Narrating Anger and Sympathy in the Condition of England:

The Role of Emotion in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Politics and Fiction

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Abstract

The Condition-of-England Question – a series of discussions that involve commentary on the state of relations between disparate groups and classed subjects – contains a nexus of competing and overlapping discourses, as well as an attention to feelings such as anger and to the communication of feeling that comprises sympathy. It evolves through the interrogative methodologies of moral philosophy, Romantic idealism, political radicalism, and the cultural assumptions that guide literary production and consumption. Condition-of-England novels, such as Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton* (1848) and Charles Kingsley's *Alton Locke* (1850), demonstrate the Carlylean premise that moral and social improvements within the body politic require a mediated reaction to the escalating discontent that characterized the nation in the period surrounding the reform acts. In this dissertation I analyze how authors and political leaders are impelled to address social and political problems through the representation of feeling and its communication. This dissertation affirms that anger, existing as a potentially corrective call for attention and action, is elemental for the formation of collective identities based on class or political beliefs. As such, it remains pertinent to Victorian debates of political reform and representation. In literary culture, anger and sympathy are conceptualized as narrative forces by which to address the declining spiritual and material conditions of England; they become considerations in the organization of plot lines or episodes, and they exist, whether named or not, in descriptions of literary protagonists, political leaders, and philosophers.

Using an interdisciplinary approach that includes social history, philosophy, theories of emotion, close readings, and rhetorical analysis, I examine the epistemology of feeling and its relation to social and political critique by comparing the philosophical and practical continuities between discourses of the sentiments and passions in the eighteenth century with discourses of feeling in the mid-nineteenth century. This includes extending my scope not only to include novels, but also philosophical treatises, periodical publications, and serialized fiction. My focus does not lie with envisioning anger as something adversative to sympathy, as much philosophical and sociological critique has implied, but in whether antisocial feelings such as anger have acknowledged social benefits. If sympathy is not any one feeling, but the interpersonal communication of feeling, then the changing discourses of sympathy in the nineteenth century imply a rethinking of the social functions of all emotion, including anger.

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Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations

AL	Charles Kingsley, *Alton Locke*
Autobiography	J. S. Mill, *John Stuart Mill: Autobiography and Other Writings*
EB	Charles Bray, *Education of the Body*
EF	Charles Bray, *Education of the Feelings*
Essays	David Hume, *Essays: Moral, Political and Literary*
EW	Alexander Bain, *The Emotions and the Will*
FH	George Eliot, *Felix Holt*
MB	Elizabeth Gaskell, *Mary Barton*
On Heroes	Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*
PP	Thomas Carlyle, *Past and Present*
Signs	Thomas Carlyle, *Signs of the Times*
SR	Thomas Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*
SSL	Charles, Kingsley, *Sanitary and Social Lectures*
SW	Thomas Carlyle, *Selected Writings of Thomas Carlyle*
TMS	Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*
WN	Adam Smith, *On the Wealth of Nations*
WW	Ernest Jones, *Woman's Wrongs*

Introduction

Much has been written, both cautionary and celebratory, on the passing of the "Great" Reform Bill of 1832, legislation that only extended male suffrage to small landowners, but had grand symbolic significance in Victorian Britain. In a well-known chapter in George Eliot's *Felix Holt, the Radical* (1866), a novel set during the passing of the Bill and written just before the passing of the Second Reform Bill in 1867, the eponymous hero is urged by Mr. Lyon to go and witness the nomination of the election candidates. The reluctant Felix expresses doubt at his suitability for such a contentious atmosphere: "'I shall get into a rage at something or other,'" he says to his apolitical friend (*FH* 241). Eliot does not intend her hero's words, despite their vague flippancy, to be idle threats; rather than blend into the expectant crowd, Felix stands out as a cultured and impassioned orator, incensed at the bribes that John Johnson, the electioneering agent, distributes to the borough's working-class colliers for political gain, and more generally, outraged at the opportunism, rather than conviction, that comes as part of politics and political life. For Felix, the ease by which the electoral agent can summon support for his candidate by way of "treating" the workers with alcohol demonstrates what he sees as the "panacea" of suffrage for people with few political loyalties.[1] In the midst of his lecture on the necessity for moral improvement before large-scale electoral reform, Felix sees Johnson, the object of his political sermon, in his audience; the sighting provokes in Holt a distinct physiological and verbal reaction: "In spite of his cooling meditations an hour ago, his pulse was getting quickened by indignation, and the

desire to crush what he hated was likely to vent itself in articulation. His tone becomes more biting" (*FH* 249).

The latter scene is a particularly telling incident in which the expression of anger combines with politics (and political opinion) in an increasingly volatile mixture; in the narrative, it culminates in a looting riot on Election Day and the imprisonment of Eliot's well-intentioned hero. Felix's "liability to be carried completely out of his own mastery by indignant anger" (*FH* 241) marks his character throughout the novel and inevitably implicates him in the riot. This anger serves as a locus of ambivalence: it is proof of both Holt's sincere political commitment and his inability to be an effective political leader. In his Introduction to Eliot's novel, Fred C. Thomson argues that Holt's character was the result of Eliot's desire to write in the tragic mode, which requires a tragic subject to suffer some flaw and the plot to "represent irreparable collision between the individual and the general" (vii). In the depiction of her (would-be) eponymous and radical protagonist, John Barton, Elizabeth Gaskell struggles with a similar ambivalence – Barton's anger and bitterness increases with his involvement in Chartist politics, and functions both as proof of his flawed disposition and his sympathetic (and moral) attitude towards injustices and inequities of the labouring poor.[2] Like Holt, Barton is a flawed and tragic figure, but rather than viewing Eliot's (and Gaskell's) ambivalences as part of the dramatic tragedy, I propose that these ambivalences exist in part because of the uncertainties about anger and its social role in mid-nineteenth-century politics and political life.

Novelists, philosophers, and social reformers who discuss anger in this period explain and represent it in conflicting ways. Anger functions as a symptom or marker of classed identity, and in this sense, could well function as the argument against working-class participation in suffrage. Yet, it also functions as a partial indictment of a political system that does little to rectify inequities and corruption, whereby anger is the symptom, of this flawed political enterprise. Holt's anger, as political anger, is distinct from other, more brutish or pejorative, forms of anger; it exists as possibility, something more than a damning character flaw, and part of Eliot's own polemic on the general state of England and its political system.

As a contrasting example to Holt's self-confessed, angry radicalism, John Stuart Mill's famous claim that Wordsworth's poetry acted as "medicine for his state of mind" during his nervous breakdown (89) presents feeling and its expression as something that instills repose rather than riot. Herein lie the vicissitudes of feelings: as "passions," especially strong or negative feelings, they take on connotations of disorder or loss of control, and consequently, a threat to personal agency, reason, and interpersonal relations; as "sentiments," tied to a kind of cognitive dimension that includes belief, feelings serve as a way to negotiate interpersonal relations, and their expression can help explain private (inner) experience and agency. For Mill, reading expressions of feeling in Wordsworth's poetry reaffirms "the common feelings and common destiny of human beings" (89). Mill's declaration implies both personal and social necessity in feeling and its expression: as a humanizing curative, and a shared connection to other individuals as a means of sociability.

3

Feeling may encourage self-awareness and prompt imaginative reflection, as it is often represented in Romantic poetry, but in the increasingly segregated political climate of mid-nineteenth-century England, and among radical calls for reform, the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" that Wordsworth advocates as the motivation for poetic expression becomes a source of unease (126). Expressing strong and negative feelings within the realm of politics, and against existing powers, has varying consequences: charges of sedition or self-interest, the establishment of collective movements of social and political reform, and the creation of public ideals and attitudes through shared beliefs and convictions. Psychologist Shula Sommers describes emotions as refractions of the social: "Emotions reflect, among other things, knowledge of the valuations of a community, concepts of social relationships as well as attitudes and beliefs held in common by members of a community" (26). Given the vicissitudes of feeling, then, how necessary or strategic is strong and negative feeling, such as anger, to political action and the desire for social change? Despite the historical spectre of the French Revolution, and subsequent riots and revolutions at home and abroad, and despite the Victorian preoccupation with the decorous, can anger have an admirable social and political function in mid-nineteenth-century England?

In attempting to answer these questions, this dissertation will explore how anger is represented in fiction and political literature of the period between the two reform acts. The authors and texts examined in this project all respond to, and in part create, the public impetus of the Condition-of-England Question, a public discourse and mode of social critique that also comments on the condition of feeling – that is, the state of

4

interpersonal relationships within and between social classes. If feeling is crucial to how people organize and interact with each other, then looking at how feelings become represented in political and literary writings of the period means exploring the civic, political, and moral connections between feeling and its expression. Representations of feelings make legible the varied and oppositional social cues, behaviours, and expectations that are required for the larger project of sociability. Given that this discussion will evolve through my examination of a series of literary and journalistic texts, I am also interested in the various narrative strategies for anger that comment on the condition of England and suggest reforms. How are these narrative strategies reflective of larger discussions of class, political action, and change in the period surrounding the reform acts? By looking at the various expressions, categorizations, and displacements of anger in texts of this period, I will examine how authors and political leaders mediate expressions of anger in an attempt to rectify the ambivalences that surround its representation.

In exploring the role of anger in the mid-nineteenth century, my scope necessarily widens to examine sympathy, the sharing and communication of feeling, which is pivotal to how feeling is conceptualized and discussed in post-Enlightenment contexts, particularly eighteenth-century moral philosophy. To be sure, discourses of feeling existed long before the eighteenth century – since the beginnings of Western philosophy[3] – but the empirical study of feeling, and the classification and taxonomy of feeling present in eighteenth-century moral philosophy, enables authors to construct discursively and ideologically a social vision that explains sociability (and its antithesis) through

associations of feeling and their effects on others. Theorizing what motivates individuals to act, eighteenth-century moral philosophers provide a model for the methodological inquiry into feeling and its consequences and benefits. Eighteenth-century discussions of feelings also consider literature as a means to express and mediate feeling. Sentimentalism, and later Romanticism, lend credence to an emotional intelligence or privileged insight based on feeling, which can be used for the purposes of political and social reform, and in the case of Romanticism, informs Jacobin and popular radicalism and later, Chartism. The purpose of my project is the exploration of the ways that these intellectual backgrounds influence mid-nineteenth-century contexts, and the means by which feeling, especially strong and negative feeling, articulates the political and literary ideologies of the time.

