use of the term might be to a certain class of readers, to such as have never heard of any other associations than those of the Loyal volunteers, it was, to the last degree perplexing. Few, it is probable, are in this predicament; but for the sake of those few, it may be necessary to observe, that the associations which take place in our ideas, are seldom volunteers, but are united by laws that are to the last degree arbitrary; and that their union, when once formed, is no longer at the will of a superior, but frequently remains indissoluble, notwithstanding the commands issued by reason for disbanding them. A little reflection will render the truth of this observation obvious, even to the most inconsiderate.

Who could behold the spot upon which a dear friend was murdered, without the most lively sensations of horror? Why are these sensations called forth by the sight of the place? Is it not from the strength of that association, which connects the idea of the place with the idea of the horrid deed? Let any person of common sensibility say, whether the scenes which they have been accustomed to view in company with a beloved object do not, particularly after a long absence recal [sic] that object to the mind, and introduce a train of ideas with which that object is connected? These trains of ideas are linked together by the laws of association, nor can they be broken off, but by the introduction of new association. When the mind is perfectly at ease and free from the influence of all violent emotions, the slightest incident will be sufficient to introduce this change; but when under the influence of passion the mind reflects every

idea that is not clearly associated with the prevalent disposition, and the circumstances which have produced it. It is this which renders the discourses of a mind at ease so seldom salutary to the afflicted. The associations of the former are unconnected and desultory; they take a wide scope, and are easily diverted into new channels. The associations of the latter are confined by passion; and are accordingly circumscribed within narrow bounds. To be able to enter into the associations of a mind, labouring under any violent emotion, is therefore not only necessary to the poet, whose province is to describe the passions, but to the philanthropist, who wishes to allay their fury.

The laws of association have been made use of by some writers to explain all the phenomena of the human mind; they have been made the basis of systems which have met with opposition, and of theories which are now nearly exploded. With the object of our present enquiry, these are totally unconnected. The principles upon which it proceed, are not implicitly adopted from any author, however celebrated; they are not chosen to suit any theory, however plausible. Of systems I have none, save the system of Christianity. Of theories I cannot be said to adopt any; since I follow none one step farther, than reflection upon the operations of my own mind, and observation upon those of others, fully justifies. Nor do I mean to stand bound for all the opinions of every author, whose sentiments I am occasionally quote....

The effects of association occurred to my mind, long before I was in possession of the word which I now make use of to express them. The first book in which I found hint upon the subject, was Lord Kames's Elements of Criticism. What is there said upon it, though in some respects it met my own ideas, did not perfectly satisfy my mind; and years elapsed before I ventured to look into Locke or Hartley, whom I considered as philosophical writers, far too abstruse for my simple judgment to comprehend. Thus, my friend, are we often deterred from seeking for information, not only upon subjects which are the particular province of the learned, but likewise upon those points that are interesting to every rational being. In this light do I consider a knowledge of the powers and principles of the female mind; and greatly do I wish to see this subject divested of all extraneous matter, cleared from the rubbish of system and hypothesis, and rendered so plain to every capacity as to become a part of common education.

Appendix B:

Charlotte Smith, "Preface" to Conversations Introducing Poetry Chiefly on the Subjects of Natural History for the use of Children and Young. London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1804.

The poetry in these books was written without any intention of publishing it. I wished to find short simple pieces on subjects of natural history, for the use of a child of five years old, who, on her arrival in England could speak no English, and whose notice was particularly attracted by flowers and insects. Among the collections avowedly made for the use of children, I met with very few verses that answered my purpose, and therefore I wrote two or three of the more puerile of the pieces that appear in these volumes. Some friends were pleased with them, as well as with some slight alterations I made in others already in my possession; and a near relative sent me several which she had composed on purpose and one or two which had long lain in her portfolio. Thus encouraged, my collection insensibly increased. I grew fond of the work; and when it contained, as I imagined, enough to answer my original intention, I sent it up[to be printed; but I found that there was not manuscript enough to make even a very small volume, I therefore undertook to enlarge the book by Conversations. I suffered some borrowed and altered pieces to remain which I should have taken out, had I known that I need not have retained them for want of a sufficient number of original compositions. Of this, however, I was not aware, till the first volume was arranged, and the prose written; and as my trespass on others has not been great, I trust it will be forgiven me, there are seven pieces not my own, some of them a little altered to answer my first purpose of teaching a child to repeat them; and five of my own reprinted. Of the remained, though the Relation to whom I am obliged objected to my distinguishing them by any acknowledgement, it is necessary to say, that where my interlocutors praise any poem, the whole or the greater part of it is hers,

It will very probably be observed, that the pieces towards the end of the second volume are too long for mere children to learn to repeat and too difficult for them to understand. It is however, impossible to write anything for a particular age; some children comprehend more at eight years old than others do at twelve, but to those who have any knowledge of Geography or Mythology, or who have a taste for Botany, the two last pieces will not be found difficult. I confess that in the progress of my work I became so partial to it, as to wish it might, at least the latter part, be found not unworthy the perusal of those, who are no longer children.

I have endeavoured as much as possible to vary the measure, having observed that a monotonous and drawling tone is required by reciting continually from memory, verses, selected without attention to variety of cadence. To each of these little pieces, I have affixed some moral, or some reflection; and where I supposed the subject or the treatment of it might be obscure, I have preceded or followed the Poetry with a slight explanation in prose, but many notes were notwithstanding unavoidable. Whoever has undertaken to instruct children has probably been made sensible in some way or other, of their own limited knowledge. In writing these pages of prose, simple as they are, I have in more than one instance been mortified to discover, that my own information was very defective, and that it was necessary to go continually to books. After all, I fear I have made some mistakes, particularly in regard to the nature of Zoophytes; but the

accounts of this branch of natural history in the few books I have, are so confused and incomplete, that I could not rectify the errors suspected.

I found it difficult to make my personages speak so as entirely to satisfy myself. I shall perhaps hear that my children, in this book do not talk like children, but the mere prattle of childhood would be less in its place, here, than language nearer to that of books, which however, will probably be criticised as affected and unnatural. There is a sort of fall-lall way of writing very usual in works of this kind, which I have been solicitous to avoid, and perhaps have erred in some other way. Being at such a considerable distance from the press, errors have crept in which under such a disadvantage are almost unavoidable,

Charlotte Smith

July 28th 1804.

Appendix C:

i) Cowley's translation of Anacreon's The Grasshopper (translation made between 1638 and 1652) in J. G. Taaffe, Abraham Cowley. New York: Twayne Publishers Incorporated, 1974. 45.

Happy Insect, what can be
In happiness compar'd to thee
Fed with nourishment divine
The dewy morning's gentle wine!
Nature waits upon thee still,
And thy verdant cup does fill,
'Tis filled wherever thou dost tread,
Nature's self thy Ganimed.
Thou dost drink and dance and sing;
Happier then the happiest King!
All the fields which thou dost see,
All the plants belong to thee,
All the Summer Hours produce,
Fertile made with early juice.
Man for thee does sow and plow;
Farmer He, and Land-Lord Thou!
Thou dost innocently joy;
Nor does thy Luxury destroy;
The Shepherd gladly heareth thee,
More harmonious then He.
Thee Country Hindes with gladness hear,
Prophet of the ripened year!
Thee Phoebus loves, and does inspire
Phoebus is himself thy Sire.
To thee of all things upon earth.
Life is no longer then thy Mirth.
Happy Insect, happy thou,
Dost neither age or winter know,
But when thou'st drunk, and danc'd and sung.
Thy fill, the flowery leaves among
(Voluptuous and wise with all,
Epicurean animal!)
Sated with thy Summer Feast,
Thou retir'st to endless rest.

ii) Charlotte Smith's version of The Grasshopper. Conversations Introducing Poetry: Chiefly on Subjects of Natural History for the use of children and young people. London, T. Nelson and Sons, 1804. 116-117.

Happy Insect, what can be
In happiness compar'd to thee
Fed with nourishment divine
The dewy morning's gentle wine!
Nature waits upon thee still,
And thy verdant cup does fill,
Tis filled wherever thou dost tread,
Nature's self thy Ganimed.
Thou dost drink and dance and sing;
Happier then the happiest King!
All the fields which thou dost see,
All the plants belong to thee,
All the suns produce
Are blest insects for thy use.
While thy feast doth not destroy,
The verdure thou dost thus enjoy
But the blythe shepherd haileth thee,
Singing as musical as he;
And peasants love thy voice to hear,
Prophet of the ripening year.
Insect truly blest! for thou
Dost neither age nor winter know,
But when thou hast danc'd and sung,
Thy fill, the flowers and leaves among,
Sated with thy summer feast,
Thou retir'st to endless rest.

N.B. Taafe comments on the erudite tradition of translations of The Grasshopper. "The Grasshopper is an excellent example of Cowley's method: light, simple, clear and direct, it never loses sight of its object while it contemplates time and happiness. Richard Lovelace's version in quatrains is a more philosophical, obscure and involved poem on the joys of friendship; and Thomas Stanley's is a more literal translation of Anacreon's Latin and about half the length of Cowley's version," 44. Taafe seems unaware of Charlotte Smith's adaptation of the poem for children.

Appendix D.

Maria Edgeworth, "The Good French Governess", Moral Tales for Young People. London: J. Johnson, 1801, 112-113.

In their way home, Madame de Rosier stopped the carriage at a circulating library. "Are you going to ask for the novel we talked of yesterday?" cried Matilda.

"A novel," said Isabella contemptuously: "no, I dare say Madame de Rosier is not a novel reader."

"Zeluco, sir, if you please," said Madame de Rosier, "you see, Isabella, notwithstanding the danger of forfeiting your good opinion, I have dared to ask for a novel."¹

"Well, I always understood, I am sure," replied Isabella disdainfully, "that none but trifling silly people were novel readers."

"Were readers of trifling silly novels, perhaps you mean," answered Madame de Rosier with temper; "but I flatter myself you will not find Zeluco either trifling or silly."

"No, not Zeluco, to be sure", said Isabella, recollecting herself, "for now, I remember Mr Gibbon, the great historian, mentions Zeluco in one of his letters; he says it is the best philosophical romance of the age. I particularly remember that, because somebody had been talking of Zeluco the very day I was reading that letter; and I asked my governess to get it for me, but she said it was a novel -- however, Mr Gibbon called it a philosophical romance."

"The name," said Madame de Rosier, "will not make such a difference to us; but I agree with you in thinking that as people who cannot judge for themselves are apt to be misled by names, it would be advantageous to invent some new name for philosophical novels, that they may be no longer contraband goods -- that they may not be confounded with the trifling silly productions, for which you have so just a disdain."

¹ She refers to a popular novel highly esteemed for its educational value in the period, John Moore's Zeluco: Various Views of Human Nature Taken from Life and Manners Foreign and Domestic, 2 vols. (London: A. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1789)

Appendix E

Clara Reeve, "To My Friend Mrs _____ On Her Holding an Argument in Favour of the Natural Equality of Both of the Sexes," in Original Poems on Several Occasions. London: T and J. W. Pasham, 1756, 4-11.

Silence best serves to disapprove
False reasoning in those we love
Tho' t'other day I held my tongue,
I thought you greatly in the wrong;
How could you so unfairly try'd
With no one present to decide,
Argue the best, that woman can
Pretend to triumph o'er a man
I once was half of your opinion,
But now subscribe to their dominion.
The same unchanging law that fixes,
Eternal difference of the sexes,
Has for the wisest ends assign'd
Due bounds to Either Sexes mind.
Your heart with argument elated,
Thinks both were equal when created,
And holds its own imagination,
That all depends on cultivation:
But to speak plainly in reality
I don't believe in this equality,
But think that partial heav'n design'd
To them the more capacious mind;
And that their brains, Dame Nature's college,
Are best receptacles for knowledge.
Lend me my friend a while your hand,
I'll lead you o'er a classic land,
To hear what sages famed of old
On this nice subject shall unfold:
Thus much may serve for introduction,
Leading to pleasure and instruction.

Not every one can write that chuses,
But those invited by the muses:
There are nine wit-inspiring lasses
Who dwell about the hill Parnassus
Their patron whom they serve and follow,
A beardless youth - the Greek Apollo -
Still lovely, active, young and gay,
He drives the chariot of the day,
Teaches these girls polite behaviours,
For which they grant him certain favours:
(But modest ones you may be sure,

For they are virgins chaste and pure.)
He leads their concerts, which they fill
With wondrous harmony and skill;
For he's the prince of all musicians,
Beside the greatest of physicians.
He finds them music for their frolics,
He cures their head-achs [sic], nerves and colics.