I. From Passion to Emotion: Definitions and Categories of Feeling

When studying feeling and its representation, I am making two basic assumptions: that the operation of the emotions, and the representation of feeling, is an inescapable part of human nature; and that the socialization of individuals happens, in large part, through the legibility and expression of feeling, which requires a consideration of self and other, an intersubjective process of comparison (or more generally, association) that stands as the ethical foundation for sympathy. Finally, I also want to make note of how the historical practice of defining and categorizing feeling can tell us much about the ostensible social, moral, and political functions of feeling.[4] As Gesa Stedman similarly notes: "Attempting to come to terms with the emotions and inventing sets of definitions

and classes of feelings is a practice which has been a staple ingredient of the discourses on emotions through the ages" (28).

Catherine Lutz has asserted that academic discussions of emotions have long been dominated by ahistorical binary distinctions (positive or negative, social or unsocial, masculine or feminine, rational or irrational, cognitive or bodily, advanced or basic). These binaries, argues Lutz, have validated and perpetuated unequal power dynamics. Within the discursive context of gender and emotion, Lutz points out that emotions commonly deemed negative are often framed as feminine, while positive emotions are seen as humanizing or universal, which privileges the masculine.[5] She proposes, and rightly so, that analyses of emotional expression need to consider discursive and historical contexts (151).

My exploration of the intersections between sympathy and anger, and as such, sympathy with anger, is an attempt to reconcile these seemingly incongruous sentiments, and to interrogate their seemingly oppositional statuses as social and unsocial. Feminist scholarship has rightly pointed out that strict binaries, and strict binary oppositions, are reductive – used historically to uphold unequal power dynamics – yet rhetorically, and as an organizing strategy or heuristic, oppositional sets have the potential to be useful in a discussion of feeling because they can help conceptualize the parameters of interrelated feelings. By organizing and articulating the extremes of feeling, one can comprehend the ways in which feelings gain social credence or are deemed unsocial or antisocial. Oppositional sets of feeling can demonstrate the limits of sociality by drawing attention to the ways that feelings are sanctioned. Moreover, in discourses of feeling, oppositional

7

sets focus on various checks and balances – the regulation of feeling – as part of the social vision in the modern polity. Looking at binaries in this way, in relation to feeling and its legibility, seems almost inevitable, since as Philip Fisher explains, "[o]pposition and contrast are artifacts of our habits of thinking by twos" (31). The categorization of feelings into oppositional groups illuminates the methodological relations between these groups; Fisher describes how feelings in literature and philosophy were marked by a methodological search for "systematic interconnectedness, oppositions, matrices, transformations, and compoundings that would organize the inner world of the soul in a profound, scientific manner" (39).

In theories of emotion, a major division is between those who consider emotions to be fundamental or "natural" – that is, felt or physiological, or part of an innate disposition – and those who deem emotions to be primarily social constructs, which are granted legitimacy through social needs that change over time, and are rooted in social codes or "display rules" (Harré and Parrott 16). Social constructivist approaches emphasize the centrality of language in the construction of these codes or rules and in the representation of emotional experience, since language maps out areas of experiences that enable individuals to make sense of feelings and their effects in the world. Regina Gagnier argues that this model interprets emotions as "endlessly malleable social constructions" (24), and in doing so, ignores patterns of behaviours across time. My work, in looking at the intellectual inheritance of the eighteenth-century, particularly moral philosophy and Romantic radicalism, attempts to consider the ways in which certain patterns or similarities have endured in the literary and empirical study of feeling.

This project also considers how discourses on feeling and emotional expression change in the mid-nineteenth century to reflect an increasingly stratified social and political structure and corresponding distinctions between socio-economic classes.

Finally, given that this project also examines how feelings are represented in literary and journalistic texts, it relies in no small part on formal and rhetorical analyses. Formalist discussions of the ways that feeling is represented in texts would consider narrative conventions, tone, and characterization, while rhetorical analyses would consider the ways that an implied author (or narrator) makes appeals to feeling for a particular effect (*pathos*). While invaluable means of inquiry for my own research, these kind of analyses also have potential limitations: if emotional appeals in fiction are interpreted as strictly rhetorical, and representations of feeling are discussed through the unidirectional concept of reading as personal identification, then emotion in general is presented as being ahistorical, and to be interpreted unproblematically by all readers.[6] To avoid this oversight, I will consider how feeling (and the sharing of feeling, or sympathy) is contiguous to wider political and social projects rooted in the actual world in which the text is read and experienced.[7]

The classification of feeling, the hallmark of discussions of the passions or the sentiments, stands as proof of the intricacies and gradation of feelings, and this can easily be applied to discussions of anger and its social role, for there are various forms and explanations of anger. In philosophical discussions, anger is often pejoratively linked to the social body as an antisocial response or reaction and a means of making distinctions within this social body. In more positive terms, however, anger within the social body

9

can be legitimized as a kind of collective claim-making that, when linked to politics, inspires campaigns for social justice or political reform. In anger's linkages to the physiological body, it stands as an affective and reactionary response and as an acknowledgment of injury or affront.[8] The purpose of my research, in discussing these implications for the social and individuated body, is to interpret the social significance of anger in a way that considers the means by which anger becomes sanctioned as part of the condition of England and in addresses to the populace, and also to examine how it can help discern between moral and immoral actions, and how it informs novelistic discourses that comment on the writing and reading of fiction. As such, my discussion of anger considers its representation within distinctly political contexts that in turn affirm distinctly literary endeavours. Indeed, literature is perhaps the best means of exploring emotion and social legibility; Rom Harré explains that because emotions exist not as stable substances or states that affect the body, but rather as representations of social exchanges or encounters, literature becomes an appropriate medium to study such representations (6).

The language used to describe anger and its cultural context has varied and changed according to newly-established forms of public order and governance, but philosophers and theorists of emotion agree that anger always involves, or implies, a judgment on something – usually the actions or character of an individual or group. Thus, it requires as its object something other to the self. In *Anger and Aggression: An Essay on Emotion* (1984), the most sustained study of anger in contemporary psychology, James Averill discusses anger as an "interpersonal emotion," one which receives its definitions

and restrictions from the social contexts in which it operates; its interpersonal role is distinguished by its temporary role of adjusting social regulations and obligations (101).

As a particular interpretation of the world, anger can be a tacit acknowledgement of the necessity to "fix" things, and as such, it has a concomitant relationship with social and political reform. Despite its negative reputation, anger is a commonly-experienced emotion, one, according to Averill, which is "intimately connected not only with our sense of well-being but also with our sense of fairness and justice" (31). Since it involves judgment and a sense of accountability, which would impute blame and responsibility on oneself or another, anger has a profound moral dimension. It can be assertive, a form of claim-making and the impetus to articulate injury; it can also involve, as part of this judgment, a hopefulness or corrective vision. As a refusal to accept conditions or losses, anger implies a belief that obstructions can be changed or overturned (Stein *et. al.* 294). In this respect, Robert C. Solomon, who defines emotions as thoughts and judgments that enable us to engage with the world, suggests that the expression of anger has a "strategic" function and value (23). Similarly, in his study on hatred and antisociability in Victorian England, Christopher Lane suggests that sanctioned anti-social behaviours often fall under the banner of reform, as a means by which to "turn rancor into a type of virtue" (51).

As a vehement emotion, anger's faintest expression may still have consequences, at least in the most immediate relations, and the ostensible danger of anger as a passion is its potential to exist as something outside of and stronger than the self (and the individual will). As both a literal and figurative force, however, anger's intensity and moral purpose

11

are critical to how it becomes socially and politically legible. Anger can be destructive or dominating – linked to the demonstration and possession of power – and it can be disruptive, in situations where those being given orders attempt to resist those orders. Finally, anger can also be righteous, a moral indignation that arises from the belief that something sacred has been violated. The "flush of indignation" that many Chartist periodicals cite as the reaction to the disparities between urban poverty and wealth, functions not solely as a symbolic turn of phrase, but also an indication of anger's affective dimension. Literally, the experience of anger, linked to its empirical origins, may energize the individual, providing necessary force behind one's articulated convictions as in the case of Felix Holt, or it may supply the motivation necessary for further action.

It is precisely because of its physiological or affective dimension that discourses on anger are often cautionary: out-of-control anger, when affect impairs cognitive judgment, has real consequences for the functioning of the social body. Even as a symptom of a weak mind or faulty disposition, as in the writings of the Stoics,[9] or as in Thomas Carlyle's critique of working-class radicalism, anger is part of meaning-making in the social body. My aim, then, is not to create a strict taxonomy of anger – literary scholars and theorists of emotion have noted the futility of such taxonomies and the reductive or normative tendencies of strict and unexamined binaries. Inevitably, discussions of anger are not neatly distinguished from aggression, hatred, and vengeance. This study will instead focus on anger by way of its transitory social role, as an adjustor

of social relations and a form of claim-making, and by its rhetorical effect within narratives.

II. Passion and Politics: Moral Philosophy, Romanticism, and Emotional Intelligence

Writing extensively about the role the "the passions" in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century moral philosophy, Susan James summarizes the motivation for moral philosophy at this time, and its implications for politics, by posing the question, "How antisocial are human beings" (55). James notes that philosophers attempt the categorical interpretation of the passions, and in doing so, ascertain culturally-specific patterns of behaviour that are not always intentionally political, but are nevertheless "shaped by, and contribute to, the theory and practice of politics" (55). Exploring the philosophical and political works of numerous philosophers,[10] James concentrates on the interconnected passions of fear and esteem, which she argues play a pivotal role in determining social and antisocial behaviours. Considering the importance that philosophers such as Hobbes, Malebranche, Hume, and Burke place on esteem – an elevation of the self that depends on others – and the fleeting nature of esteem, James identifies the frightening prospect of "disempowerment" as the impetus for political organization:

> This is one reason why people habitually pursue competitive and
> aggressive courses of action, and the only effective solution to these
> antisocial tendencies is a sovereign capable of terrifying us into obeying

the law and thus imposing a sort of order on our passion. The quest for esteem is therefore one important aspect of a more general question for power, which can only be contained by an absolutist form of government. (57)

James' focus on how political philosophers, by using the passions as an organizing category for an explanation of human disposition and action, assign "an indirect legitimation of hierarchical societies" (60). Granted, examining justifications of power and control, as part of a discussion of human nature, can aid us in better understanding and distinguishing the imperatives of governance, and subsequently, oppression or subjugation at a particular historical moment, but the focus of my research lies elsewhere.

Like James, I contend that moral philosophy should be a point of inquiry in an examination of feeling and emotion, but philosophy does not exist as the solitary discipline that examines feeling and human action – literature also attempts to provide explanations and representations of patterns of behaviour. For all her thorough scholarship, James ignores the intersections between philosophical and literary queries on feeling and its social effects. The philosophical treatises that this project examines – David Hume's *Treatise on Human Nature* (1739-40), Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), and Alexander Bain's *The Emotions and the Will* (1859) – consistently rely on literary examples to illustrate their theories of human nature and interpersonal relations. While feeling may seem like an intangible concept, especially in social constructivist approaches, when represented in literature, feeling can become an embodied force that dictates social relations within the exploratory and less immediate

14

world of fiction; literature, and of particular interest to this project, fictional and non-fictional prose, is a major system of interpretation for feeling and action, and as such, has a constitutive impact on how people view the role of literature in mediating and informing public life.

Further, my interest is not so much centred on esteem or fear, although interrelated sets of feelings are the major organizing schema of much philosophical discussion on the passions. By examining anger, which can variously be destructive, disruptive and righteous, I am concentrating on an emotion whose effect can produce either fear or esteem in others. Unlike James' guiding question, the inquiry of my research is not to determine the magnitude of how antisocial people are, and how this determination gets reified in governmental or religious authority; instead, my focus lies in whether these antisocial feelings have acknowledged social benefits. As such, this project must inevitably consider how individuals attempt to minimize anger's negative or destructive consequences, and how they evoke anger to make judgments on the nature of human relations and the inequities or injustices of the period, the latter of which can explain anger's role in social and political critique.

Many political and social writings in the mid-nineteenth century (such as condition-of-England texts) are concerned with the state of material conditions – the large urban slum or the factory – but they also discuss the conditions of sociality in public life. This attention to collective relations, to public consensus through shared feeling, emerges as a response to large-scale social and economic disparity and industrial labour relations. In representing class hostilities in numerous journalistic and novelistic discourses, writers

15

and political leaders express concerns over the lack of feeling (or benevolent bonds) between groups of individuals. This concern is manifested not distinctly as a discussion of apathy, but also as the lack of shared or common feeling (sympathy) across socioeconomic classes, which can ultimately breed hostility. Thus, sympathy, as the communication of shared feeling, becomes a part of this discussion, a necessary counter to anger, and a socializing force that may mitigate antisocial actions and impulses, which is why concerns over sympathy include discussions of anger and vice versa.

In the treatises of Hume and Smith, humans tend to sympathize with each other: the (imagined) communication of feeling is part of the human disposition. A discussion of human nature – specifically, whether individuals are inherently disposed to benevolence, or whether they are self-interested – is the guiding impetus of post-Enlightenment moral and political philosophy, as well as the emerging discipline of psychology. In *Leviathan* (1651), Hobbes' interest in controlling the passions is hardly separate from his discussion of politics, and he interprets human nature as it pertains to the development of a civil and political society. In responding to the Hobbesian notion of self-interest as the basis for sociability, Smith emphasizes sympathy and the benevolent affinities as the primary guides for human relations. This philosophical tension helps explain and justify human action, and also preferential modes of governance or regulation. The "benevolent theory" found in Smith's treatise, and in the philosophies of other moralists such as Francis Hutcheson (1694 -1746) and Anthony Ashley Cooper, the Third Earl of Shaftsbury (1671 -1731), avows a moral sense (and a moral and civic duty). This moral sense or duty reappears in Smith's more famous work on political economy,

16

On the Wealth of Nations (1776), as the "invisible" and benevolent hand that regulates the marketplace. It also anticipates the utilitarian theory of the "greatest happiness for the greatest number" propounded by nineteenth-century philosopher Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832).

By way of its central tension concerning what constitutes the driving principle of human behaviour and interaction, moral philosophy provides an articulate point of contention around which philosophical discussions of feeling could categorize sets of passions and their antitheses. As human nature becomes systematically explored and categorized, it becomes characterized by practical concerns, such as the control and use of the passions within the realms of sociability. Indeed, the psychology and empirical origins of feeling in the eighteenth century are intertwined with discussions of ethics, and by extension, with standards of conduct, all of which relate to political theories of governance. Moral philosophy's empirical inquiry into the passions renders feelings as the "authoritative grounds for aesthetics and social experience" (Pinch 8) and provides counters to Rationalist claims that reason alone guides thoughts and actions.

To be sure, the associationist principles of philosophers such as Hume, and benevolent theories such as those of Smith, did not take into account physiology (or evolutionary and biological comparisons), but as Harry H. Gardiner explains, psychophysiological theories were a nineteenth-century approach to the study of emotion (276). Both Hume and Smith's discussion of the passions, however, display an increasingly complex social vision that becomes applicable to mid-nineteenth century contexts. Hume's *Treatise* considers the epistemology and legibility of feelings through

relationships established by contiguity and resemblance, which ultimately requires a conscious and reflective understanding of the self and one's relation to others. By linking sympathy to propriety, Smith posits the sympathizing subject as a critic or judge who, in order to evaluate the conduct and feelings of others within the bounds of propriety, requires a social knowledge that can then judge the validity and intensity of the feeling in accordance with the situation that excites it in the first place. Scholars discussing Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* have identified the treatise's distinctly social purpose: the delineation and enunciation of an emergent class system. Maureen Harkin argues, for instance, that Smithian discussions of virtue and propriety provide virtuous principles adapted specifically for "commercial society" of economic competition and self-interest (175); John Dwyer asserts that the *Theory* was written for the purpose of providing the "middling ranks" in emerging capitalist society – and Dwyer equates Smith, as a professor and public servant, with this rank – with "a framework for social behaviour" (42).

The nineteenth-century reception of Hume's *Treatise* was quiet, largely due to his skepticism. Smith gained considerably more attention in the period as the celebrated author of *The Wealth of Nations,* but has been overlooked outside of his contribution to economics. Writing in 1876, Leslie Stephen explains that the muted reception Smith received as a moral philosopher in the nineteenth century was due to his "complacent optimism," an outlook that espoused a moral sense as an instinct that guides human passions towards what is good and ignores the less benevolent side of human nature (77-78), and Stephen also includes Smith's mentors, Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, in this

school. Smith's *Theory* may have been popular in his day, but Stephen ascribes this attractiveness to the effect of optimism, which produces a "cheering" affect rather than any conviction (71). Clearly, in the context of the nineteenth century, doctrines appealing to a natural instinct for social harmony might be admirable, but unrealistic or naïve.

Despite Stephen's charge, Smith's *Theory*, which is centred on the categorization of feelings as social or unsocial, is not without resonance in Victorian contexts. By the mid-nineteenth century, the emergent socioeconomic system that Harkin and Dwyer discuss had been firmly established and many were decrying its flaws: dissent against increased mechanization (Luddite and Swing riots) gave way to demonstrations surrounding the factory reform movement, New Poor Law (1834) repeal, Chartism, legalization of trade unions, and extended suffrage. Such political and social protests not only tested the affinities between groups of classed subjects, they also considered feeling and its expression by way of social and political distinctions, and in light of specific class interests.

In a *Blackwood's* article titled "On Parliamentary Reform and the French Revolution" (May 1831), published less than a year before the passing of the Reform Act, the author commences his condemnation of parliamentary reform by quoting a passage from *Theory* that illustrates Smith's concern regarding feeling as it relates to politics. The author in *Blackwood's,* in describing the calls for reforms, brings up Smith's discussion of public opinion in times of political turbulence. Smith argues that although the government usually maintains peace and tranquility, in times of public and political factionalism, and general discontent, a pressing need for reform captures public and

political attention. Smith calls this the "spirit of the system," which "enflames" public opinion and provides a forum for the leaders of discontented parties to attempt to overthrow the tested system of governance for the "imaginary beauty" of an ideal and untried system (*TMS* VI. Ii. II. 15). Similarly, the author of the *Blackwood's* article warns against a particular "spirit of the system" in times of political turbulence or hostility and links Smith's general worries to the present situation of the 1830s: "One would have imagined that the illustrious philosopher was here portraying the history of the present Reform Bill, instead of calmly reflecting on the effects of public folly in former times" (745). The author's use of Smith is apt: both are concerned with feeling and the communication of feeling within an increasingly stratified system of competing interests and ideologies.

The intersection of politics and feeling – the "spirit of the system" or, in nineteenth-century contexts, "the spirit of the people" – can also be applied to a discussion of radical politics and, as part of that, certain Romantic ideals, but William Reddy has also suggested that eighteenth-century sentimentalism, which briefly allowed emotions to play a more open role in political decision-making, was necessary to British perceptions of the French Revolution, and more widely, revolutionary politics.[11] Yet by the late-eighteenth century, sentimentalism had distinctly pejorative connotations. Iain Wilkinson explains this change in thinking as a shift from one that emphasizes a particular critical or cultivated stance or perspective to one that is increasingly open to charges of self-interest:

whereas the word "sentimental" was used in the middle decades of the

eighteenth century to refer to the process of critical thinking about social

problems as well as the experience of humanitarian sensibility, by the end

of the century it had begun to lose its positive associations with

Enlightenment social reform and was increasingly being used in a purely

derogatory sense to signify a disposition to wallow in emotional feeling.

(115)

In this traditional sense, sentimentalism, as a process of reflection that can aid reform,

includes feeling in daily and political life.

If Hume and Smith provided an emphasis on interpersonal relations in their

discussions of human feelings and virtues, Romanticism provided an emphasis on

emotional intelligence. In the widest sense, I use the phrase "emotional intelligence" to

mean the self-conscious engagement and scrutiny of feeling. Emotional intelligence can

be a skill, a contemplative one that makes the individual more prone to aesthetic

experiences and meditative poetic forms such as the lyric or ode, or it can be a heightened

sensibility and ability to control (or at least harness) emotions toward a purposeful goal.