From out the side of this fam'd mountain,
Rises a wit-inspiring fountain;
Which murmurs music as it plays,
Laurels its banks produce and bays.
Here all the scholars drink their fill,
And then attempt to climb the hill;
(But first from trees the barks they take,
And garlands for their heads they make;
Whose strange effects to us a wonder
Secure them from the power of thunder:)
With pain and care they clamber up,
And very rarely gain the top:
But if they reach the Muses seat
They have assign'd them a retreat.
Apollo's self records their name,
And gives it to the charge of Fame;
Who first displays to earth and sky,
Then folds it up and lays it by,
In her immortal library.
Now comes our case - the ancients tell us,
These nymphs were always fond of fellows;
For by their records it is clear
Few women ever have been there.
Not that it contradicts their laws,
But they assign the following cause;
The sacred Helicanian spring,
Of which old poets sweetly sing:
(Tho' modern writers only flout it,
Alleging they can do without it)
Produces very strange effects,
On the weak brains of our soft sex;
Works worst vagaries in the Fancy
Then Holland's gin, or Royal Nancy.
In short, to what you will compare it,
Few women's heads have strength to bear it.
See some with strong and lively fancies,
Write essays, novels and romances.
Others by serious cares and pains,
With politics o'erset their brains.
Children some call themselves of Phoebus,
By virtue of a pun or rebus.

Some much affect the strain satyric,
And others all for panegyric.
In all, and each of these you find,
strong markings of the female mind,
Still superficial, light and various;
Loose, unconnected and precarious:
Life and vivacity I grant,
But weight and energy they want;
That strength that fills the manly page,
And bids it live to future age.

Now as it oft hath been evinc'd,
We do not love to be convinc'd;
So if conviction give you grief,
Restriction may afford relief.
Exceptions to all general rules,
Are still allow'd of in the school:
And Phoebus's favours to the fair
Are not impossible tho' rare.
In Fame's great library we're told,
Some female names there are enroll'd;
Matrons of Greece, others of Rome,
And some, to please you, nearer home:
Moderns there are, France brags of many,
And England shews as good as any.
See our Orinda swell the page,
Carter and Lennox grace this age;
But leaving these consign'd to Fame,
Lusus Naturae is their name
As some among the men we find,
Effeminate in form and mind;
Some women masculine are seen
In mind, behaviour and in mien:
For Nature seldom kindly mixes,
The quality of both the sexes.
These instances are sometimes quoted
As owls are shown, to be hooted.
Dare now to ope your eyes and see,
These truths exemplified in me.
What tho' while yet an infant young,
The numbers trembled on my tongue;
As youth advanc'd, I dar'd aspire
And trembling struck the heavenly lyre.
What by my talents have I gained?
By those I lov'd to be disdain'd
By some despised by others fear'd,
Envy'd by fools, by witlings jeer'd
See what success my labours crown'd,
By birds and beasts alike disown'd.
Those talents that were once my pride,

I find it requisite to hide;
For what in man is most respected,
In women's form shall be rejected.
Thus have I prov'd to demonstration,
The fallacy of your oration
(You need not let the fellows know it,
They'll praise the wit, but damn the poet)
This point illustrated my friend,
Brings my long story to its end:
When you have read it o'er at leisure,
Keep it - or burn it - at your pleasure.

Appendix F:

Clara Reeve, The Progress of Romance through times, countries and Manners, with Remarks on the Good and Bad Effects of it on them Respectively in a Course of Evening Conversations, 2 vols. Colchester: W. Keymer, 1785. 102-104.

[N.B: This list is reproduced exactly as it appears in Reeve's book.]

Books for Children

A Little Spelling Book for Children.

J. Newberry's Books for Children.

Marshal's Books for Children.

Mrs Barbauld's Lessons For Children.

An Easy Introduction to The Knowledge of Nature, and The Study of the Scriptures, by Mrs Trimmer.

Sacred History selected from the Scriptures, by Mrs Trimmer.

Reading Made Easy - the best edition.

Fenning's Spelling Book.

Dodsley's Fables, ancient and modern.

Lessing's Fables, - translated from the German.

Gay's Fables.

Cotton's Visions.

Female Academy, or History of Mrs Teachum.

Oeconomy of Human Life.

Madame de Lambert's Advice to a Son and Daughter.

Magazin des Enfants, - translated.

Madame Bonne translated.

Geography for Children.

History of England, - Question and Answer.

Roman History, ditto.

Grecian History, - ditto.

Books for Young Ladies

A Father's Instructions, by Doctor Percival.

A Father's Legacy, by Doctor Gregory.

Mrs Talbot's Meditations for Every Day of the Week.

Mrs Rowe's Letters, Moral and Entertaining.

Mrs Chapone's Works.

Mrs H. More's Sacred Drama's and Search after Happiness.

Moore's Fables for the Female Sex.

Galateo, or the Art of Politeness.

The Lady's Preceptor.

The Geographical Grammar.

Lowth's English Grammar.

The Spectator.

The Guardian.

The Adventurer.

Rambler.

The Connoisseur.

Nature Displayed.

Fontenelle's Plurality of Worlds.

Telemachus.

Travels of Cyrus.

Theatre of Education, by Madame de Genlis

Tales of the Castle, by the same.

Richardson's Works.

Fordyce's Sermons to Young Women.

Mason on Self-Knowledge.

The Speaker, by Doctor Enfield.

Appendix G:

From Catharine Cappe, "Introduction" to Memoir of the Life of the Late Mrs Catharine Cappe, 2nd ed., London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1823. 2-4.

It is not necessary in order to be useful in this way, that the writer should have filled any very high or conspicuous station, that he should have risen to eminence in the walks of literature or science, much less that he should have been the accomplished statesman, the profound politician or the successful warrior: it is not even necessary that he should have been distinguished for extra-ordinary talents, or admired for extra-ordinary accomplishments. In the contrary it is rather desirable, if his Memoir is to be of extensive use, that he should have assimilated more nearly to the general mass of human characters: have been such as the ordinary beholder can see without envy; whose mental and moral progress he can easily trace in those common occurrences continually taking place in human life, through which, in some form or other, he himself may expect to pass; and of whose various defects and attainments he may therefore avail himself, as of so many beacons in the great ocean of life, whether to avoid the one, or to make for the other, so as happily to steer his own course in safety to the land of everlasting uprightness.

Reflections such as these, and not, as she firmly believes, any vain expectation of an imaginary life in the fleeting breath of those who succeed her, have induced the writer of these Memoirs to take up her pen; and happy would she esteem herself, should any younger person of the rising generation, by careful perusal of her simple narrative, be firmly convinced that those trials and privations, which necessarily arise out of their various circumstances, and are therefore the deed of Providence, may be made, even in this life, highly subservient to their happiness and comfort; and on the contrary, that the very attainment of those objects which are usually most eagerly pursued, such as general admiration, a perpetual round of amusements, or even the acquirement of what is usually called a good establishment in marriage, issue not infrequently in the ruin of their peace, their virtue and their Christian hope.

But she has yet another end in view. It is her wish to state, as accurately as can be recollected, what passed in her own mind, upon particular occasions, during the period of infancy and childhood; being persuaded that if others would do the same, parents would eventually be furnished with more certain principles for the management of the infant mind, or at least, that they would endeavour to be more guarded in the government of their own temper, and more watchful to prevent the occurrence of erroneous sentiments in common conversation; which, being incidental, are wont to have greater influence than any moral lessons, however excellent, which are purposely taught.

It is likewise her intention, in order the more effectually to answer the objects principally in view, to give an outline, as the narrative proceeds, of the history of those persons with whom she may not have been particularly connected; not indeed of their birth, parentage, and education, but merely of those leading features in their temper or situation, which appear to have fixed their character, and fixed their destiny. The real names of a few only will be given, but the reader may be assured that they are all portraits taken from the life; and therefore, that as far as their history can be of any use, it may equally be depended upon.

Bibliography

i) Primary Material:

- a) Books published before 1900.
(this list also includes twentieth-century reprints)
- b) Articles in Periodicals pre-1800.

ii) Secondary Texts

- a) Books published after 1900.
(this list also includes some secondary texts published between 1800 and 1900)
- b) Articles in Books published after 1900.
- c) Articles in Journals published after 1900.
- d) Unpublished Papers
- e) Theses
- f) Dictionaries

i) Primary Material

- a) Books published before 1900
(including twentieth-century reprints)

John Aikin. The Calendar of Nature Designed for the Instruction and Entertainment of Young Persons. Warrington: W. Eyres, 1784.

John Aikin and Anna Laetitia Barbauld. Evenings at Home: or, the Juvenile Budget Opened, Consisting of a Variety of Miscellaneous Pieces for the Instruction and Amusement of Young Persons. 6 vols.. London: J. Johnson, 1792-1796.

Lucy Aikin. Poetry for Children Consisting of Short Pieces to be Committed to Memory. 2nd ed.. London: R. Phillips, 1803.

Lucy Aikin, The Works of Anna Laetitia Barbauld with a Memoir by Lucy Aikin. Boston: David Reed, 1826.

William Alexander. History of Women from the Earliest Antiquity to the Present Time: Giving Some Account of Almost Every Interesting Particular Concerning that Sex, Among all Nations Ancient and Modern (1779). 2 vols. 3rd ed.. Introduced by Jane Rendall. Bristol: reprint Thommes Press, 1994.

Madame de Aulnoy. Les Contes des fées: A Collection of Novels and Tales of the Fairies (1699). 3 vols.. 2nd ed.. London, J. Brotherton and W. Meadows, 1728.

Jane Austen. Emma: A Novel. 3 vols.. London: T. Egerton, 1816.

Jane Austen. Emma. Edited and with an introduction by David Lodge. London: Open University Press, 1971.

Jane Austen. Emma. London: Penguin, 1985.

Jane Austen. Mansfield Park: A Novel. 3 vols.. London: T. Egerton, 1814

Jane Austen. Pride and Prejudice: A Novel. 3 vols.. London: T. Egerton, 1813.

Jane Austen. Sense and Sensibility: A Novel. 3 vols.. London: T. Egerton, 1811.

Joanna Baillie. Plays on the Passions: A Series of Plays in which it is Attempted to Delineate the Stronger Passions of the Mind - Each Passion Being the Subject of a Tragedy or Comedy. 3 vols.. London: T. Cadell and W. Davis, 1798.

Clara Lucas Balfour. A Sketch of Mrs Trimmer. London: W. and F. G. Cash, 1852.

Anna Barbauld. The British Novelists: with an Essay and Prefaces Biographical and Critical. 50 vols.. London: F.C. and J. Rivington, 1810.

Anna Barbauld. The Female Speaker: or, Miscellaneous Pieces in Prose and Verse, Selected from the Best Writers and Adapted to the Use of Young Women. London: J. Johnson, 1811.

Anna Barbauld. Hymns in Prose for Children. London: J. Johnson, 1781.

Anna Barbauld. Lessons for Children in Four Parts. Part I for Children from Three to Five Years Old. London: J. Johnson, 1808.

John Barclay. Argenis: The Adventures of Polyarchus and Argenis. Paris: N. Buon, 1621.

Dr James Beattie. "Essay on Fable and Romance," in Dissertations Moral and Critical. London: T. Cadell and W. Creech, 1783.

Madame Elie de Beaumont. The History of a Young Lady of Distinction: In a Series of Letters, 2 vols.. London: F. Noble and J. Noble, 1754.

Madame Jeanne Marie le Prince de Beaumont. L'Éducation complète ou abrégé de l'histoire universelle mêlée de géographie et de chronologie. 4 tom. Paris: Billois, 1803.

Madame Jeanne Marie le Prince de Beaumont. Le Magasin des enfans. London: J. Haberkorn, 1756.

Madame Jeanne Marie le Prince de Beaumont. La Nouvelle Clarice: histoire veritable.

London: J. Nourse, 1767.

Thomas Belsham. Elements of the Philosophy of the Mind and of Moral Philosophy to which is Prefixed a Compendium of Logic. London: J. Johnson, 1801.

Thomas Belsham. Memoirs of the Late Thomas Belsham Including a Brief Notice of his Published Works and Copious Extracts from his Diary together with Letters to and from his Friends and Correspondents. Edited by John Williams. London: n.p., 1833.

Thomas Belsham. Memoirs of the late Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, M.A. Including a Brief Analysis of his Works Together with Anecdotes and Letters of Eminent Persons, his Friends and Correspondents. London: J. Johnson, 1812.

Elizabeth Benger. Memoirs of the Late Mrs Elizabeth Hamilton, with a Selection from her Correspondence and Other Unpublished Writings. 2nd ed.. London: Longman, Hall, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1819.

Hugh Blair. Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres. Dublin: Messrs. Whittlestone, Collier and others, 1783.

The Countess of Blessington. The Governess. 2 vols.. London: Longman, Orme, Brown, Green and Longman, 1839.

Anna Laetitia Le Breton. Memoirs of Mrs Barbauld Including Letters and Notices of her Family and Friends. London: n.p., 1874.

Anne Brontë. Agnes Grey (1847). London: Harmondsworth, 1987.

Charlotte Brontë. Jane Eyre: An Autobiography. 3 vols.. London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1847.

Mary Brunton. Discipline: A Novel. 3 vols.. London: n.p., 1815.

Mary Brunton. Discipline. With a foreword by Dale Spender. London: Pandora Press, 1986.