The Romantic period prompted individuals to "claim their emotions as guarantors of their

individuality" (Pinch 3); the capacity for feeling (as a kind of emotional intelligence) was

a mark of personal distinction. Within art, the expression of feeling provides a privileged

point of insight, which can, in turn, inform cultural and social critique. John D. Mayer,

Peter Salovey, and David R. Caruso define emotional intelligence not only as a set of

abilities that can process emotional information, or a group of beneficial personality

traits, but also as a *zeitgeist*, "an intellectual or passionate trend that characterizes the moment" (93-93).

Condition-of-England texts, in commenting on the Two Nations of England – the rich and poor – also "characterize the moment" by way of feeling, or lack thereof. In this respect, they comment on the condition of the present age in a way that involves the expression of an ostensible emotional intelligence. Condition-of-England texts express a particular perspective on society in a way that privileges feeling, and the exploration of feeling, as a means by which to discuss social relations and problems of the period. Such discourses also provide sanctions for the expression and disclosure of feeling, even strong feeling such as anger and its kin. My exploration of feeling in this period will consider, as part of this legibility, the organized growth of working-class radicalism or activism, and the concomitant rise of a working-class literary culture (in particular, Chartist fiction). The chapters that follow consider philosophical and moral inheritances from the eighteenth century, but deal mostly with mid-nineteenth century texts and their immediate contexts. The chapters are not intended to provide a continuous or sequential approach to literary history; rather, my aim is to examine specific and interrelated ways that mid-nineteenth-century authors represent strong and presumably unsocial feelings such as anger or indignation, and to consider the productive potential of anger and its representation.

The primary texts explored in this dissertation are disparate; they range in form – novels, short stories, periodical essays, newspaper articles, political pamphlets and philosophical treatises – and in political ideologies and intellectual affinities, yet they all

22

assert, as part of their social and political critique, that feeling is necessary to social and political amelioration. The novels explored in this project – Charles Kingsley's *Alton Locke* (1850) and Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton* (1848) – have been variously designated as social problem, industrial, and condition-of-England novels, both by Victorian and contemporary critics. By calling them condition-of-England novels, I am purposefully emphasizing the intellectual debt they owe to Carlyle, who both coined and shaped the Condition-of-England Question. To be sure, numerous industrial or social problem novels were published in the mid-nineteenth century – notably, Benjamin Disraeli's *Sybil* (1845), Charles Dickens' *Hard Times* (1854), and Gaskell's second industrial novel, *North and South* (1855) – but I have chosen Kingsley and Gaskell's novel not only because of their overt Carlylean references, but also because their plots entwined concerns over working-class radicalism (and anger) with the expression of strong feeling in daily life, and in literary and political life. Disraeli's novel offers readers the phrase Two Nations, which is integral to the conceptualization of the condition of England as one of disparity as much as lack of feeling, yet the novel's plot point of making Sybil, the working-class eponymous heroine, a lost aristocrat, obscures the complexities of inter-class feeling and cooperation that this project discusses. Gaskell's *North and South* is similar in subject matter – the mistrust between masters and men that largely leads to a labour strike – but I contend that the novel avoids the narrative intervention found in *Mary Barton,* and the direct address to readers is an important component to my discussion of sympathy and fiction.

Rather than concentrate predominately on the condition-of-England novel, however, which numerous critics have argued is predominately directed to middle-class readers, I have also consciously included Chartist and working-class texts in an effort to show how this underlying concern with feeling and its expression endures, albeit with distinct political goals, in texts not distinctly deemed as serving middle-class interests. Indeed, contemporary scholars discussing sympathy in novels of the period have continually, and necessarily, remarked on how appeals to shared feeling have helped reify class differences, particularly middle-class moral superiority and emotional control. As such, appeals to feeling have been subject to criticism that they are apolitical or the antitheses to action – complicit in maintaining the current socio-economic system rather than radically overturning it. By considering how Chartists make appeals to feeling, and envisioning these appeals as part of political meaning-making, my aim is to explore how shared feeling is not distinctly the product of (middle-class) consciousness in the literature of the time, and thusly, address what I take to be as a critical oversight in contemporary discussions of sympathy and mid-nineteenth-century fiction.

Chapter One considers the philosophical inheritance of eighteenth-century moral philosophy, and in particular, Hume's *Treatise on Human Nature* and Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Both philosophical works include lengthy discussions of sympathy as the basis for sociability. Rather than any one feeling, sympathy is a communicated feeling that enables the sympathetic spectator (to use Smith's term) to share in, and judge, the feelings and behaviours of others. It exists, then, as a form of social judgment or approval. In contrast, Smith considers anger to be an unsocial passion and declares that it

24

is a feeling with which one does not easily sympathize. Looking at the conditions that Smith deems as necessary before anger can be readily accessible for the sympathetic spectator provides an important entry point into my examination of how anger can be sanctioned and made legible in daily and public life, and my discussion of Hume and Smith demonstrates the various affinities between sympathy and anger.

Yet, by the 1840s, the concept of sympathy as a humanizing and socializing force falls under considerable suspicion as worries over class hostility increase. Sympathy becomes, in this period, more intimately tied to self-interest than to benevolence: a self-indulgent foray into the gross inequities of the time. This charge – which I argued earlier is an enduring one in contemporary scholarship on sympathy – is one that was also discussed by nineteenth-century writers and reformers. By exploring these criticisms of sympathy as another set of limits to its social and moral import, I connect both sympathy and anger to narrative, and in particular, the cognitive and rhetorical features of sympathy and anger when represented through fiction. My contention is that theorizing sympathy in the strict context of class-interest, while legitimate, ignores its fundamental ethical function.

Chapter Two more specifically considers the Condition-of-England Question as an articulated urgency and discourse about shared feeling and its social role – one that particularly shaped the early works of Thomas Carlyle. In *Signs of the Times* (1829) and *Chartism* (1839), Carlyle summarizes the profound cultural changes of the early nineteenth century as the emergence of a divisive, callous system of wages and competition, with "Cash Payment as the sole nexus between man and man" (*SW* 199).

25

The widening material and ideological gulf between the working classes and the middle and upper classes – between what the Victorians variously called the toiling and untoiling, workers and masters – is imagined as both a geographical or spatial separation, and also as a separation or lack of shared feeling. Chartist authors such as Thomas Cooper (1805-1892) and Ernest Jones (1819- 1869), like Carlyle, also used anger as part of their social and political critiques. As part of my discussion, I explore how the representation of anger, as the rhetorical force of indignation and as the public articulation of grievances, becomes vital to how mid-nineteenth century writers and Chartist leaders discuss class and direct their critiques to an envisioned, and potentially embodied, readership and populace.

Chapter Three discusses "The Education of the Feelings," a publication by the philosopher and social radical Charles Bray (1811- 1884). More generally, it also is a phrase I use to discuss public and reformist discourses that explain feelings by way of associationist principles and by a series of limits and balances. Attention to the social body meant an attention to public morality as well as public health, and the two were intrinsically linked in governmental and charitable projects of education and reform. As well as emphasizing conduct and habit as a means to socialize emotional expression, the "Education of the Feelings" also considered physical education, and the physical body, as a site of emotional regulation.

Bray's handbook is both a philosophical and educational treatise that, like eighteenth-century moral philosophy, provided empirical origins for feeling. The other texts that I examine in this chapter – Thomas Carlyle's *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and*

the Heroic in History (1841) and Charles Kingsley's *Alton Locke, Tailor and Poet: An Autobiography* (1850) – are also concerned with feeling and its relationship to right conduct and just action, insomuch that what emerges as a unifying observation about these otherwise disparate texts is the underlying preoccupation with heroes (and moral and political leaders) as embodied models of civic conduct and feeling.

Chapter Four of this dissertation considers philosophical discussions of suffering, and sympathy with suffering, in order to explore suffering's political dimension. Long seen as redemptive or even unavoidable in Christian contexts, suffering, in the secular sense, must consider the potential for redress which, like anger, means the attribution of blame and, potentially, punishment. The political philosopher Hannah Arendt (1906-1975) considers suffering as part of what she calls the "politics of pity": groups motivated by a compassionate response to suffering can be easily persuaded towards violence, insofar as the "boundlessness" of feeling as a response to the suffering of the masses has the potential for violence and revolution (90). Like Arendt, I contend that sympathy with suffering requires anger, or indignation, because it requires the attribution of blame and the possibility and force of redress. Rather than being solely destructive, however, I see the politics of suffering as being potentially ameliorative, and a practice grounded in narrative, rather than in strict spectatorship.

In looking at Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton* (1848), this chapter explores how suffering can provide a means of community-building that encourages class cooperation and dialogue. Importantly, however, Gaskell's narrator suggests that class solidarity alone cannot help alleviate the social problems or class hostilities that cause suffering. As

27

part of my discussion, I will also examine nineteenth-century and contemporary receptions of *Mary Barton,* particularly the prevailing critique that Gaskell used feeling to temper her "impassioned polemic" (Lennox-Boyd 22). Rather, I argue that sympathy, the sharing of feeling and a perspective or openness that enables individuals to endure difference, is both material and ideological. In this respect, sympathy becomes part of Gaskell's polemic.

The conclusion to this project briefly considers the affinities between anger and sympathy by way of their particular roles in political protest and activism. My aim, in conjunction with an examination of scholarly work on Victorian activism, is to summarize what I take to be the tenants of Victorian activism in a way that takes into account condition-of-England novel.

What unites this disparate group of authors for this project is their focus on feeling as the means by which to discuss the current condition of England, and their ability to express and sympathize with strong and negative feeling. Indeed, anger has a role in the formation of class-consciousness and personal agency, as it has a role in how daily and political life come to be represented in literary discourses. History shapes the articulation and potential utility of feeling. Given the legacy of the French Revolution, of Peterloo, and with revolutions in continental Europe in the early and mid-nineteenth century, the English public expression of strong feeling must be articulated in ways that makes it capable of sympathy from others. This requires an affirmation and mediation, rather than strict repression, of feeling.

Endnotes

[1] In *Chartism,* Thomas Carlyle argues for suffrage as a panacea (216).

[2] Catherine Gallagher suggests that Barton's radicalism functions as "proof" of his inability to make "moral choices," as well as "an emblem of his moral responsibility (73). See *The Industrial Reform of English Fiction: Social Discourse and Narrative Form, 1832-1867* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1985).

[3] Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* uses the passions as a means of ethical inquiry. Aristotle's *Ethics* also provides the classic, and enduring, example of the ambivalent relation to anger; he links anger to a virtue, as a just and natural reaction to offense. See *Nicomachean Ethics,* trans. Roger Crisp (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000), Book IV.

[4] The definitional categories of passion, sentiment, feeling, and emotion vary historically and have long been used interchangeably. As "the passions" became semantically detached from their Christian connotations in the latter Middle Ages, they acquired a distinctly pejorative connotation. From its very etymology, passion implies passivity, and in this sense, passion is a "disclaimed reaction" – whereby the subject (or sufferer) disclaims responsibility or agency – and its negative overtones are linked to notions of biological agitation and disorder (Averill 16). Encompassingly, the term passion was often used to discuss negative or strong feeling in general, such as anger; Stedman also notes that the term often appeared in texts as a synonym for anger or destructive emotional expression. In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century moral philosophy, the term "sentiment" was distinct from "feeling" in moral philosophy; the

former implied a distinct cognitive capacity (a "mental feeling"), the latter emphasized physical agitation, sensation, or affect (Stedman 39). The term "emotion" became increasingly used in place of "passion" or feeling particularly in scientific and physiological disciplines during the nineteenth century. Unless otherwise noted, I use these terms based on the connotations above, and in accordance with their historical usages.

[5] Since such binaries also underscore the gender asymmetry that devalues women for being irrational and excessively emotional, Lutz points out that gender is inseparable as a point of discussion on the representation of emotion (151- 58).

[6] Stedman also makes this point and refers to Barbara Hardy's *Forms of Feeling in Victorian Fiction* (Athens: Ohio UP, 1985) as an example of this ahistorical approach. Hardy claims that while all Victorian novelists manipulate reader's feelings for fictional effect, the distinction between great Victorian novelists – Hardy discusses Dickens, Thackeray, and Eliot – and less-skilled novelists is that the latter make this appeal to the emotions more apparent through overtly manipulative and stereotyped modes (14). In this respect, Hardy ignores the political context of specific (and perhaps didactic) strategies of address and conceives of literary merit as separate from political and social purpose. Mary Ellen Doyle attributes the rhetorical appeal to the emotions as an element of style – particularly a Dickensian style – but does not consider these rhetorical appeals as the means by which authors make certain feelings socially and political legible. See *The*

Sympathetic Response: George Eliot's Fictional Rhetoric (London: Associated University Press, 1981).

[7] Even when a person knowingly reads fiction, this individual can still have sympathy for characters that he or she knows do not exist – what many call the "paradox of emotional responses to fiction." There is much divergent research on this paradox: that the emotions that one feels when reading fiction are "make-believe"; that they are our responses to an illusionary world that has been created through fiction; and that cognition or belief is irrelevant to emotional responses to fiction. See Kendall Walton, "Fearing Fictions" in *Journal of Philosophy* 75.1 (1978): 5 -27; Colin Radford, "How Can We Be Moved by the Fate of Anna Karenina?" *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society.* 49 (1975): 67-80; Peter Lamarque and Stein Haugom Olsen, *Truth, Fiction, and Literature: A Philosophical Perspective* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994). Regardless of the explanations provided, sympathy is an imagined identification that entails a response in the actual world.

[8] In later theories of emotions, such as in Charles Darwin's *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872), anger provides the "fight" in fight-or-flight responses that are part of the survival instinct, whereas the flight response is marked and motivated by fear (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1965).

[9] The Stoics (approximately 200 BCE to 300 CE) viewed affective states (impulses, desires, fears, and more generally, feeling) to be unreliable and easily corruptible. In Stoical thought, and post-Enlightenment philosophers influenced by the

Stoics such as Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), the passions were misguided or poorly-directed thoughts that thwart rational judgments and decision-making.

[10] Specifically, James examines the following: Thomas Hobbes (1588 – 1679), Nicolas Malebranche (1638 – 1715), David Hume (1711-1776), and Edmund Burke (1729 – 1797). In *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth-Century Philosophy,* James includes lengthy discussions of Hobbes, Malebranche, Spinoza, and Descartes. (Oxford: OUP, 1997).

[11] See William M. Reddy's "Sentimentalism and Its Erasure: The Role of Emotions in the Era of the French Revolution." *Journal of Modern History* 72.1 (2000): 109-152.

Chapter One

"What has befallen you?": Narratives of Sympathy and Anger

> He who walks through a great city to find subjects for weeping, may find plenty at every corner to wring his heart; but let a man walk on his course, and enjoy his grief alone – we are not of those who would accompany him. The miseries of us poor earth-dwellers gain no alleviation from the sympathy of those who merely hunt them out to be pathetic over them. The weeping philosopher too often impairs his eyesight by his woe, and becomes unable from his tears to see the remedies for the evil he deplores. Thus it will often be found that the man of no tears is the truest philanthropist, as he is the best physician who wears a cheerful face, even in the worst of cases.
>
> – Charles MacKay
> *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds* (1841)

A socializing force in eighteenth-century moral philosophy, sympathy undergoes a series of changes in the nineteenth century, noteworthy not only in philosophy, but also in literary forms and modes of representation. For eighteenth-century moral philosophers such as David Hume and Adam Smith, sympathy is a human disposition, and both philosophers provide categorizations and taxonomies of feelings as more than personal vices or virtues by discussing how feelings influence social relations.

By the early and mid-nineteenth century, this social vision expands to include the modern class system and the pressing need to articulate class relations and class interests. The passions, increasingly replaced by designations of feeling and emotion, become the objects of scrutiny in politics and in sociological and scientific studies. In the period of Charles MacKay's popular history, the Hungry Forties, sympathy becomes the self-indulgent property of the "weeping philosopher." In its excesses, sympathy does little to

remedy the widespread miseries of mid-nineteenth-century industrialized and urban life. Yet even under considerable critique and suspicion, sympathy, as a socializing force, endures and serves an array of purposes in politics and the representation of daily life.

In MacKay's critique, the tears of the philosopher impair the effectiveness of social action – the conscious process of diagnosing and documenting social problems and offering ameliorative solutions. Indeed, MacKay's description of the weeping philosopher as a person who "merely hunts [problems] out to be pathetic over them" implies a certain self-centred motive, and MacKay trenchantly ridicules the lofty aims of sympathy (and emotional expression in general); instead, he favours the controlled, almost scientific, actions of the philanthropist-physician. In his popular history, MacKay is touching upon a common public sentiment: by the mid-nineteenth century, the rise of working-class radicalism, the creation of workhouses in accordance with the New Poor Law (1834), and Benthamite and Malthusian doctrines, provoke new discussions about charity as opponents and proponents consider its effectiveness in alleviating urban poverty and social inequity.[1] Throughout the nineteenth-century, individuals (including policy makers, reformers, and social scientists) questioned whether philanthropy was truly a practice born out of sympathy and Christian duty, one born out of a prevailing class-based fear of the urban poor, or simply, a self-interested exercise.

In discussing the origins of the class system in the period, Harold Perkin argues that the Poor Laws, along with other legislation aimed at controlling the working classes (such as the Combinations Act), were products of the period's political thought, which evaded paternalistic responsibilities while attempting to "enact paternal discipline" (187-

34

89). Perkin's model of social control is influential, and similar models continue to be used in contemporary Victorian scholarship to explore sympathy and, more widely, nineteenth-century class relations. Variously, scholars have discussed sympathy as a disciplinary tool that operates through visual and discursive means in literature and journalism,[2] or as a process of middle-class self-constitution and reification of socioeconomic difference.[3] These approaches assume an inherent self-interestedness as the impetus of sympathy and sympathetic identification. The once-innate disposition of sympathy – available to individuals of all social ranks according to Hume and Smith's treatises – becomes increasingly interrogated by contemporary scholars as a suitable means of expressing and representing relations between the classes. The interpersonal (and imaginative) sharing of feeling becomes, in mid-nineteenth-century texts, an ostensible means of either ameliorating or avoiding "the violent dislocations of industrialization" (Shaub 19). Yet, much contemporary scholarship questioning the efficacy of sympathy ignores how nineteenth-century authors and reformers expressed similar arguments in relation to sympathy and its expression.

This chapter examines the extensions of, and overlaps between, discourses of feelings, in particular sympathy and anger, from eighteenth-century moral philosophy to nineteenth-century political and social writings that attempt to document and diagnose the condition of England and discuss interclass relations. The response to the either inhumane or indifferent treatment of the labouring and urban poor was one that both affirmed sympathy's role in social projects and sociability and designated its limits. For political radicals, political representation was a better means of alleviating the conditions

that social and Christian reformers attempted to mitigate with charity. If sympathy is not any one feeling, but the interpersonal communication of feeling, the changing discourses of sympathy in this period imply a rethinking of the social functions of all emotion, especially of those that seem antithetical. In this respect, my examination of sympathy implies an interrogation of the proposed limits and exceptions to these communicative processes or exchanges. As a model or means of control or self-constitution, sympathy garners critique as to its social and moral value. There is a fundamental uncertainty behind sympathy and its ethical function, one that both Hume and Smith must confront in their philosophical treatises, and one that endures in nineteenth-century discourses on feeling. Understanding the philosophical nuances that reside in eighteenth-century moral philosophy can provide valuable insight into sympathy's relation to politics, interpersonal relations, and literature, even during periods of its critique.

By its very title, *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds,* MacKay's study speaks to prevailing and intertwining concerns about feeling and its expression. In particular, MacKay focuses on the crowd, whether it be the throngs of people in the city, the spontaneous formation of individuals, or the political crowd demanding attention and political change. Historically, the language used to describe the crowd becomes the very language used to describe unregulated, strong emotions such as anger; the crowd is both a literal force and an analogy that reinforces the concurrent concerns over emotional expression and the organization and movement of individuals into groups.[4] I want momentarily to contrast MacKay's weeping philosopher with another figure of feeling: the angry man in Smith's *The Theory of the Moral Sentiments* (1759).

36

Like Mackay's overly emotive philosopher, the angry man is an exemplar of the social limitations of sympathy. MacKay's figure may prompt mild ridicule, but Smith's angry man is threatening to both individuals and social order.