Mary Brunton. Self-Control: A Novel. 3 vols.. 2nd ed.. London: n.p., 1811.

Margaret Bryan. A Comprehensive Astronomical and Geographical Class Book for the Use of Schools and Private Families. London: Baldwin, Cradock and Joy, 1815.

Margaret Bryan. Lectures on Natural Philosophy with an Appendix Containing Astronomical and Geographical Problems. London: George Kearsley and James Carpenter, 1806.

Margaret Bryan. Natural History: A Compendious System of Astronomy. London: n.p., 1797.

Georges Louis Le Clerc, Count de Buffon. Histoire Naturelle, Générale et Particulière, avec la Description du Cabinet du Roi. 44 tom.. Paris: De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1749-

1767.

Fanny Burney. Camilla: or, a Picture of Youth. 5 vols.. London: T. Payne, T. Cadell Junior and W. Davis, 1796.

Fanny Burney. Camilla: or, A Picture of Youth. Edited by E. A. Bloom and L. D. Bloom. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983.

Fanny Burney. Cecilia: or, Memoirs of an Heiress. 5 vols. Dublin: Price, 1774.

Fanny Burney. Evelina: or, a Young Lady's Entrance into the World. 3 vols.. London: T. Lowndes, 1778.

Fanny Burney. The Wanderer: or, Female Difficulties. London: Longman and Co., 1814.

Catharine Cappe. Account of Two Charity Schools for the Education of Girls and of a Female Friendly Society in York Interspersed with Reflections on Charity Schools and Friendly Societies in General: Local Examples Except for her Thoughts on the Destructive Practice of Binding Poor Girls for a Long Term of Years Apprentice for Their Labours. York: William Blanchard, 1800.

Catharine Cappe, ed.. Charlotte Richardson: Poems on Several Different Occasions. York: T. Wilson and R. Spence, 1806.

Catharine Cappe. A Connected History of the Public Life and Divine Mission of Jesus Christ, as Recorded in the Four Evangelists, with Notes Selected from the Shorthand Papers of the Late Reverend Newcombe Cappe: To Which are Added Reflections Arising From the Several Subjects of Each Section. York: T. Wilson and Sons, 1809.

Catharine Cappe. Memoir of the Life of the Late Mrs Catharine Cappe (1822). 2nd ed.. London: Longman, Hall, Hurst, Rees and Orme, 1823.

Catharine Cappe. Observations on Charity Schools, Female Friendly Societies and Other Subjects Connected with the Views of the Ladies' Committee. York: William Blanchard, 1805.

Catharine Cappe, ed.. Poems on Several Different Occasions by Charlotte Richardson to Which is Prefixed Some Account of the Author Together with Reasons Which Have Led to Their Publication by the editor Catharine Cappe. Printed by Subscription for the Benefit of the Author. York: T. Wilson and R. Spence, 1806.

Catharine Cappe. Thoughts on Various Charitable and Other Important Institutions and on the Best Mode of Conducting them to which is Subjoined an Address to the Females of the Rising Generation: Dedicated by Permission to William Wilberforce Esq.. York: Thomas Wilson and Sons, 1812.

The Rev. Newcombe Cappe. Discourses Chiefly on Devotional Subjects: to which are Prefixed Memoirs of his Life by Catharine Cappe with an Appendix Containing a Sermon Preached at the Interment of the Author by the Rev. William Wood and a

Sermon on the Occasion of the Death of Robert Cappe, M. D. with Memoirs of his Life by the Rev. C. Wellbeloved. York: T. Wilson and R. Spence, 1805.

Thomas Carlyle. Sartor Resartus (1833-1834 in Fraser's Magazine). Edited by C. F. Harrold. New York: Odyssey Press, 1937.

Lord Chesterfield. Letters Written by the Right Honourable Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, to his Son, Philip Stanhope, Esq. Late Envoy Extraordinary at the Court of Dresden Together with Several Other Pieces on Various Subjects Published by Mrs Eugenie Stanhope from the Originals now in her Possession. 2 vols.. Dublin: G. Faulkner, 1774.

Hester Mulso Chapone. Letters on the Improvement of the Mind: Addressed to a Young Lady. 2 vols.. London: J. Walter, 1773.

Charlotte Charke. A Narrative of the Life of Mrs Charlotte Charke: Written by Herself (1755). Gainseville, Fla.: Scholar Facsimile and Reprints, 1969.

Mrs Mary Cockle. Important Studies for the Female Sex in Reference to Modern Manners Addressed to a Young Lady of Distinction. London: C. Chapple, 1809.

Erasmus Darwin. The Botanic Garden: A Poem in Two Parts. Lichfield: J Jackson, 1789.

Erasmus Darwin. Plan for the Content of Female Education in Boarding Schools. London: J. Johnson, 1797.

Thomas Day. Sandford and Merton: A Work Intended for the Use of Children. London: J. Stockdale, 1783-1789.

Daniel Defoe. Moll Flanders (1722). London: The New English Library Limited, 1964.

Frances Anne Edgeworth. A Memoir of Maria Edgeworth with Selections from her Letters. 3 vols.. London: privately printed, 1867.

Maria Edgeworth. Belinda. 3 vols.. London: J. Johnson, 1801.

Maria and Richard Lovell Edgeworth. Early Lessons (1809). 7th ed.. London: George Routledge and Sons, 1909.

Maria Edgeworth. Helen, A Tale. 3 vols.. London: n.p., 1834.

Maria Edgeworth. Leonore. London: n.p., 1806.

Maria Edgeworth. Moral Tales for Young People. 5 vols.. London: J. Johnson, 1801.

Maria Edgeworth. The Parents' Assistant: or, Stories for Children (1795). Cork: George Cherry, 1800.

Maria Edgeworth. Letters for Literary Ladies to which is Added an Essay on the Noble

- Science of Self-Justification. London: J. Johnson, 1795.
- Maria Edgeworth. Letters for Literary Ladies with an Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification. Introduced by Claire Connolly. London: J. M. Dent, 1993.
- Maria and Richard Lovell Edgeworth. Practical Education. London: J. Johnson, 1798.
- Maria and Richard Lovell Edgeworth. Practical Education. (1798) London: Garland Publishing Incorporated, 1974.
- Dr William Enfield. The Speaker. London: J. Johnson, 1774.
- Madame d'Épinay. Les Conversations d'Emilie. Paris et Liège: Plombeux, 1784.
- Abbé Salignac de la Mothe Fénelon. Éducation des Filles. Paris: n.p., 1687.
- Lady Eleanor Fenn. The Child's Grammar: Designed to Instruct Ladies who may not have Attended to the Subject Themselves to Instruct their Children. Dublin: B. Dugdale, 1799.
- Lady Eleanor Fenn. The Fairy Spectator: or, the Invisible Monitor By Mrs Teachwell and her Family (1788). London: John Marshall, 1790.
- Lady Eleanor Fenn. Juvenile Correspondence: or, Letters Suited to Children: From Four to Above Ten Years of Age, in Three Sets. 2nd ed.. London: John Marshall, 1785.
- Lady Eleanor Fenn. The Juvenile Tatler by a Society of Young Ladies Under the Tuition of Mrs Teachwell. London: J. Marshall and Co., 1789.
- Eliza Fenwick, ed.. The Autobiography of Mrs Fletcher with Letters and Other Family Memorials. Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1875.
- Sarah Fielding. The Adventures of David Simple: Containing an Account of his Travels through the Cities of London and Westminster in Search of a Real Friend. 2 vols.. London: A. Millar, 1744.
- Sarah Fielding. The Governess: or, The Little Female Academy: Calculated for the Entertainment and Instruction of Young Ladies in their Education. London: A. Millar, 1749.
- Sarah Fielding. The Governess: or, The Little Female Academy (1749). Introduced and with a bibliography by Jill E. Grey. London: Oxford University Press, 1968.
- Sarah Fielding. The Governess: or, The Little Female Academy (1749). Introduced by Mary Cadogan. London: Pandora, 1987.
- La Fontaine. Fables Choisies. Paris: Denys Théry, 1668.
- La Fontaine. Fables and Tales from La Fontaine to which is Prefix'd the Author's Life. London: A. Bettesworth, C. Hitch and C. Davis, 1734.

Dr James Fordyce. Sermons on Young Women. 2 vols.. London: A. Millar, T. Cadell and others, 1766.

Dr James Fordyce. The Character and Conduct of the Female Sex and the Advantages to be Derived by Young Men from the Society of Virtuous Women. London: T. Cadell, 1766.

John Gay. Fables: Invented for the Use of his Highness Duke of Cumberland. 2nd ed.. London: J. Johnson, 1778.

John Gay. "Preliminary Dissertation Concerning the Fundamental Principle of Virtue and Morality" (1731). In British Moralists: Being Selections From Writers Principally of the Eighteenth Century, ed. L.A. Selby-Bigge. 2 vols.. 2: 267-285. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897.

Madame Stéphanie Félicité Comtesse de Genlis. Adèle et Théodore: ou, lettres sur l'éducation contenant tous les principes relatifs aux trois différens plans d'éducation des princes, des jeunes personnes et des hommes. 3 tom.. Paris: n.p., 1782.

Madame Stéphanie Félicité Comtesse de Genlis. Adelaide and Theodore: or, Letters on Education Containing all the Principles Relative to Three Different Plans of Education. 3 vols.. 3rd ed.. London: C. Bathurst and T. Cadell, 1783.

Madame Stéphanie Félicité Comtesse de Genlis. Leçons d'une gouvernante à ses élèves: ou, fragmens d'un journal, qui a été fait pour l'éducation des enfans de monsieur d'Orléans. 2 tom.. Paris: n.p., 1791.

Madame Stéphanie Félicité Comtesse de Genlis. Lessons of a Governess to her Pupils. 3 vols.. London: G. G. J. and J. Robinson, 1792.

Madame Stéphanie Félicité Comtesse de Genlis. Tales of the Castle: or, Stories of Instruction and Delight. 4 vols.. Dublin: Price and others, 1785.

Madame Stéphanie Félicité Comtesse de Genlis. Théâtre à l'usage des jeunes personnes. 4 tom.. Dublin: Luc White, 1781.

Madame Stéphanie Félicité Comtesse de Genlis. Theatre of Education. London: T. Cadell and P. Elmsly, 1781.

Madame Stéphanie Félicité Comtesse de Genlis. Les Veillées du château: ou, cours de morales à l'usage des enfans. 3 tom.. Paris: n.p., 1784.

Edward Gibbon. Memoirs of my Life (written 1788-1791). Edited by Georges A. Bonnard. London: Nelson, 1968.

Thomas Gisborne. An Enquiry into the Duties of the Female Sex (1797). 8th ed.. London: T. Cadell and W. Davis in the Strand, 1808.

William Godwin. Memoirs of the Author of the Rights of Woman. London: J. Johnson, 1798.

Catharine Macaulay Graham. Letters on Education with Observations on Religious and Metaphysical Subjects. London: n.p., 1790.

Dr John Gregory. A Father's Legacy to his Daughters. London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1774.

Lord Halifax. The Complete Works of George Savile, First Marquess of Halifax, including New Year's Day Gift: or, Advice to a Daughter (1700). London: D. Midwinter, 1719.

Elizabeth Hamilton. The Cottagers of Glenburnie: A Tale for the Farmer's Inglenook. Edinburgh: Manners, Miller and S. Cheyne, 1808.

Elizabeth Hamilton. Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education. (1801). 2nd and 3rd eds.. Bath: R. Cruthwell, 1801; 5th ed.. Bath: R. Cruthwell, 1816; 6th ed.. London: Baldwin and others, 1818.

Elizabeth Hamilton. Letters to the Daughter of a Nobleman on the Formation of Moral and Religious Principle. 2nd ed.. London: T. Cadell and W. Davis, 1806.

Elizabeth Hamilton. Memoirs of Modern Philosophers. 3 vols.. Bath: R. Cruthwell, 1800.

Jonas Hanway. Advice from Farmer Trueman to his Daughter, Mary: in a Series of Discourses, Calculated to Promote the Welfare and True Interest of Servants with Reflexions of No Less Importance to Masters and Mistresses with Regard to Private Happiness and Public Tranquility. London: J. Dodsley and others, 1770.

Elizabeth Harper. An Extract from the Journal of Elizabeth Harper. London: n.p., 1769.

David Hartley. Observations on Man, his Frame, his Duty and his Expectations. (1749), Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1967.

Miss Hatfield. Letters on the Importance of the Female Sex with Observations on Their Manners and Education. London: J. Adlert, 1803.

William Hayley. A Philosophical, Historical and Moral Essay on Old Maids by a Friend to the Sisterhood. 3 vols.. London: T. Cadell, 1785.

Mary Hays. Letters and Essays: Moral and Miscellaneous. 2 vols.. London: T. Knott, 1793.

Mary Hays. The Memoirs of Emma Courtney. 2 vols.. London: G.G. and J. Robinson, 1796.