For Smith, anger is one of the "unsocial passions," a category that also includes resentment and hatred: the unsocial passions drive individuals from each other and are ineffective in garnering sympathy. This chapter asserts that despite Smith's designation, the unsocial passions are necessary in social and political life and requisite to the formation of collective identities. Between the 1830s and 1860s, the period surrounding the reform acts and the rise of working-class radicalism such as the Chartist movement, anger becomes an inextricable and strategic part of political assertions and calls for enfranchisement as the means to alleviate the suffering and inequities of the working classes. In this context, anger functions as proof of sympathy with the suffering of the poor, or as proof of one's moral outrage and concern over the state of relations between the classes. In literary culture, anger is a narrative force by which to address the declining spiritual and material conditions of England; it becomes a consideration in the organization of plot lines or episodes, and it exists, whether named or not, in descriptions of literary protagonists, political leaders, and philosophers (the latter best exemplified by Carlyle).

By invoking the weeping philosopher and the angry man, I aim to point out the possible extremes, or parameters, of sympathy and anger, as such extremes provide an important heuristic for the understanding of the social and political implications of feeling. A concentration on extremes (or antitheses) focuses on the limits of feeling, their

social utility, and the varying strategies that legitimize their expressions or minimize their consequences. Despite their ostensible oppositions, overlaps between sympathy and anger persist: both come under considerable critique in the nineteenth century; both involve a conception of the self; and both are theoretically linked to larger discussions of narrative and the role of literature in alleviating social issues. Conceiving of anger as something oppositional or exclusive to sympathy is in itself purposeful, since both can, given a degree of social legitimacy, engender collectivity by creating affective and emotional bonds between groups of people.

At best, sympathy is a socializing force: it enables individuals to identity with each other on the basis of fellow feeling and has the potential to transform one's views of people unlike oneself. In excess, sympathy can immobilize an individual: the person who sympathizes too much is unable to act against suffering and victimization (Shaub 15-17). At best, anger can be an ameliorative or productive force and a form of claim-making: it can be an assertion of a wrong or injustice against an individual or group; it can be a motivating force used to correct a wrong, a situation, or prevent further harm; or it can restore or overturn the balance of power. At worst, anger is destructive and antisocial, used to inflict pain or injury for personal gains or pleasure and produce social fissures or antagonistic responses. Embodied in the crowd, as a mob or a riot, anger also exists as a potentially revolutionary force. Thus, in their excesses, sympathy and anger can both motivate and compromise actions of social and political reform and can give rise to considerable tensions in the body politic.

In examining the epistemology of feeling in eighteenth-century moral philosophy, I want to compare the philosophical and practical continuities between discourses of the sentiments and passions in the eighteenth century with discourses of feeling (or emotion) in the mid-nineteenth century. Emotion is an organizing category; understanding the trajectory of changes and similarities in conceptions of feeling (and their shared expression) can illustrate how philosophers and authors attempt to describe feeling by way of human nature and psychology, by way of social critiques about the material and spiritual condition of England, and by way of literary merit.

I. Sociability and the Epistemology of Feeling: Representing Sympathy

Hume identifies the subject of *A Treatise on Human Nature* (1739- 1740) as the "science of human nature" (I. i. I. 7). Given the philosophical inheritance of the Enlightenment – intellectual and social progress and reforms, the advancement of sciences and scientific methodology, and empiricist epistemologies to explain human behaviour – this does not seem surprising. Hume's lament in the Conclusion to Book I, however, which comes immediately before his sustained discussion of "the passions" in Book II, can be characterized by what Adele Pinch calls "emotional extravagance": it eludes definitions and boundaries (4). Feelings, and particularly the feelings of the "weeping" philosopher, compromise Hume's philosophic and systematic observance of human nature and action:

> I am first frightened and confounded with that forlorn solitude, in which I
> am plac'd in my philosophy, and fancy myself some strange uncouth

monster, who not being able to mingle and unite in society, has been expell'd all human commerce, and left utterly abandon'd and disconsolate. Fain wou'd I run into the crowd for shelter and warmth; but cannot prevail with myself to mix with such deformity. I call upon others to join me, in order to make a company apart; but no one will hearken to me. (*Treatise* I. iv. VII. 264)

Hume's observance of human activity alienates him from the objects of his study. He is both "confounded" and "forlorn" at his intellectual endeavour; like Smith's angry man, he is an "uncouth monster" unable to "mingle and unite in society." Hume's hyperbolic moment of despair and self-doubt at the first book's conclusion, whether feigned or otherwise, could be a pronouncement of failure for this "science of man" and the unsystematic relationship among feelings, intellect, and imagination. Formally, Hume's emotional extravagance inserts feeling into a discussion of both sociability and its antithesis, which in his example is social alienation and despair.

Hume's central epistemological distinction is between impressions and ideas, a division that is based on intensity: impressions, which include emotions and sensations, are forceful and immediate, while ideas are "faint images" that are recollected from impressions (*Treatise* I. i. I. 1). Impressions strike the senses, explains Hume; what remains in the mind is a copy after the impression ceases, and this becomes an idea (*Treatise* I. i. II. 8). These objects of the mind are not invariable or solitary; along with personal memory and imagination, they produce variable – or, in the case of Hume's resultant despair, unexpected – results. Imagination may be "inconstant and fallacious"

(*Treatise* I. iv. VII. 265), yet it is a means by which individuals make associations between certain objects and causes. Similarly, the passions are, for Hume, associative rather than stable or closed states, in which one passion can readily change into or merge with another.[5] These associative principles help explain the "changeableness" of human nature (*Treatise* II. i. IV. 283), perhaps a fitting reason behind Hume's philosophical despair.

His moment of despondency is doubly interesting, since it also acknowledges, rather dramatically, the magnitude of existing unsociability, even within the very "crowd" of people to which he runs for consolation: "When I look abroad, I foresee on every side, dispute, contradiction, anger, calumny and detraction. When I turn my eye inward, I find nothing but doubt and ignorance. All the world conspires to oppose and contradict me; tho' such is my weakness" (*Treatise* I. iv. VII. 264). This enlarged vision is both cautionary and descriptive; animosity and conflict abound as impressions and beliefs differ. This illustrative moment of concern for the unsociability of individuals widens the philosopher's field of inquiry: from simply classifying the passions to examining their manifestations and social consequences.

Hume's categorization of passions focuses on binaries and oppositions: hate is examined in the same section as love; pride, in the same as humility; anger, in the same as benevolence. These sets of feeling are what Hume calls the "indirect passions," since they require a belief about an object, real or imagined. As this object is either the self or another person, these groups of feelings are intimately concerned with interpersonal relations: "Hatred, resentment, esteem, love, courage, mirth and melancholy; all these

passions I feel more from communication than from my own natural temper and disposition" (*Treatise* II. i. XI. 317). For Hume, individuals are susceptible to the opinion of others, and they judge objects and people more through imaginative comparisons than from any intrinsic merit or value (*Treatise* II. i. VI. 291).

Another unique predilection of human nature in *Treatise* is its capacity for sympathy: "No quality of human nature is more remarkable, both in itself and in its consequences, than that propensity we have to sympathize with others, and to receive by communication their inclinations and sentiments, however different from, or even contrary to our own" (II. i. XI. 316). Sympathy is not isolated feeling, but a formidable communication of feeling framed by social conventions and recognizable cues: one individual interprets another's emotional state through visual or discursive cues (facial expressions, language, etc.), and this is conveyed as an impression that "acquires such a degree of force and vivacity, as to become the very passion itself" (*Treatise* II. i. XI. 317). The force of this sympathetic communication is determined by the strength of the relation between the self and the person with whom one sympathizes: "The stronger the relation is betwixt ourselves to any object, the more easily does the imagination make the transitions, and convey to the related idea the vivacity of conception, with which we always form the idea of our person" (*Treatise* II. i. XI. 318). In this respect, Humean sympathy is dictated by two conditions: the existing or imagined relationship between the sympathizing subject and his or her object of sympathy, and a conception of the self, which enables the understanding of associationist principles, such as resemblance and contiguity, that are required in the first condition. Thus, for Hume, affections and

hostilities depend on, and are a reflection of, ourselves and our relationships with others (*Treatise* II. i. XI. 319). Both conditions are shaped by the imagination (imagined relations or resemblances), and historical forces, since resemblances between individuals – recognizable social identities or shared beliefs – take on new articulations over time.

In discussing Hume's theory of associative relations, Susan James outlines the importance of resemblance – as the recognition of similarities – in interpersonal communication and feeling:

> Resemblance is the first relation at work, but once a basis for comparison has been established, contiguity or proximity comes into play. Humans compare themselves with other humans because they resemble each other, but while a common soldier compares himself with his sergeant corporal, he does not compare himself with his general. As Hume puts it, the distance between general and solider "cuts off the relation." (63)

Associations such as resemblance, contiguity, and proximity, in this regard, have explicit connotations with social position, or rather, the overt recognition of one's position in regards to another or in regards to one's own. Ultimately, then, Hume's communication of sympathy is a socialized response, since such associative relations, or lack thereof, link the individual to his or her relative place in the social order – a particularly regimented order, if one takes Hume and James' analogy further. As James' discussion illustrates, Hume's examples of sympathy involve significant attention to the social relations between the sympathetic subject and his or her object, and his assertion that sympathy is strongest towards those with whom one shares a physical or social resemblance is

43

significant. In this respect, sympathy, necessary to the project of sociability, regulates interactions with members of one's own social position or station (and dictates relations with those outside of this position), and in doing so, it prompts identification or even resentment.[6] As an affirmation of one's place (and fidelity to that place) in society, this aspect of sympathy becomes more explicitly reiterated through Smith's own philosophical treatise on feeling.

Hume and Smith's conceptions of sympathy demonstrate an increasingly organized social vision, and Smithian sympathy is a suitable extension to Hume's. The examples of sympathetic exchange that Smith provides, as well as the limits he imposes, are telling as to how he conceptualizes feeling (in this case, sentiment) in relation to sociability. Smith qualifies his discussion of sympathy by linking it to "propriety," yet he also proposes sympathy as a requisite of human nature:

> How selfish so ever a man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, then he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it. . . . The greatest ruffian, the most hardened violator of the laws of society, is not altogether without it. (*TMS* I. i. I. 1)

Throughout *The Theory of Moral Sentiments,* Smith also provides consecutive examples of the sympathetic communication of feeling as a process dictated by imagination rather than certainty, and by a consideration of the self and other: a person observing someone being tortured imagines what the other is feeling, albeit to a weaker degree; those

44

sympathetic to beggars on the street, with their sores and ulcers, are likely to experience a corresponding unease or itch in their own bodies "because that horror arises from conceiving what they themselves would suffering, if they really were the wretches whom they were looking upon" (*TMS* I. i. I. 2-3).