Elizabeth Helme. Maternal Instructions: or, Family Conversations on Moral and Entertaining Subjects Interspersed with History, Biography and Original Stories. London: M. and S. Brooke for T.N. Longman and O. Lees, 1804.

Rowland Hill. Instructions for Children: or, A Token of Love for the Rising Generation. London: G. Thompson, 1794.

- Richard Holmes, ed.. Mary Wollstonecraft, A Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark and William Godwin, Memoirs of the Author of the Rights of Woman. London: Penguin, 1987.
- Henry Home, Lord Kames. Elements of Criticism (1762). 2 vols.. 6th ed.. Edinburgh: John Bell and William Creech, 1785.
- Henry Home, Lord Kames. Elements of Criticism. Edited and with a new introduction by John Valdimir Price. London: Routledge, Thoemmes Press, 1993.
- Henry Home, Lord Kames. Sketches of the History of Man. Edinburgh: n.p., 1774.
- Henry Home, Lord Kames. Loose Hints upon Education. Edinburgh: n.p., 1781.
- Richard Hurd. Letters on Chivalry and Romance. Dublin: Richard Watts in Skinner Row, 1762.
- Francis Hutcheson. An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections with Illustrations on the Moral Sense (1725) in L.A. Selby-Bigge, British Moralists: Being Selections from Writers Principally of the Eighteenth Century. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897. 1: 431-446.
- Elizabeth Inchbald. Prefaces to The British Theatre: or, a Collection of Plays Acted at the Theatres Royal Printed from the Prompt Books with Biographical and Critical Remarks. 25 vols.. London: Longman and Co., 1806-1809.
- Elizabeth Inchbald. A Simple Story. 4 vols.. London: G.G. and J. Robinson, 1791.
- Maria Jacson. Botanical Dialogues between Hortensia and her Four Children: Designed for the Use of Schools. London: J. Johnson, 1797.
- Maria Jacson. Botanical Lectures. London: n.p., 1804.
- Maria Jacson. Sketches of the Physiology of Vegetable Life. London: John Hatchard, 1811.
- Maria Jacson. The Florist's Manual: or, Hints for the Construction of a Gay Flower Garden. London: n.p., 1816.
- Henry James. The Turn of the Screw. London: W. Heinemann, 1898.
- John Janeway. A Token For Children: Being an Exact Account of the Conversion, Holy and Exemplary Lives and Joyful Deaths of Several Young Children. Boston in New England: John Phillips, 1728.
- Dorothy Kilner. Anecdotes of a Boarding School: or, an Antidote to the Vices of Those Establishments. London: n.p., 1783.
- Dorothy and Mary Kilner. The Village School: A Collection of Entertaining Histories for Children (1783). 2 vols.. London: J. Harris, 1828.

- A Lady. The Twin Sisters: or, the Effects of Education. London: T. Hookham, 1788.
- Mary and Charles Lamb. Mrs Leicester's School and Other Writings in Prose and Verse (1809). London: Macmillan, 1885.
- Charlotte Lennox. Henrietta. 2 vols.. London: A. Millar, 1758.
- Charlotte Lennox. Sophia. London: James Fletcher, 1762.
- Reverend Theophilus Lindsey. Memoirs of the Late Reverend Theophilus Lindsey M.A. including a Brief Analysis of his Works Together with Aecdotes and Letters of Eminent Persons. Also a General View of the Progress of the Unitarian Doctrine in England and America by Thomas Belsham, Minister of the Chapel in Essex Street. London: J. Johnson, 1812.
- John Locke. Aesop's Fables in English and Latin, for the Benefits of those who, not Having a Master, would Learn Either of these Tongues. London: n.p., 1703.
- John Locke. Some Thoughts Concerning Education. 5th ed.. London: n.p., 1705.
- John Locke. An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690). Edited by John W. Yolton. London: J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd, 1965.
- John Locke. Locke's Philosophical Works: The Philosophical Works of John Locke. Edited with a preliminary essay and notes by J. A. St. John. London: G. Bell and Sons Ltd. 1912.
- Dr Lowth. A Short Introduction to English Grammar with Critical Notes. London: n.p., 1762.
- Paul-Henri Mallet. Northern Antiquities: or, a Description of the Manners, Customs, Religion and Laws of the Ancient Danes and other Northern Nations: Including those of our own Saxon Ancestors. Translated by Thomas Percy. London: T. Carnan and Co., 1770.
- Richmal Mangnall. Historical and Miscellaneous Questions. Stockport: J. Clarke, 1798.
- Jane Marcet. Conversations on Chemistry: Intended More Especially for the Female Sex (1805). London: Longman, Hurst, Rees and Orme, 1806.
- Harriet Martineau. Autobiography. London: Smith Elder and Co., 1877.
- Edmund Moore and Henry Brooke. Fables for the Female Sex (1744). 3rd ed.. London: R. Franklin, 1749.
- John Moore. Zeluco: Various Views of Human Nature, Taken from Life and Manners Foreign and Domestic. 2 vols.. London: A. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1789.
- Hannah More. Strictures on Female Education with a View of the Principles and Conduct Prevalent Among Women of Rank and Fortune. 2 vols.. London: T. Cadell Jr.

and W. Davis, 1799.

Hannah More. Cheap Repository Tracts. London: Joseph Marshall, 1795-1798.

Arthur Murphy. The Desert Island: A Dramatic Poem in Three Acts. As it is Acted at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane. London: Paul Vaillant, 1760.

Jerome Murch. Mrs Barbauld and her Contemporaries: Sketches of Some Eminent Literary and Scientific Englishwomen. London: n.p., 1877.

Ann Murry. Mentoria: or, the Young Ladies' Instructor in Familiar Conversations on Moral and Entertaining Subjects Calculated to Improve Young Minds in the Essential as well as the Ornamental Parts of Female Education. Dedicated by permission to the Princess Royal. London: J. Fry, and Co. 1778.

Ann Murry. The Sequel to Mentoria: The Young Ladies' Instructor in Family Conversations in which are Introduced Lectures on Astronomy and Natural Philosophy. London: n.p., 1778.

Grace A. Oliver. Tales, Poems and Essays by Anna Laetitia Barbauld with a Biographical Sketch. Boston: Robert Brothers, 1884.

Jean Baptiste de la Curne de Sainte Palaye. Memoirs of Ancient Chivalry to which are Added the Anecdotes of the Times from the Romance Writers and Historians of those Ages. Edited and with a preface by Susannah Dobson. London: J. Dodsley, 1784.

William Paley. Natural Theology: or, Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity, Collected From the Appearance of Nature. London: R. Faulder, 1802.

Jane Pearson. Sketches of Piety in the life and Religious Experiences of Jane Pearson: Extracted from her own Memorandum. London: n.p., 1817.

Dr Thomas Percival. A Father's Instructions to his Children: Consisting of Tales, Fables and Reflections Designed to Promote the Love of Virtue, A Taste for Knowledge and an Early Acquaintance with the Works of Nature. 2 vols.. London: J. Johnson, 1776.

Charles Perrault. Contes des fées: ou, contes du temps passé de ma mere l'oye: avec des moralités (1695). New York: J. Rivington, 1795.

Charles Perrault, Histories, or Tales of Past Times with Morals translated into English by Guy Miège. London: J. Pote and R. Montagu, 1729.

Laetitia Pilkington. Memoirs of Laetitia Pilkington, 1712-1750: Written by Herself (1748-1754) edited by Iris Barry. London: George Routledge and Sons, 1928.

Mrs Mary Pilkington. Mentorial Talks for the Instruction of Young Ladies just Leaving School and Entering upon the Theatre of Life. London: J. Harris, 1802.

Plutarch. Plutarch's Lives: A Selection of the Lives of Plutarch Abridged: Containing the Most Illustrious Characters of Antiquity for the Use of Schools. Edited by William

- Manor. London: T. Davidson, 1800.
- Alexander Pope. Collected Poems: Pope's Epistles and Satires. Introduced by Ernest Rhys. London: J. M. Dent, 1944.
- Richard Price. Review of the Principal Questions and Difficulties in Morals. London: n.p., 1758.
- Joseph Priestley, ed.. Hartley's Theory of the Human Mind. London: n.p., 1775.
- Joseph Priestley. Autobiography of Joseph Priestley: Memoirs Written by Himself: An Account of Further Discoveries in Air. Edited by Jack Lindsay. London: Adams and Dart, 1970.
- Joseph Priestley. Memoirs of the Rev. Doctor Joseph Priestley to the Year 1795, Written by Himself with a Continuation to the Time of his Decease by his Son, Joseph Priestley and Observations on his Writings by T. Cooper and W. Christie (1805). London: J. Johnson, 1806.
- Mrs Matilda Marian Pullan. Maternal Counsels to a Daughter: Designed to Aid her in the Care of her Health, Improvement of her Mind and Cultivation of her Heart. London: n.p., 1855.
- Clara Reeve, ed.. The Phoenix: or, the History of Polyarchus and Argenis translated from the Latin by a Lady. 4 vols.. London: John Bell, 1772.
- Clara Reeve. The Exiles: or, the Memoirs of the Count de Cronstadt London: T. Hookham, 1788.
- Clara Reeve. Memoirs of Sir Roger de Clarendon, The Natural Son of Edward, Prince of Wales. London: T. Hookham and J. Carpenter, 1793.
- Clara Reeve. The Old English Baron: or, The Champion of Virtue: A Gothic Story. Colchester: W. Keymer, 1777.
- Clara Reeve. Original Poems on Several Occasions. 2nd ed.. London: T. and J. W. Pasham in Blackfriars for W. Harris, St Paul's Churchyard, 1769.
- Clara Reeve. The Two Mentors: A Modern Story. London: Charles Dilly, 1783.
- Clara Reeve. The School for Widows. London: T. Hookham and J. Carpenter, 1791.
- Clara Reeve. Plans for Education with Remarks on the System of Other Writers: in a Series of Letters between Mrs Darnford and her Friends. London: T. Hookham and J. Carpenter, 1792.
- Clara Reeve. The Progress of Romance through Times, Countries and Manners: with Remarks on the Good and Bad Effects of it, on them Respectively, in the Course of Evening Conversations. 2 vols.. Colchester: W. Keymer, 1785.

- Clara Reeve, The Progress of Romance. Introduced by Suzi Halimi. London: British Library Facsimile, 1980.
- Clara Reeve. The Progress of Romance and the History of Charoba, Queen of Aegypt. Reproduced from the Colchester edition of 1785, with a bibliographical note by Esther M. McGill. New York: The Facsimile Text Society, 1930.
- Samuel Richardson. Pamela: or, Virtue Rewarded: In a Series of Familiar Letters from a Beautiful Young Damsel to her Parents. 4 vols.. London: n.p., 1741.
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Émile: ou, de l'éducation. 4 tom.. Amsterdam: n.p., 1762.
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Emilius and Sophia: or, a New System of Education. London: R. Griffiths and others, 1762.
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Emile. Translated by Barbara Foxley and with an introduction by P. D. Jimack. London: J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1992.
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Julie: ou, la nouvelle Héloïse (1761). Translated into English as Eloisa: or, a Series of Original Letters Collected and Published by J.J. Rousseau. 4 vols.. London: R. Griffiths, T. Becket and P.A. de Handt, 1761.
- Sir Walter Scott. Lives of the Novelists. Paris: A. and W. Galigani, 1825.
- Madelène Scudéry. Clelia: An Excellent New Romance. Translated by J. Davies. London: n.p., 1656-1661
- Charlotte Smith. Conversations Introducing Poetry: Chiefly on Subjects of Natural History for the Use of Children and Young People (1804). London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1863.
- Charlotte Smith. Elegiac Sonnets and Other Poems. 9th ed.. London: T. Cadell Jun. and W. Davies in the Strand, 1800.
- Charlotte Smith. Emmeline; The Orphan of the Castle. 4 vols.. London: T. Cadell, 1788.
- Charlotte Smith. Minor Morals: Interspersed with Sketches of Natural History, Historical Anecdotes and Original Stories Intended for the Use of Young Persons. London: Sampson Low, 1798.
- Charlotte Smith, Rambles Farther: A Continuation of Rural Walks in Dialogue Intended for the Use of Young Persons. London: T. Cadell Jr. and W. Davis, 1796.
- Charlotte Smith. Rural Walks in Dialogues Intended for the Use of Young Persons. Dublin: P. Wogan, 1795.
- Hannah Snell. The Female Soldier... who took upon herself the name of James Gray: and, being Deserted by her Husband, put on Men's Apparel and Travelled to Coventry in Quest of Him, where she Enlisted in Colonel Guise's Regiment of Foot. London: R. Walker, 1750.

- Dugald Stewart. The Collected Works of Dugald Stewart. 10 vols.. Edited by Sir William Hamilton. Edinburgh: Constable, 1854-60.
- Dugald Stewart. Outlines of Moral Philosophy for the Use of Students in the University of Edinburgh. London: William Creech and T. Cadell, 1743.
- Jonathan Swift. Directions to Servants and Other Miscellaneous Pieces, 1733-1742 (1745). Edited by Herbert Davis. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1964.
- Ann and Jane Taylor. Correspondence Between a Mother and Her Daughter at School (1817). 4th ed.. London: Taylor and Hessey, 1817.
- Anne Isabelle Thackeray. A Book of Sibyls: Mrs Barbauld, Miss Edgeworth, Miss Opie, Miss Austen. London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1883.
- William Makepeace Thackeray. Vanity Fair: A Novel Without a Hero (1848). New York: Harper Bros, 1848.
- Hester Thrale. Thraliana: The Diary of Mrs Hester Lynch Thrale (later Mrs Piozzi), 1776-1809. 2 vols. 2nd ed.. Edited by Katharine C. Balderston. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1942.
- Janet Todd and Marilyn Butler, eds.. The Works of Mary Wollstonecraft. 7 Vols.. London: William Pickering, 1989.
- Miss Trimmer. A Book of Questions Adapted to Mrs Trimmer's History of England. London: J. Harris, 1817.
- Mrs Trimmer. A Comment on Dr Watts's Divine Songs. London: J. Buckland and others, 1798.
- Mrs Trimmer. The History of The Robins: or, Fabulous Histories Designed for the Instruction of Children Respecting Their Treatment of Animals. London: T. Longman, G.G.J. and J. Robinson, 1788.
- Mrs Trimmer. The Guardian of Education. London: J. Hatchard, 1812.
- Mrs Trimmer. Scripture Lessons Designed to Accompany a Series of Prints from the Old Testament. London: J. Marshall, 1797.
- Mrs Trimmer. Some Account of the Life and Writings of Mrs Trimmer with Original Letters, Meditations and Prayers Selected from her Journal. 2 vols.. London: n.p., 1814.
- Mrs Trimmer. The Teacher's Assistant, Consisting of Lectures in Catechetical Form Being Part of a Plan of Appropriate Instruction for the Children of the Poor (n.d.). London: J.G.F. Rivington, 1836.
- F. M. A. Voltaire. A Prophecy. Geneva: n.p., 1761.
- F. M. A. Voltaire. Prophétie. Genève: n.p., 1761.

- Gilbert Wakefield. Memoirs of the Life of Gilbert Wakefield B.A., Written by Himself (1792). London: J. Johnson, 1804.
- Priscilla Wakefield. Domestic Recreation: or Dialogues Illustrative of Natural and Scientific Subjects. London: Darton and Harvey, 1805.
- Priscilla Wakefield. Instinct Displayed, or Facts Exemplifying The Sagacity of Various Species of Animals. London: Harvey and Darton, 1811.
- Priscilla Wakefield. An Introduction to Botany: in a Series of Familiar Lessons. London: n.p., 1796.
- Priscilla Wakefield. An Introduction to the Natural History and Classification of Insects in a Series of Letters. London: n.p. 1816.
- Priscilla Wakefield. Mental Improvement or the Beauties and Wonders of Nature and Art Conveyed in a Series of Instructive Conversations. 2 vols.. London: n.p., 1794.
- Priscilla Wakefield. Reflections on the Present Condition of the Female Sex: with Suggestions for its Improvement. London: J. Johnson, 1798.
- Thomas Warton. History of English Poetry from the Close of the Eleventh to the Commencement of the Eighteenth Century (1774-1781). 2nd ed.. London: J. Dodsley and others, 1775.
- Dr. Isaac Watts. Divine Songs: Attempted in Easy Language for the Use of Children to which are Added the Principles of the Christian Religion, Expressed in Plain and Easy Verse. 2nd ed.. London: M. Lawrence, 1716.
- Ellen Weeton. The Journals of Ellen Weeton, 1807-1825. Edited by Edward Hall, with a new introduction by J.J. Bagley. 2 vols.. Newton Abbot: David and Charles Reprints, 1969.
- Ellen Weeton. Miss Weeton: Journal of a Governess. Edited by Edward Hall. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936.
- John Wesley, ed.. An Extract from Miss Mary Gilbert's Journal. Chester: J. Harrie, 1768.
- Elizabeth West. Memoirs or Spiritual Exercises of Elizabeth West: Written by her own Hand. Glasgow: John Bryce, 1766.
- Jane West (Mrs Prudentia Homespun). The Advantages of Education: or, The History of Maria Williams. London: n.p., 1793.
- John Williams. Memoirs of the late Reverend Thomas Belsham Including a Brief Notice of His Published Writing and Copious extracts from his Diary Together with Letters to and from his Correspondents. London: n.p., 1833.
- Mary Wollstonecraft (Mr Cresswick). The Female Reader. London: J. Johnson, 1789.

Mary Wollstonecraft. The Female Reader (1789). Edited by Moira Ferguson. New York: Scholar's Facsimile and Reprints, Delnor, 1980.

Mary Wollstonecraft. Letters on the Management of Infants. (Begun 1797) First published in Posthumous Works of the Author of A Vindication of the Rights of Woman. Edited by William Godwin. 4 vols.. London: J. Johnson, 1798 4:55-7.

Mary Wollstonecraft. Mary Wollstonecraft, A Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark; and William Godwin, Memoirs of the Author of the Rights of Woman. Edited by Richard Holmes London: Penguin, 1987.

Mary Wollstonecraft. Original Stories from Real Life with Conversations Calculated to Regulate the Affections (1788). 2nd ed.. London: J. Johnson, 1791.

Mary Wollstonecraft. Original Stories from Real Life. Introduced by E. V. Lucas. London: Henry Frowde, 1906.

Mary Wollstonecraft. Thoughts on the Education of Daughters with Reflections on Female Conduct in the More Important Duties of Life (1787). Clifton: Augustus M. Kelley, 1972.

Mary Wollstonecraft. A Vindication of the Rights of Woman. London: J. Johnson, 1792.

Mary Wollstonecraft. A Vindication of the Rights of Woman. Edited and with an introduction by Miriam Kramnick. London: Penguin, 1975.

Mary Wollstonecraft The Wrongs of Woman: or, Maria. London: J. Johnson, G. G. & J. Robinson, 1798.

J. Wright. Spiritual Songs for Children: or, Poems on Several Subjects and Occasions. London: Joseph Marshall, 1727.

b) Articles in Periodicals, pre-1800.

The Analytical Review. 23 (1796): 524-527

The Augustan Review. 2 (May 1816): 484 486.

The British Critic. 6 (July 1816): 96-98.

The British Critic. 22 (Aug. 1803): 195.

The British Lady's Magazine. 4 (Sept 1816): 96-98.

The Champion. 31 (March 1816): 102 103.

The Critical Review. 19 (1797): 170 174.

The Ladies Monthly Museum. 16 (March 1806): 202 203

The Literary Panorama. 6 (June 1817): 418 419

The Monthly Magazine. Begun 1872.

The Monthly Repository 18 (1823): 163-167 and 238 241

The Monthly Review. 39 Nov. 1802): 334 335

The Monthly Review. 49 Jan 1806) 79 82

The Monthly Review. 80 July 1816): 370

The Monthly Visitor. 14 Sept 1801) 98 99

The Quarterly Review 14 Oct 1815 188 201

ii) Secondary Texts

a) Books published after 1900

Margaret Alic. Hypatia's Heritage: A History of Women in Science from Antiquity to the Late Eighteenth Century. London: The Women's Press, 1986.

Janet Gurkin Altman. Epistolarity: Approaches to a Form. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1982.

A. Ashfield. Women Romantic Poets: An Anthology, 1770-1838. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995.

Philippe Ariès. Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life. New York: Random House, 1965.

Nancy Armstrong. Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Nancy Armstrong and Lennard Tennenhouse. The Ideology of Conduct: Essays in Literature and the History of Sexuality. London: Methuen 1987.

S.H. Atkins. A Select Checklist of Printed Material on Education Published in England to 1800. Hull: University of Hull Institute of Education, 1970.

W.H. Atkins. English Literary Criticism: Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries. London: Methuen, 1968.

Gillian Avery and Angela Bull. Nineteenth-Century Children: Heroes and Heroines in Children's Stories, 1780-1900. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1965.

James Axtell, ed.. The Educational Writings of John Locke: A Critical Edition with Introduction and Notes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968.

G.J. Barker-Benfield. The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain. London: University of Chicago Press, 1992.

Florence V. Barry. A Century of Children's Books. London: Methuen, 1922.

Christine Battersby. Gender and Genius: Towards a Feminist Aesthetics. London: The Women's Press, 1989.

D.W. Bebbington. Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1780s. London: Unwin Ltd., 1979.

Gillian Beer. The Romance. London: Methuen, 1970.

- Catherine Belsey and Jane Moore, eds.. The Feminist Reader: Essays in Gender and the Politics of Literary Criticism. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989.
- Marina Benjamin, ed.. Science and Sensibility: Gender and Scientific Enquiry. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991.
- Shari Benstock, ed.. The Private Self: Theory and Practice of Women's Autobiographical Writings. London: Routledge, 1988.
- Jane Bingham and Grayce Scholt. Fifteen Centuries of Children's Literature: An Annotated Chronology of British and American Works in Historical Context. London: Greenwood Press, 1980.
- Frank Gees Black. The Epistolary Novel in the Late Eighteenth Century: A Descriptive and Bibliographical Study. Oregon: Oregon University Press, 1940.
- Harold Bloom, ed.. Romanticism and Consciousness. New York: Norton, 1970.
- A.H. Body. John Wesley and Education. London: The Epworth Press, 1936.
- C.G. Bolam, Jeremy Goring, H. L. Short and Roger Thomas, eds.. The English Presbyterians: From Elizabethan Puritanism to Modern Unitarianism. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1968.
- James E. Bradley. Religion, Revolution and English Radicalism: Nonconformity in Eighteenth-Century Politics and Society. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- George C. Brauer. The Education of a Gentleman: Theories of Gentlemanly Education in England, 1660-1775. New York: Bookman Associates, 1959.
- Renate Bridenthal, Claudia Koonz, and Susan Stuard, eds.. Becoming Visible: Women in European History. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987.
- J. R. Brink, ed.. Female Scholars: A Tradition of Learned Women Before 1800. Montreal: Eden Press Women's Publications, 1980.
- Bella Brodzki and Celeste Schenck, eds.. Life/Lines: Theorizing Women's Autobiography. London: Cornell University Press, 1988.
- Elizabeth Bergen Brophy. Women's Lives and the Eighteenth-Century English Novel. Tampa: University of South Florida Press, 1991.
- Alice Browne. The Eighteenth-Century Feminist Mind. Brighton: Harvester University Press, 1987.
- J. D. Browning, ed.. Education in the Eighteenth Century. Introduced by Annette Bridgman. New York: Garland Publishing Incorporated, 1979.
- Julia Prewitt Brown. Jane Austen's Novels and Social Change. London: Harvard University Press, 1979.

- Jerome Hamilton Buckley. The Turning Key: Autobiography and the Subjective Impulse Since 1800. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984.
- Joan N. Burstyn. Victorian Education and The Ideal of Womanhood. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1984.
- Donald Bush. Jane Austen. Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press, 1975.
- Marilyn Butler. Jane Austen and the War of Ideas. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975.
- Marilyn Butler. Maria Edgeworth: A Literary Biography. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972.
- Marilyn Butler. Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries: English Literature and its Background, 1760-1830. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981.
- J. Estlin Carpenter. Unitarianism: An Historic Survey. London: The Lindsey Press, 1922.
- Lord David Cecil. A Portrait of Jane Austen. London: Constable, 1978.
- Anand C. Chitnis. The Scottish Enlightenment and Early Victorian English Society. London: Croom Helm, 1986.
- John Christie and Sally Shuttleworth, eds.. Nature Transfigured: Science and Literature, 1700-1980. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989.
- Patricia Clarke. The Governesses: Letters from the Colonies, 1862-1882. London: Hutchinson, 1985.
- Martha Pike Conant. The Oriental Tale in England in the Eighteenth Century. New York: Columbia University Press, 1908.
- Isabel Constance Clarke. Maria Edgeworth, her Family and Friends. London: Hutchinson, 1950.
- Vineta Colby. Yesterday's Woman: Domestic Realism in the English Novel. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974.
- Linda Colley. Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837. London: Yale University Press, 1992.
- Stephen Copley and John Whale, eds.. Beyond Romanticism: New Approaches to Texts and Contexts, 1780-1832. London: Routledge, 1992.
- Peter Coveney. The Image of Childhood or Poor Monkey: The Child in Literature. Bungay, Suffolk: Richard Clay and Co. Ltd., 1957.
- Stuart Curran, ed.. The Poems of Charlotte Smith. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Joanne Cutting-Gray. Woman as 'Nobody' and the Novels of Fanny Burney. Florida:

Florida University Press, 1992.

Martin A. Danahay. A Community of One: Masculine Autobiography and Autonomy in Nineteenth-Century Britain. New York: State University Press, 1993.