Importantly, Smith provides sympathy with a narrower definition by restricting it to certain passions. One needs to know the cause of a person's emotional state, he explains, before sympathy is possible; otherwise, the sympathy will be "imperfect," spurred by curiosity rather than true feeling. In order to know the cause of sympathy, the first question that Smith asks is, "What has befallen you?" (*TMS* I. i. I. 9). The use of the word "befallen" is telling; first, it implies that what has "befallen" the individual is something negative or unwanted, and second, that this predicament has materialized for an individual through no action of his or her own. By this question, then, Smith proclaims that the traditional definition of sympathy is fellow-feeling with suffering (*TMS* I. iii. I. 1). Thus, when an individual sympathizes with suffering, he or she makes certain evaluative judgments about the sufferer (a tacit acknowledgement of injustice or cruelty that has befallen the object of sympathy) and his or her feelings.

Smith sets up his "impartial spectator" to be a judge or critic. His discussion of impartiality does not negate the self, but envisions the sympathizing subject as one whose sympathy entails moral approbation towards the feeling of another. Charles Griswold explains that in proposing an impartial spectator, as opposed to an actor, Smith's provides "a theory of the spectator's approval of emotions" (104). The spectator-actor dichotomy is central in Smith's treatise and Griswold notes how Smith himself provides the analogy

45

of the theatre critic as the model by which one could best discuss moral and social judgments and express either approval or disapproval (65-67). Linking propriety to sympathy is understandable in this respect: the impartial spectator must judge the propriety of the feeling given the social context, and the propriety of its expression relative to the situation that excites it.

Despite the prominent place that sympathy holds in Hume and Smith's discussions of the moral sentiments, there is no genuine or promised outcome as a result of sympathetic engagement and exchange, and this may explain why sympathy falls prey to critique in post-Revolutionary contexts. Nancy J. Hirschmann acknowledges this point as the inherently "problematic individualism" of sympathy, wherein the understanding of others only comes from a projection of one's own experiences. Hirschmann's observation provides another uncertainty between sympathy and its ability to motivate action: "The fact that sympathy cannot on its own motivate people to act suggests that it is a deeply individualistic psychological principle: my sympathetic feelings may be 'natural,' but they are locked inside me until some 'trigger' happens to motivate me to act" (184). Herein lies the epistemological uncertainty of sympathy in Hume and Smith's theories: prompted by the imagination, sympathy may well be a fictitious response, and while it is not guided by self-interest (as the Smithian term, "impartial spectator," implies), it does require an immanent conception of self. It is enough for a person to imagine how another feels, rather than have assurance of that feeling, which explains why one is able to have sympathy for the dead, or fictional characters, or feel embarrassed for those who are not embarrassed themselves (but perhaps should be).

46

Conceptions of sympathy in moral philosophy, such as those posited by Hume and Smith, are counter-responses to the doctrine of self-interest adopted by philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes and Bernard Mandeville. As counter-responses, they claim an ethical doctrine that grants human nature the disposition of benevolence; this benevolent disposition, however, can never fully escape the central figure of the self. Indeed, both nineteenth-century and contemporary authors and scholars have addressed the possibility (or inescapability) of sympathy's relation to self-interest. In *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century* (1876), Leslie Stephen provides a compelling reason for this paradox: since philosophy itself is "obligated to start from considerations of the individual mind, instead of contemplating the social organism," the "plausibility" of the selfish doctrine is bound to pervade (70). More recently, Anne Cvetkovich discusses sympathy in Victorian sensation fiction by linking it to pleasure. Shared feeling is pleasurable as it can link the spectator to another individual, and Cvetkovich argues that the pleasure of sympathy exists as a form of power that converts pain into the pleasure of the spectator (154). Hume would likely concur; in *Treatise,* he discusses the pleasure that can ensue when comparing one's own state with the misery and suffering of another's: "The misery of another gives us a more lively idea of our happiness" (*Treatise* II. ii. VIII. 375). In discussing Hume's conceptions of sympathetic virtue, Christine Swanton points out that this pleasure is not always constant, but rather, determined by the magnitude of the scene or event and the proximity of the spectator to the object.[7] As such, this pleasure implies that it comes from a kind of interpersonal triumph or power over another individual – a situation that is rife with potential hostilities.

Amanda Anderson has noted how significant scholarly work on Victorian literature and culture has tended to view nineteenth-century intersubjective practices and capabilities – from which new paradigms, norms, or perspectives emerge as a means of understanding culture – as legitimizing forms of power, and she discusses, particularly, contemporary critiques of critical detachment or disinterest. Her contention is that a "hermeneutics of suspicion" suffuses contemporary discussions of critical or aesthetic detachment, which questions the possibility of critical (or cultivated) distance and the ethical or moral value of such a perspective (8). A similar interpretation pervades contemporary discussions of sympathy and sympathetic engagement: scholars looking at benevolent theories in moral philosophy, whether primarily as a means of self-constitution, or prompted by individualistic motives, tend to overlook sympathy's social role as a point of view or perspective, concentrating instead on sympathy as a strict subject position.

This "hermeneutics of suspicion" also frames much mid-nineteenth-century discussion of sympathy. MacKay's quote in the epigraph raises questions as to whether sympathy is a formidable force for social good, or whether it is a self-indulgent foray of the philosopher or philanthropist (a broad designation that could well include authors, critics, reformers and political leaders). In *Signs of the Times* (1829), Carlyle quite tellingly describes "the noble omnipotence of Sympathy" as one in which "all are cast as victims and as fuel" (*SW* 61) – a potentially explosive catalyst for self-interested political agency and the pursuit of power.

48

In contemporary Victorian scholarship, those who question the efficacy and validity of sympathetic engagement might consider appeals to sympathy as apolitical (or at least avoidant) responses within interpersonal and social relations. Most notable is Raymond Williams's discussion of mid-nineteenth-century industrial novels, such as Gaskell's *Mary Barton,* which he characterizes as having "a combination of sympathetic observation" and a "largely successful attempt at imaginative identification" (*Culture and Society* 88). This "structure of feeling," a concept that Williams uses to characterize the daily experiences and standards of living of a particular time and place, makes certain assumptions. First, it implies that feeling – its expression and representation – is necessary to the characterization of a period and its dominant beliefs, given (as Humean theory also explains) that many of our most fundamental emotions – love, hate, anger, benevolence – require an ascertained belief about the particular object of feeling. Second, it also links feeling, and conflicts in feeling, to public opinion and sentiment. Yet Williams' description of Gaskell's novel illustrates his own contention that sympathy is not enough; it may act as a smokescreen to political solutions or avoid the laying of blame on those who should be held accountable for the period's inequities and miseries.

Williams's "structure of feeling" is one that attempts to characterize a particular historical moment – much like Hazlitt's "spirit of the age" (albeit less idealistically) or Carlyle's "condition of England" – by outlining dominant perceptions and values shared among individuals and articulated in literary forms and conventions. For Williams, the industrial novels of the Hungry Forties – as literary responses to large-scale industrial suffering – are examples of these structures of feeling, and *Mary Barton* is an

"imaginative re-creation" of working-class Manchester life (*Culture and Society* 87). Yet with its changes in emphasis – from John Barton, the intended eponymous protagonist, to his daughter, Mary, and from the political plot to the domestic and melodramatic – Gaskell's novel, Williams argues, ultimately reflects the author's middle-class fear of working-class anger and violence. Thus, for Williams, Gaskell's response to suffering is "deep and genuine," but pity or sympathy (Williams uses the terms interchangeably) cannot stand alone in this structure of feeling, and Barton becomes, in the narrative, a projection of middle-class worries (*Culture and Society* 90-91).

In this respect, sympathy is admirable but, like MacKay's weeping philosopher, woefully insufficient. It does not resolve the conditions that prompt sympathy in the first place; moreover, it ostensibly fails to overcome feelings of anger, fear or condemnation that are entrenched, not necessarily in conscious self-interest, but in class differences and ideologies. This is a charge leveled at many condition-of-England writers, and Gaskell's contemporaries, such as Charles Dickens, Thomas Carlyle, and Charles Kingsley. William's observation that Gaskell's sympathy is inconsistent is apt, especially considering that, by Hume and Smith's own assurances, sympathy *is* inconsistent by its very nature – it changes according to one's position in the world (and relation to the object), and it varies according to the kinds of feelings with which one could sympathize.

In discussing appeals to feeling in Victorian fiction, Valerie Bystrom argues that sympathy in condition-of-England novels is prompted primarily through pathos; the novels' unevenness arises from the fact that sympathy is represented through fiction: "As the conventions of sympathetic pathos evolve through the eighteenth and nineteenth

50

centuries, they reflect the inconsistencies which arise simply from the effort to introduce the sympathetic program into the traditions of fiction" (219). Bystrom, however, ignores the possibility that sympathy could be inconsistent on its own, regardless of literary and fictional conventions, and she subsumes the potential for excessive sympathy under a moral doctrine of Christian duty, whereby sympathy linked to Christian virtue is safe from charges of excessiveness (219).

Yet the relationship between feeling and its representation in literary conventions is reciprocal. Literary forms or conventions do not simply dictate the representation of feeling (although forms such as sensation fiction and melodrama certainly rely on deliberate affect). Moreover, feeling is not, as we say of form, an empty vessel to be filled by words; instead, literary forms and conventions are partly constituted by recognizable conceptions of feelings that respond to some need (or outrage, or fear, or anger) of the moment. Philip Fisher makes a similar point when he argues that "vehement" emotions have a stake in determining literary form: "the passions are not important mainly as momentary situations within works. They are not only occasions where some character or another feels shame or anger, love or sorrow. Instead, wonder, pity, mourning, fear, anger, grief, and shame legislate what we mean by genre and by form" (11).