Frederick Joseph Harvey Darton. Children's Books in England: Five Centuries of Children's Books. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932.

Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall. Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850. London: Hutchinson Education, 1987.

Gwenn Davis and Beverly A. Joyce, eds.. Personal Writings by Women to 1800: A Bibliography of American and British Writers. London: Mansell, 1989.

Natalie Zemon Davis and Arlette Farge, eds.. A History of Women in the West. Vol 3, Renaissance and Enlightenment Paradoxes. London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1993.

Lennard Davis. Factual Fictions: The Origins of the English Novel. New York: Columbia University Press, 1983.

Sara Delamont and Lorna Duffin, eds.. The Nineteenth-Century Woman: Her Cultural and Physical World. London: Croom Helm, 1978.

Margaret Anne Doody. Frances Burney: The Life in the Works. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

David Douglas Devlin. Jane Austen and Education. London: Macmillan, 1975.

A.E. Dobbs. Education and Social Movements. London: Longman, 1919.

C.H. Dobinson. Jean-Jacques Rousseau. London: Methuen, 1969.

Heather Dubrow. Genre. London: Methuen, 1982.

John Dwyer. Virtuous Discourse: Sensibility and Community in Late Eighteenth-Century Scotland. Edinburgh: John Donald Publications, 1987.

Carol Dyhouse. Girls Growing Up in Late Victorian and Edwardian England. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981.

Mary Eagleton. Feminist Literary Theory: An Introduction. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986.

Terry Eagleton. Literary Theory: an Introduction. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983.

Peter Earle. The Making of the English Middle Class: Business, Society and Family Life in London, 1660-1730. London: Methuen, 1989.

Julia L. Epstein. The Iron Pen: Frances Burney and the Politics of Women's Writing.

- Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1989.
- Margaret Ezell. Writing Women's Literary History. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993.
- Mary A. Favret. Romantic Correspondence: Women, Politics and the Fiction of Letters. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Moira Ferguson, ed.. First Feminists: British Women Writers, 1578-1799. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989.
- E. M. Field. The Child and his Book: Some Account of the History and Progress of Children's Literature in England. London: Wells, Gardner, Darton and Co., 1891.
- Eva Figes. Sex and Subterfuge: Women Writers to 1850. London, Macmillan, 1982.
- Avrom Fleishman. Figures of Autobiography: The Language of Self-Writing in Victorian and Modern England. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983.
- Kate Flint. The Woman Reader, 1837-1914. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.
- Alastair Fowler. Kinds of Literature: An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932.
- Susan Fraiman. Unbecoming Women: British Women Writers and the Novel of Development. New York: Columbia University Press, 1993.
- P. Fritz and R. Morton, eds.. Woman in the Eighteenth Century and other Essays, Toronto: Sarasota Press, 1976.
- Regenia Gagnier. Subjectivities: A History of Self-Representation in Britain 1832-1920. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar. The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979.
- Sean Gill. Women and the Church of England: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present. London: S.P.C.K., 1994.
- Charles Coulston Gillespie. Genesis and Geology: The Impact of Scientific Discoveries Upon Religious Beliefs in the Decades Before Darwin. New York: Harper Row, 1959.
- John Landall Gillis. Youth and History: Tradition and Change in European Age Relations 1770 - Present. New York: Orlando Academic Press, 1981.
- David Gilson. A Bibliography of Jane Austen. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.
- Elizabeth Goldsmith, ed.. Writing the Female Voice: Essays in Epistolary Literature. Boston: North-Eastern University Press, 1987.

- Claudio Guillen. Literature as System: Essays Toward the Theory of Literary History. Princeton: Princeton University Press, University Press, 1971.
- Nicholas Hans. New Trends in Education in the Eighteenth Century. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1950.
- Thomas L. Hankins. Science and the Enlightenment. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- David Hartley. Observations on Man, His Frame, His Duty and His Expectations. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1967.
- Florence May Anna Hilbish. Charlotte Smith: Poet and Novelist, 1749-1806. London: The Mitre Press, 1941.
- Bridget Hill. Eighteenth-Century Women: An Anthology. London: Allen and Unwin, 1984.
- Geoffrey Boyd Hilton. The Age of Atonement. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.
- Raymond V. Holt. The Story of Unitarianism. London: The Lindsey Press, 1931.
- Raymond V. Holt. The Unitarian Contribution to Social Progress in England. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1938.
- M. A. Hopkins. Hannah More and her Circle. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1947.
- Bea Howe. A Galaxy of Governesses. London: Batsford Press, 1954.
- Kathryn Hughes. The Victorian Governess. London: The Hambledon Press, 1993.
- Suzanne W. Hull. Chaste, Silent and Obedient: English Books for Women, 1475-1640. San Marino, California: Huntington Library, 1982.
- David Hunt. Parents and Children in History: The Psychology of Family Life in Early Modern France. London: Basic Books Inc., 1970.
- Felicity Hunt, ed.. Lessons for Life: The Schooling of Girls and Women, 1850-1950. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987.
- Margaret Hunt, Margaret Jacob, Phyllis Mack and Ruth Perry, eds.. Women and the Enlightenment. Vol. 9 of Women and History Series. New York: Co-published by the Institute for Research in History and the Haworth Press, 1984.
- Henry James. The Turn of the Screw. London: Dent, 1935.
- Eva Jacobs and others, eds.. Woman and Society in Eighteenth-Century France: Essays in Honour of J.S. Spink. London: The Athlone Press, 1979.

Estelle Jelinek, ed.. The Tradition of Women's Autobiography: From Antiquity to the Present. Boston: Twayne and others, 1986.

Estelle Jelinek. Women's Autobiography: Essays in Theory and Criticism. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980

Angela V. John. Unequal Opportunities: Women's Employment in England 1800-1918. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986.

M. G. Jones. The Charity School Movement in the Eighteenth Century. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938.

Vivien Jones. Women in the Eighteenth Century: Constructions of Femininity. London: Routledge, 1990.

Ludmilla Jordanova, ed.. Languages of Nature: Critical Essays in Science and Literature. London: Free Association Books, 1986.

Ludmilla Jordanova. Sexual Visions: Images of Gender in Science and Medicine Between the Eighteenth and the Twentieth Centuries. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989.

Harriet Devine Jump. Mary Wollstonecraft: Writer. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1994.

Martin Kallich. The Association of Ideas and Critical Theory in Eighteenth-Century England: A History of a Psychological Method in English Criticism. The Hague: Mouton, 1970.

Josephine Kamm. Hope Deferred: Girls' Education in English History. London: Methuen, 1965.

Josephine Kamm. How Different From Us: A Biography of Miss Buss and Miss Beale. London: Bodley Head, 1958.

Barbara Kanner. The Women of England from Anglo-Saxon Times to the Present: Interpretative Bibliographical Essays. London: Mansell, 1980.

Frederick M. Keener and Susan E. Lorsch, eds.. Eighteenth-Century Women and the Arts. New York: Greenwood Press, 1988.

Gary Kelly. Revolutionary Feminism: The Mind and Career of Mary Wollstonecraft. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992.

Gary Kelly. Women, Writing and Revolution, 1790-1827. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.

Ruth Kelso. Doctrine for the Lady of the Renaissance. Urbana Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1978.

- Jon P. Klancher. The Making of English Reading Audiences, 1790-1832. Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987.
- Samuel Klinger. The Goths in England: A Study in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth- Century Thought. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1952.
- Margaret Kirkham. Jane Austen, Feminism and Fiction. Brighton: Harvester Press, 1983.
- Miriam Brody Kramnick, ed.. Original Stories from Real Life by Mary Wollstonecraft. Classics of Children's Literature, 1621-1932. New York: Garland, 1977.
- Paul Langford. A Polite and Commercial People: England, 1727-1783. London: Guild Publishing, 1989.
- Thomas Laqueur. Religion and Respectability: Sunday Schools and Working-Class Culture, 1780-1850. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976.
- John Lawson and Harold Silver, A Social History of Education in England. London: Methuen, 1973.
- William Lehmann. Henry Home Lord Kames and the Scottish Enlightenment: A Study in the National Character and in the History of Ideas. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971.
- Jonathon Loesberg. Fictions of Consciousness: Mill, Newman and the Reading of Victorian Prose. London: Rutgers University Press, 1986.
- Derek Longhurst. Gender, Genre and Narrative Pleasure. London: Unwin Hyman Ltd, 1989.
- Roger Lonsdale, ed.. Eighteenth-Century Women Poets. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- Terry Lovell. Consuming Fiction. London: Verso, 1987.
- Carol MacCormack and Marilyn Strathern, eds.. Nature, Culture and Gender. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980.
- Oliver MacDonagh. Jane Austen: Real and Imagined Worlds. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991.
- Edgar E. Macdonald, ed.. The Education of the Heart: The Correspondence of Rachel Mordecai Lazarus and Maria Edgeworth. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1971.
- Mary R. Mahl and Helene Koon, eds.. The Female Spectator: English Women Writers Before 1800. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977.
- Gail Malmgreen, ed.. Religion in the Lives of English Women, 1760-1930. London: Croom Helm, 1986.

John E. Mason. Gentlefolk in the Making: Studies in the History of English Courtesy Literature and Related Topics from 1531-1774. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1935.

William Matthews. British Autobiographies: An Annotated Bibliography. California: Archan Books, 1968.

H. McLachlan. English Education Under the Test Acts. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1931.

Anne K. Mellor. Romanticism and Feminism. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988.

F. Minneka. The Dissidence of Dissent: The Monthly Repository, 1806-1838. New York: Octagon Books, 1972.

Sally Mitchell. The Fallen Angel: Chastity, Class and Women's Reading 1835-1880. Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1981.

Ellen Moers. Literary Women. London: The Women's Press, 1975.

Toril Moi. Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory. London: Routledge, 1988.

Laura G. Mooneyham. Romance, Language and Education in Jane Austen's Novels. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988.

John Morris. Versions of the Self: Studies in English Autobiography from John Bunyan to John Stuart Mill. New York: Basic Books, 1966.

Percy Muir. English Children's Books, 1600-1900. London: B.T. Batsford Ltd, 1954.

J.J. Muskett. Suffolk Manorial Families. 3 vols.. Exeter: privately printed, 1900.

Wanda Fraiken Neff. Victorian Working Women: An Historical and Literary Study of Women in British Industries and Professions, 1832-1850. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1929.

Felicity Nussbaum. The Autobiographical Subject: Gender and Ideology in Eighteenth-Century England. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989.

Felicity Nussbaum and Laura Brown. The New Eighteenth Century: Theory, Politics and English Literature. New York: Methuen, 1987.

P. O'Brien. Warrington Academy, 1757-1786, its Predecessors and Successors. Wigan: Owl Books, 1989.

James Olney. Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical. Princeton University Press, 1980.

Iona and Peter Opie. The Classic Fairy Tale. London: Oxford University Press, 1974.

- W.J. B. Owen, ed.. Wordsworth's Literary Criticism. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974.
- Norman Page. The Language of Jane Austen. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1972.
- William Paley. Natural Theology: or, Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity, Collected from the Appearances of Nature. London: R. Faulder, 1802.
- David B. Parke. The Epic of Unitarianism: Original Writings from the History of Liberal Religion. Boston: Star King Press, 1957.
- Alicia C. Percival. The English Miss Today and Yesterday. London: Murray, 1939.
- Harold Perkin. The Origins of Modern Society. London: Routledge, 1969.
- Ruth Perry. Women, Letters and the Novel. New York: AMS Press, 1980.
- Linda Peterson. Victorian Autobiography: The Tradition of Self-Interpretation. London: Yale University Press, 1986.
- Samuel F. Pickering Junior. John Locke and Children's Books in Eighteenth-Century England. Knoxville: University of Tennessee, 1981.
- Ivy Pinchbeck and Margaret Hewitt. Children in English Society from Tudor Times to the Eighteenth Century. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969.
- Roy Porter. The Enlightenment. Basingstoke: Macmillan Education Ltd., 1990.
- Roy Porter, ed. The Enlightenment in National Context. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.
- Mary Poovey. The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer: Ideology as Style in the Works of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley and Jane Austen. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984.
- Mary Poovey. Uneven Developments: The Ideological Work of Gender in Mid-Victorian England. London: Virago, 1989.
- Rosamund Bayne Powell. The English Child in the Eighteenth Century. London: John Murray, 1939.
- Mary Prior, ed.. Women in English Society, 1500-1800. New York: Methuen, 1985.
- F. K. Prochaska. Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth-Century England. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980.
- June Purvis. The Education of Girls and Women. Leicester: History of Education Society, 1985.
- June Purvis. A History of Women's Education in England. Milton Keynes: Open

University Press, 1991.

Jane Rendall, ed.. Equal or Different: Women's Politics 1800-1914. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987.

Jane Rendall. The Origins of Modern Feminism: Women in Britain, France and the United States, 1780-1860. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1985.

Alice Renton. Tyrant or Victim? A History of the British Governess. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1991.

Kimberley Reynolds. Girls Only: Gender and Popular Children's Fiction in Britain, 1880-1910. Brighton: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990.

Myra Reynolds. The Learned Lady in England, 1650-1760. Boston: Houghton Mifflin and Co., 1920.

Isabel Rivers. Books and their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England. Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1982.

Betsy Rodgers. Georgian Chronicle: Mrs Barbauld and her Family. London: Methuen, 1958.

Katharine M. Rogers, ed.. Before their Time: Six Women Writers of the Eighteenth Century. New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Company, 1979.

Katharine M. Rogers. Feminism in Eighteenth-Century England. Brighton: Harvester Press, 1982.

Katharine M. Rogers. Frances Burney: The World of Female Difficulties. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990.

Doreen Rosman. Evangelicals and Culture. London: Croom Helm, 1984.

Margaret Mary Rubel. Savage and Barbarian: Historical Attitudes in the Criticism of Homer and Ossian in Britain, 1760-1800. Amsterdam: North Holland Publishing Company, 1978.

Mary P. Ryan. Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida Country, New York, 1790-1865. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Roger Sales, ed.. English Literature in History, 1780-1830: Pastoral and Politics. Introduced by Raymond Williams. London: Hutchinson, 1983.

Valerie Sanders. The Private Lives of Victorian Women: Autobiography in Nineteenth-Century England. Brighton: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989.

Michael Sanderson. Education, Economic Change and Society in England, 1780-1870. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1983.

- Paul Sangster. Pity My Simplicity: The Evangelical Revival and the Religious Education of Children, 1738-1800. Buckinghamshire: The Epworth Press, 1963.
- Barbara Schapiro, The Romantic Mother: Narcissistic Patterns in Romantic Poetry. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983.
- Mary Anne Schofield and Cecilia Macheski, eds.. Fetter'd or Free?: British Women Novelists, 1670-1815. Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1986.
- Robert Edwin Schofield. The Lunar Society of Birmingham: A Social History of Provincial Science and Industry in Eighteenth-Century England. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963.
- Robert Scholes. Textual Power: Literary Theory and The Teaching of English. London: Yale University Press, 1985.
- Joel Schwarz. The Sexual Politics of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1984.
- Wayne Schumaker. English Autobiography: its Emergence, Materials and Form. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1954.
- Joan Wallach Scott. Gender and The Politics of History. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988.
- Walter Sidney Scott, ed.. Letters of Maria Edgeworth and Anna Laetitia Barbauld Selected from the Lushington Papers. London: Golden Cockerel Press, 1953.
- T.B. Shepherd. Methodism and the Literature of the Eighteenth Century. London: The Epworth Press, 1940.
- Kathryn Shevelov. Women and Print Culture. London: Routledge, 1989.
- Elaine Showalter. The New Feminist Criticism: Essays on Women, Literature and Theory. London: Virago Press, 1986.
- Brian Simon. Studies in the History of Education, 1780-1870. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1960.
- Judy Simons. Diaries and Journals of Literary Women from Fanny Burney to Virginia Woolf. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1990.
- Godfrey Frank Singer. The Epistolary Novel. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1933.
- LeRoy W. Smith. Jane Austen and the Drama of Woman. London: Macmillan, 1983.
- Olivia Smith, The Politics of Language, 1791-1819. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984.

- Barbara H. Solomon and Paula S. Berggren, eds.. A Mary Wollstonecraft Reader. New York: New American Library, 1983.
- Patricia Meyer Spacks. Imagining a Self: Autobiography and Novel in Eighteenth-Century England. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976.
- David Spadafora. The Idea of Progress in Eighteenth-Century Britain London: Yale University Press, 1990.
- Jane Spencer. The Rise of The Woman Novelist: From Aphra Behn to Jane Austen. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986.
- Samia I. Spencer, ed.. French Women and the Age of Enlightenment. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984.
- Dale Spender, ed.. Living by the Pen: Early British Women Writers. New York: Teachers' College Press, Athene Press, 1992.
- Dale Spender. Mothers of the Novel: 100 Good Women Writers Before Jane Austen. London: Pandora, 1986.
- Dale Spender. The Writing or the Sex? or Why You Don't Have to Read Women's Writing to Know it's No Good. New York: Pergamon Press, 1989.
- William C. Spengemann. The Forms of Autobiography: Episodes in the History of a Literary Genre. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980.
- Domna Stanton, ed.. The Female Autograph. General editor Jeanine Parisier Plottel. New York: New York Literary Forum, 1984.
- Sir Leslie Stephen and Sir Sidney Lee, eds.. The Dictionary of National Biography. London: Oxford University Press, 1950.
- Sir Leslie Stephen. English Thought in the Eighteenth Century. New York: Peter Smith, 1949.
- Lawrence Stone. The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979.
- Geoffrey Summerfield. Fantasy and Reason: Children's Literature in the Eighteenth Century. London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1984.
- Julia Swindells. Victorian Writing and Working Women: The Other Side of Silence. Oxford: Polity Press, 1985.
- Richard Thompson. Classics or Charity?: The Dilemma of the Eighteenth-Century Grammar School. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1971.
- C. Linklater Thomson. Jane Austen: A Survey. London: Horace Marshall and Son, 1929.

- Janet Todd, ed.. A Dictionary of British and American Women Writers, 1660-1800. London: Methuen, 1987.
- Janet Todd, ed.. A Wollstonecraft Anthology. Oxford: Polity Press, 1989.
- Janet Todd. Readings of Mary Wollstonecraft. Oxford: Polity Press, 1989.
- Janet Todd. The Sign of Angellica: Women, Writing and Fiction 1660-1800. London: Virago, 1989.
- Claire Tomalin. The Life and Death of Mary Wollstonecraft (1974). London: Penguin, 1992.
- Margaret J. Tuke. A History of Bedford College for Women, 1849-1937. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939.
- Cheryl Turner. Living by the Pen: Women Writers in the Eighteenth Century. London: Routledge, 1994.
- Gerald P. Tyson. Joseph Johnson: A Liberal Publisher. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1942.
- Deborah M. Valenze. Prophetic Sons and Daughters: Female Preaching and Popular Religion in Industrial England. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1985.
- Ralph M. Wardle. Mary Wollstonecraft: The Collected Letters. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979.
- Ian Watt. The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding. London: Chatto and Windus, 1957.
- R.K. Webb. Harriet Martineau: A Radical Victorian. London: Heinemann, 1960.
- Katharine West. A Chapter of Governesses: A Study of the Governess in English Fiction, 1800-1949. London: Cohen and West, 1949.
- Frances Widdowson. Going up into the Next Class: Elementary Teaching and the Progress of the Middle-Class Girl, 1870-1914. London: Hutchinson, 1983.
- Basil Willey. The Eighteenth-Century Background: Studies in the Idea of Nature in the Thought of the Period. London: Chatto and Windus, 1940.
- Ioan Williams. Novel and Romance, 1700-1800: A Documentary Record. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970.
- Raymond Williams. Keywords. Glasgow: Croom Helm, 1976.
- Doris M. Yarde. The Life and Works of Mrs Trimmer, a Lady of Brentford. Bedfont, Middlesex: Hounslow and District History Society, 1972.

Alice Zimmern. The Renaissance of Girls' Education: A Record of Fifty Years' Progress. London: A. D. Innes, 1898.

Jack Zipes. Fairy Tales and the Art of Subversion: The Classical Genre for Children and the Process of Civilization. London: Heinemann, 1983.

b) Articles in Books Published After 1900

Ros Ballaster. "Romancing the Novel: Gender and Genre in Early Theories of Narrative." In Living by the Pen: Early British Women Writers, ed. Dale Spender, 188-200. New York: New York Teachers' College Press, Athene Press, 1992.

Gillian Beer. "Representing Women, Re-presenting the Past." In The Feminist Reader, Essays in Gender and the Politics of Literary Criticism, eds. Catherine Belsey and Jane Moore, 63-80. Houndmills: Macmillan, 1989.

Marina Benjamin, "Women Writers on Science, 1790-1840." Chap. in Science and Sensibility: Gender and Scientific Enquiry, 27-59. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991.

Maurice and Jean H. Bloch. "Women and the Dialectics of Nature in Eighteenth-Century French Thought." In Nature, Culture and Gender, eds. Carol MacCormack and Marilyn Strathern, 25-41. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980.

Jean H. Bloch. "Women and the Reform of the Nation." In Woman and Society in Eighteenth-Century France: Essays in Honour of J.S. Spink, eds. Eva Jacobs and others, 3-18. London: The Athlone Press, 1979.

Robert A. Colby. "Mansfield Park: Fanny Price and the Christian Heroine." Chap. in Fiction with a Purpose: Major and Minor Nineteenth-Century Novelists, 66-104. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967.

Elizabeth Fox-Genovese. "Women and the Enlightenment." In Becoming Visible: Women in European History, eds. Renate Bridenthal, Claudia Koonz and Susan Stuard, 251-278. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987.

Elizabeth J. Gardner. "The Philosophes and Women: Sensationalism and Sentiment." In Women and Society in Eighteenth Century France: Essays in Honour of J.S. Spink, eds. Eva Jacobs and others, 19-28. London: The Athlone Press, 1979.

Ruth Graham. "Rousseau's Sexism Revolutionised." In Woman in the Eighteenth Century and Other Essays, eds. Paul Fritz and Richard Morton, 127-140. Toronto: Samuel Stevens Hakkert, 1976.

Lawrence E. Klein. "Gender, Conversation and the Public Sphere in Early Eighteenth-Century England." In Textuality and Sexuality: Reading Theories and Practices, eds. Judith Still and Michael Worton, 100-115. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993.

Arnold Kettle. "Emma." In Jane Austen: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Ian Watt, 112-123. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1963.

Gita May. "Rousseau's Anti-feminism Reconsidered." In French Women and the Age of Enlightenment, ed. Samia I. Spencer, 309-317. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984.

- Greg Myers. "Science for Women and Children: The Dialogue of Popular Science in the Nineteenth Century." In Nature Transfigured: Science and Literature, 1700-1900, eds. John Christie and Sally Shuttleworth, 171-200. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989.
- Mitzi Myers. "Hannah More's Tracts for the Times: Social Fiction and Female Ideology." In Fetter'd or Free? : British Women Novelists 1670-1815, eds. Mary Ann Schofield and Cecilia Macheski, 264-284. Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1986.
- Mitzi Myers. "Harriet Martineau's Autobiography: The Making of a Female Philosopher." In Women's Autobiography Essays in Theory and Criticism, ed. Estelle Jelinek, 53-70. London: Indiana University Press, 1980.
- Mitzi Myers. "Impeccable Governesses, Rational Dames, and Moral Mothers: Mary Wollstonecraft and The Female Tradition in Georgian Children's Books." In Annual of the Modern Language Association, Division on Children's Literature and the Children's Literature Association. 31-59. London: Yale University Press, 1986.
- Twila Yates Papay. "Defining the Educative Process: Maria Edgeworth's Belinda." In Eighteenth-Century Women and the Arts, eds. Frederick M. Keener and Susan E. Lorsch, 141-149. New York: Greenwood Press, 1988.
- M. Jeanne Peterson. "The Victorian Governess: Status Incongruence in Family and Society." In Suffer and Be Still: Women in the Victorian Age, ed. Martha Vicinus, 3-19. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972.
- Timothy Reiss. "Revolution in Bounds: Wollstonecraft, Women and Reason." In Gender and Theory: Dialogues on Feminist Criticism, ed. Linda Kauffman, 11-50. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989.
- Jane Rendall. "Writing History for British Women: Elizabeth Hamilton and the Memoirs of Agrippina." In Wollstonecraft's Daughters: Womanhood in England and France, 1780-1920, ed. Clarissa Campbell Orr, 79-93. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995.
- John Reichart. "More than Kin and Less than Kind: The Limits of Genre Theory." In Theories of Literary Genre, ed. Joseph P. Strelka, 57-79. Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1978.
- Joan Wallach Scott, "Experience." In Feminists Theorize the Political, eds. Judith Butler and Joan Wallach Scott. New York: Routledge, 1992. 22-40.
- John Seed. "Theologies of Power: Unitarianism and the Social Relations of Religious Discourse, 1800-1850." In Class, Power and Social Structure in British Nineteenth-Century Towns, ed. R.J. Morris, 107-156. Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1986.
- Londa Schiebinger. "The Private Life of Plants: Sexual Politics in Carl Linnaeus and Erasmus Darwin." In Science and Sensibility: Gender and Scientific Enquiry, ed. Marina Benjamin, 121-143. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991.

Ann B. Shteir. "Linnaeus's Daughters: Women and British Botany." In Women and the Structure of Society, eds. Barbara J. Harris and Joann K. McNamara, 67-73. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1982.

Samia I. Spencer. "Women and Education." Chap. in French Women and the Age of the Enlightenment, 83-96. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984.

Rene Wellek. "The Concept of Evolution in Literary History." In Concepts of Criticism, ed. Stephen G. Nichols, Jr., 37-53. Newhaven Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1963.

David Williams. "The Politics of Feminism in the French Enlightenment." In The Varied Pattern: Studies in the Eighteenth Century, eds. Peter Hughes and David Williams, 333-351. Toronto: A. M. Hakkert Ltd., 1971.

Arthur Wilson, "'Treated Like Imbecile Children' (Diderot): The Enlightenment and the Status of Women." In Woman in the Eighteenth Century and Other Essays, eds. Paul Fritz and Richard Morton, 89-104. Toronto: Samuel Stevens Hakkert, 1976.

Robert M. Young. "David Hartley." In Dictionary of Scientific Biography, ed. C. C. Gillespie, 3:250-256. New York: Scribner's, 1970-1975.

Robert M. Young. "Association of Ideas." In Dictionary of the History of Ideas: Studies of Selected Pivotal Ideas, ed. Philip P. Wiener, I:111-118. New York: Scribner's, 1968.

c) Articles in Journals Published after 1900

Marion Amies. "Amusing and Instructive Conversations: The Literary Genre and its Relevance to Home Education," History of Education 14:2 (1985): 87-99.

Nancy Armstrong. "Literature as Women's History." Genre 19 (Winter 1986): 347-369.

Elaine Hoffman Baruch. "The Feminine 'Bildungsroman': Education Through Marriage." Monthly Review. 22:2 (1981): 335-57.

Judith Bennett. "History That Stands Still: Women's Work in the European Past." Feminist Studies 14:2 (1988): 269-83.

Ruth H. Bloch. "American Feminine Ideals in Transition: The Rise of the Moral Mother, 1785-1815." Feminist Studies. 4:2 (June 1978): 101-126.

Barbara Bowen Oberg. "David Hartley and the Association of Ideas." Journal of the History of Ideas 37 (July-Sept. 1976): 441-53.

Malcolm Bradbury. "Jane Austen's Emma." Critical Quarterly 4: 4 (Winter 1962): 333-346.

Thomas J. Collins. "Some Mutual Sets of Friends: Moral Monitors in Emma and Our Mutual Friend." The Dickensian 65:357 (Jan. 1969): 32-34.

P. J. Corfield. "Class by Name and Number in Eighteenth-Century Britain." History 72:234 (Feb. 1987): 38-61.

Leonore Davidoff. "Class and Gender in Victorian England" in Feminist Studies 5:1 (1979): 88-141.

Peter L. DeRose. "Marriage and Self-Knowledge in Emma and Pride and Prejudice." Renaissance 30:4 (1978): 199-216.

Tom Dunne. "A Polemical Introduction: Literature, Literary Theory and The Historian," Historical Studies 14 (1987): 1-9.

Shoshana Felman. "Turning the Screw of Interpretation." Yale French Studies 55:56 (1977): 94-207.

Jan Fergus and Janice Farrar Thaddeus. "Women, Publishers and Money, 1790-1820." Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture 17 (1987): 191-207.

Karl M. Figlio. "Theories of Perception and the Physiology of the Mind in the Late Eighteenth Century." History of Science 13 (1975): 177-212.

R. B. Freeman. "Children's Natural History Books Before Queen Victoria." History of Education Society Bulletin 17 (1976): 7-21.

- John Gascoigne. "From Bentley to the Victorians: The Rise and Fall of British Newtonian Natural Theology." Science in Context 2:2 (1988): 219-256.
- Dena Goodman. "Enlightened Salons: The Convergence of Female and Philosophic Ambition." History and Theory. 31 (1992): 1-20.
- Joyce Hemlow. "Fanny Burney and the Courtesy Books." PMLA 65 (1950): 732-761.
- Damon D. Hickey. "Mary Wollstonecraft and The Female Reader." English Language Notes 13:2 (1975): 128-129.
- Joan Hoff, "Gender as a Postmodern Category of Paralysis," Women's History Review 3:2 (1994): 149-68.
- R.E. Hughs, "The Education of Emma Woodhouse." Nineteenth-Century Fiction. 16:1 (June 1961): 69-74.
- Ludmilla Jordanova. "Review of Vivien Jones's Women in the Eighteenth Century" Gender and History 4:1 (Spring 1992): 108-9.
- U.C. Knoepfelmacher. "The Importance of Being Frank: Character and Letter-Writing in Emma." Studies in English Literature 1500-1900 8:4 (Autumn, 1967): 639-658.
- M. LeGates. "The Cult of Womanhood in Eighteenth-Century England." Eighteenth-Century Studies 10 (1976-1977):21-39.
- Miriam Leranbaum, "Mistresses of Orthodoxy: Education in the Lives and Writings of Late Eighteenth Century Women Writers." Publications of the American Philosophical Society 121 (1977): 281-301.
- Bogna W. Lorence. "Parents and Children in Eighteenth-Century Europe." History of Childhood Quarterly: The Journal of Psychohistory 2:1 (Summer 1974): 1-30.
- Margaret Maxwell. "The Perils of the Imagination: Pre-Victorian Children's Literature and the Critics." Children's Literature in Education 13 (1974): 45-52.
- Jane McDermid. "Conservative Feminism and Female Education in the Eighteenth Century." History of Education 18:4 (1989): 309-322.
- J. Mechling. "Advice to Historians on Advice to Mothers." Journal of Social History. 9 (1979): 44-63.
- P.J. Miller. "Women's Education, 'Self-Improvement' and Social Mobility: A Late Eighteenth-Century Debate." British Journal of Educational Studies 20 (1972): 302-314.
- Kenneth L. Moler. "Sense and Sensibility and its Sources." Review of English Studies 17:68 (Nov. 1966): 413-419.
- D. Monaghan. "Mansfield Park and Evangelicalism: a Reassessment." Nineteenth Century Fiction 33 (1978-1979): 215-223.

- Susan J. Morgan. "Emma Woodhouse and the Charms of the Imagination." Studies in the Novel: Jane Austen: Special Number 7:1 (Spring 1975): 33-48.
- Valerie Grosvenor Myer. "Cara Sposa at the Ball: Jane West and Jane Austen's Emma." Notes and Queries 29:3 (1982): 208.
- Mitzi Myers. "Early Advice to Mothers on Books for Girls" Children's Literature Association Quarterly 12 (1987): 118-24.
- Mitzi Myers. "'Servants as they are now Educated': Women Writers and Georgian Pedagogy." Essays in Literature 16 (1989): 51-69.
- Mitzi Myers. "A Taste for Truth and Realities: Advice to Mothers on Books for Girls." Children's Literature Association Quarterly 12:3. (Fall 1987): 118-124.
- Janaki Nair, "On the Question of Agency in Indian Feminist Historiography," Gender and History 6:1 (April 1994): 368-404.
- Jane Nardin. "Charity in Emma." Studies in the Novel: Jane Austen: Special Number 7:1 (Spring 1975): 61-72.
- Judith Newton. "Family Fortunes, New History and New Historicism." Radical History Review 43 (1989): 5-22.
- Stein Haugom Olsen. "Do You Like Emma Woodhouse?" Critical Quarterly 19:4 (Winter 1977): 3-19.
- Norman Page. "Standards of Excellence: Jane Austen's Language." A Review of English Literature 7:3 (July 1966): 91-98.
- Catherine Parke. "Vision and Revision: a Model for Re-reading the Eighteenth-Century Novel of Education." Eighteenth-Century Studies 16:2 (1982-1983): 162-174.
- J.H. Plumb. "The New World of Children in Eighteenth-Century England." Past and Present 67 (May 1975): 64-93.
- Ellen Pollack. "Feminism and the New Historicism: A Tale of Difference or the Same Old Story." The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation 29 (Fall 1988): 281-86.
- Mary Poovey. "Uncrafting Wollstonecraft: Mary Wollstonecraft, The Gender of Genres in Late Eighteenth-Century England." Novel: A Forum on Fiction 15:2 (1982): 111-126.
- Margaret W. Rossiter. "Women and the History of Scientific Communication." Journal of Library History 21 (1986): 39-59.
- Barbara Schnorrenberg. "Education for Women in the Eighteenth Century." Women and Literature 4 (1976): 49-55.
- John Seed. "Gentlemen Dissenters: The Social and Political Meanings of Rational Dissent in the 1770s and 1780s." The Historical Journal. 28:2 (1985): 299-325.

- Ann B. Shteir. "Botanical Dialogues: Maria Jackson and Women's Popular Science Writing in England." Eighteenth-Century Studies 23:3 (Spring 1990): 301-317.
- Margaret Spufford. "First Steps in Literacy: The Reading and Writing Experiences of the Humblest Seventeenth-Century Spiritual Autobiographers." Social History 4 (1979): 407-435.
- Alison G. Sullaway. "Emma Woodhouse and a Vindication of the Rights of Woman." Wordsworth Circle 7:4 (Autumn 1976): 320-332.
- Barbara Taylor. "Mary Wollstonecraft and the Wild Wish of Early Feminism." History Workshop Journal 33 (1992): 197-219.
- Sylvana Tomaselli. "The Enlightenment Debate on Women." History Workshop Journal 19 (1985): 101-124.
- Sylvana Tomaselli, "Reflections on the History of the Science of Woman." History of Science 29 (1991): 185-205.
- T. B. Tomlinson. "Jane Austen's Originality: Emma." Critical Review 9 (1966): 22-37.
- Iain Topliss. "Mary Wollstonecraft and Maria Edgeworth's Modern Ladies." Études Irlandaises 6 (Dec. 1981): 1-30.
- Amanda Vickery. "Historiographical Review: Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History." The Historical Journal 36:2 (1993): 383-414.
- Amanda Vickery. "The Neglected Century: Writing the History of Eighteenth Century Women" Gender and History 3 (1991): 211-19.
- Dror Wahrman. "National Society, Communal Culture: an Argument about the Recent Historiography of the Eighteenth-Century." Social History 17 (Jan. 1992): 43-72.
- Beth Kowaleski-Wallace. "Milton's Daughters: The Education of Eighteenth Century Women Writers." Feminist Studies 12:2 (1986): 275-93.
- Ruth Watts. "Joseph Priestley and Education." Enlightenment and Dissent 2 (1983) 83-100.
- Ruth Watts. "Knowledge is Power - Unitarians, Gender and Education in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries." Gender and Education 1:1 (1989): 35-50.
- Victor C. Wexler. "'Made for Men's Delight': Rousseau as Antifeminist." American Historical Review 81 (1976): 266-291.
- Edward M. White. "Emma and the Parodic Point of View." Nineteenth-Century Fiction. 18:1 (June 1963): 55-63.
- Albert E. Wilhelm, "Three Word Clusters in Emma," Studies in the Novel: Jane Austen:

Special Number. 7:1 (Spring 1975): 49-60.

Joyce Zonona. "The Sultan and the Slave: Feminist Orientalism and the Structure of Jane Eyre." Signs 18:3 (Spring 1993): 592-617.

d) **Unpublished Papers**

Mary Poovey. "Aesthetics in Political Economy: Mary Wollstonecraft's Critique of Adam Smith." Unpublished paper given at the University of Utrecht, June, 1992.

Jane Rendall. "Does History Speak? Writing A History for British Women (c. 1780-1810)." Unpublished paper, 1994.

Jane Rendall. "Tacitus Engendered: Gothic Feminism, Nationality and Domesticity." Unpublished paper, 1993.

Jane Rendall. "Virtue and Propriety: The Scottish Enlightenment and the Construction of Femininity." Unpublished paper, 1989.

e) Theses

Sally Stewart Ferrer. "The Literary Criticism of Mary Wollstonecraft." Ph.D. diss.: University of Colorado-at-Boulder, 1979.

Leslie Pamela Fox, "Hannah More, Evangelical Educationalist: A Study of the Educational Ideals and Practices of the Evangelicals." Ph.D. diss.: McGill University, Montreal, 1949.

Sylvia Leslie Hicks. "Women and Teaching: Perceptions of Gender Relationships in the Context of Schooling." Ph.D. diss.: York, 1989.

Geneva Meers. "Victorian Schoolteachers in Fiction." Ph.D. diss.: Northwestern University, 1953.

Susan Alice Miller. "Hannah More (Self-Defence) and the Construction of Eighteenth-Century Anti-Feminism." M. A. diss.: York, 1985.

Sarah E. Parrott, "Escape from Didacticism: Art and Idea in the Novels of Jane Austen, Fanny Burney and Maria Edgeworth." Ph.D. diss.: York University, 1993.

John Seed. "The Role of Unitarianism in the Formation of Liberal Culture: A Social History." Ph.D. diss.: University of Hull, 1984.

Twila Virginia Yates. "Maria Edgeworth and The Art of Education." Ph.D. diss.: Purdue University, 1976.

f) Dictionaries

Dr Samuel Johnson. A Dictionary of the English Language in which Words are Deduced from Their Originals and Illustrated in Their Different Significations by Examples From the Best Writers to which are Prefixed a History of the English Language and an English Grammar. London: W. Strahan, 1773.

The Oxford English Dictionary (1933). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966.