Unlike Williams, then, I do not consider the representation of feeling in industrial novels of the 1840s to be apolitical, but as part of a recognizable dialogue between sympathetic author (or narrator), a readership, and the object(s) of sympathy. My particular interest in condition-of-England texts is one that affirms this connection

between feeling and form: condition-of-England texts are purposefully concerned with feeling and its role in public life, and in turn, the representation of feeling in these texts informs their formal aspects. Formalistic concerns – such as the tone of the narrator, direct addresses to the reader, and changes in focalization – can aid in what George Eliot calls "the extension of our sympathies," which is, according to Eliot, the "greatest benefit" to the public given by an artist, whether visual or literary.[8] In discussing how sympathy operates through the act of reading fiction, Keith Oatley also considers Eliot's declaration linking artistic achievement and merit with sympathy, and he contends that a story's organization – its discourse structure – has the potential for differing psychological effects (440). Different narrative techniques influence the amount, or "spectrum" of sympathetic identification between readers and objects of sympathy in fiction by way of associations (reflections, emotions, memories). Oatley's "associative structure" is a varying structural element and a point of dialogue between readers and characters whereby the reader identifies with a protagonist or narrator (445-447).

The mid-nineteenth century was a period of profound concern over interpersonal relations: the lack of identification (and thus, sympathy) between individuals articulated as a physical and emotional gulf between the Two Nations, and the emergence of new forms of identification based on class and political motives. In such a period, the extension of one's sympathy could be a decisively political act and as such, it becomes particularly contentious and hard to represent. Moreover, with the emergence of political radicalism and working-class movements such as Chartism, calls for sympathetic feeling exist alongside populist concerns. The crowd in Mackay's popular history may be

52

delusional or "mad," but it serves as a powerful trope at the time – one that informs both feeling and literary and discursive forms. The crowd is embodied sympathy, a group of individuals linked by some common feeling, however fleeting. Indeed, such fellow feeling can provoke particular fears of unrest or insurrection that may impede or quell sympathy by those who do not share similarities (or in Humean terms, resemble) those in the crowd. In this respect, the Frankenstein reference that Gaskell and other mid-nineteenth century authors employ to describe the "uneducated" and increasingly hostile masses (of which John Barton is a part) is particularly apt: this "monstrous" assemblage is the object of both sympathy and fear, the latter being the typical reaction to displays of anger.[9] Like other reactions to anger, sympathy with anger also produces antisocial responses: the very danger of such sympathy is that it can breed more anger.

II. The Unsocial Passion, Social Order, and Legibility: Representing Anger

Smith's angry man, like Frankenstein's monster, may be a difficult figure to sympathize with; yet despite anger being an "unsocial" passion, it is not impossible to have sympathy with anger. Smith explains that individuals are "averse to enter into [anger], and, til informed of its causes, to be disposed rather to take part against it" (*TMS* I. i. I. 8). Not knowing the response to the question, "what has befallen you?," and thus, being unable to judge the propriety of the feeling or the situation from which the feeling arose, the spectator responds with fear or anger. Smith is not arguing that sympathy with anger cannot exist, nor is he cautioning against all forms of anger; indeed, the lack of "proper" indignation is, for Smith, a defect in character,[10] since it renders a individual

53

"incapable of protecting either himself or his friends from insult and injustice" (*TMS* VI. Iii. 16). Despite its categorization as "unsocial," anger has, in Smith's discussion, a discernible social function as an assertion of a perceived wrong or injustice, and it is not the actual emotion that elicits sympathy, but the situation or context that one enters into as a spectator. Thus, the sympathizing subject must have a clear understanding (and certainty) of the situation that excites the feeling in the first place in order to judge that feeling accordingly.

In this sense, anger must be contextualized and defined before one can have sympathy with this feeling: the situation that excites it must be articulated, and its object must be recognizable. Moreover, it must be expressed at a level relative to its object and the situation, and this Smithian requirement exists, alongside many similar historical treatments of anger, because as an unsocial passion, anger carries connotations of madness or disorder, or at the very least, a likely escalation of feeling and consequent action. For Smith, anger must be "humbled and bought down below that pitch to which it would naturally rise;" he attributes unmitigated expressions of anger to an "undisciplined nature" (*TMS* I. ii. III. 1), a charge that resounds in Carlyle's own critique of Chartist anger and the threat of physical force. Without mediation, explains Smith, the "hoarse, boisterous, and discordant" qualities of anger inspire antisocial reactions of aversion or fear (*TMS* I. ii. III. 5).

This discussion of anger – that its qualities require feeling be mediated in order to be socially recognizable and valorized – has implications for how it is represented. For context (and the conditions necessary to incur sound judgment on its ethical and social

import), anger requires disclosure[11] on the part of who is angered: one that articulates the cause of such a feeling in the first place. While these may be viewed as justifications or excuses for anger, Smith makes it clear that it is the role of the spectator to judge the propriety of these reasons, which although problematic (a point I will take up in Chapter Four), may be intended to disavow such disclosure to be a self-serving justification on the part of the angry subject. Like other reactions of anger, sympathy with anger also produces antisocial responses: like-minded discontent and the escalation of hostilities. Yet, as a reaction to injustice, anger, if judged by the spectator as so, can be sanctioned as appropriate, or even necessary.

The ways that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century writers define and describe anger provide examples of this tenuous relationship between sociability and emotional expression. Definitive categories of the social and unsocial passions, like the distinctions between high and low culture, are characterized along the lines of social utility – that which stabilizes a coherent social body and that which undermines it. As a potential disturbance to prevailing order or authority, anger can be either an assertion or claim about oneself or a reaction to one's treatment at the hands of others. Thus, like sympathy, anger requires a "conception of oneself that enables one to judge another" (Sommers 31). While the "social passions" arise from a benevolent desire to contribute to or help society, "unsocial passions" such as anger instill what Fisher calls "the absolute priority of the self" (46). Despite its connotations, or indeed, partly because of them, angry expressions assert the importance of the individual (which is why Smith deems them unsocial), but they also articulate an individual's place in, and reflections on, society.

Fisher explains that expressions of anger operate as reactions to an affront that threatens, however minutely, the project of sociability and interpersonal relations: for it is in "the everyday actions of noticing offenses, requiring apology, and making or receiving apology that a banal but conspicuous policing of the borders of self-worth takes place" (66). Anger expressed by the unified or collective assertions of a group can serve as an important social barometer of a particular period or event; it can exist as the interrogation of existing norms, as the demand for social (and perhaps political) apology or solutions, and as the validation of a collective identity or authority whose outrage is worthy of sympathy.

Expressed collectively, anger adheres less to abstract notions of injustice and more as established resistance to, or assurances of, existing orders, norms or authority. Of the latter, Smith provides a notable example of anger's role in the regulation of power and existing relation: "Magnanimity, or a regard to maintain our own rank and dignity in society, is the only motive which can ennoble the expression of this disagreeable passion" (*TMS* I. ii. III. 8). The maintenance of "rank and dignity" is not only just cause for anger in Smith's discussion; it has also been intrinsically linked to philosophical discourses about anger itself. Aristotle similarly discussed anger (*orge*) as an impulse most often manifested towards inferiors or those close to us. Discussing the importance of controlling and defining anger in Graeco-Roman tradition, William V. Harris discusses the variant forms of anger, *orge* and *thumos*, respectively: *orge*, conceived of as wrath or an impulse, is tied to punishment and the "infliction of concrete penalties" by magistrates (62-63); *thumos*, is a sudden vehement passion, usually subsiding, and as "spiritedness,"

56

it is a principal part of the human psyche and its capacity to feel (66). The former is deliberate, and largely the privilege of those in positions of authority, and Averill summarizes this impulse by explaining that one does not become angry at those we fear or respect (81).

In her study of anger in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, Carol Z. Stearns argues that anger in socially-powerful individuals was often tolerated as a prerogative, while anger (and its display) in those with little or no power has historically been perceived as a form of insanity, hence the double meaning of the word "mad" (49-53). The assumption behind Stearns' discussion, one that historically has worked as a socially-determined means of regulating anger, is that marginalized individuals have little recourse to anger, since the conditions which inspired the emotion in the first place would never be changed. In this respect, it is significant that Stearns fixes her historical scope to pre-Revolutionary contexts and prior to the emergence of the modern class system. While sociability requires consensus, and established and widely-accepted norms, anger raises objections to the existing structures of power by articulating grievances, a situation not readily available in classical and medieval contexts.[12] Socially-recognizable and sanctioned anger must carry with it the possibility of the alleviation of said grievances, and thusly, the possibility of change in a social order that makes the amelioration of injustices and wrongs realistic in the first place – herein lies its importance in social and political activism and campaigns. As self-assertion, anger can be a response to an injustice or pain inflicted upon the individual, or a distinct group; as an articulated

reaction (and disclosure) of such infliction, it can defend, contest, and redefine authority and existing norms.

In this relationship between anger and its legibility there exists the promise of or impetus for reform, and in its extreme, revolution. The associationist principles of moral philosophy that are used to explain human nature and action continue into the nineteenth century, but they become imbricated within a larger project of reform and the concerns over social cohesion. The work of Alexander Bain serves as a formidable example of mid-nineteenth-century approaches to feeling and the emerging field of psychology. Nineteenth-century psychology – itself intimately connected to philosophy with its concerns over ethics, epistemology, and aesthetics – also links anger to power, either as an expression of its assurance or as a challenge to existing powers. Bain's scholarly and professional background explicitly demonstrates his intellectual indebtedness to moral philosophy, psychology, education, social justice and reform.[13]

As Daniel N. Robinson notes, Bain's singular contribution to the field was that he combined a materialistic (deterministic) perspective on psychological development with empirical facts of human psychology (xxiv). Hume's ambitious intellectual undertaking, to produce a "science of human nature," is reiterated similarly by Bain, who asserts that his two works, *The Senses and Intellect* (1855) and *The Emotions and the Will* (1859), jointly comprise a "systematic exposition of the human mind," which served for more than thirty years as a standard guide for the discipline of modern psychology. This "systematic psychology," explains Robinson, develops an ethics from its epistemological base, whereby feelings provide credibility and legibility to abstract notion of aesthetics

58

and ethics, and from opposing forces of checks and balances between the intellect, the emotions, and the will (xxv, xxvii). In discussing Bain's philosophical legacy in particular, Robert H. Wozniak aptly notes that Bain combined associationist principles of philosophy with "an exhaustive taxonomic catalogue of the facts of everyday human experience and action" (48). For Bain, emotion entailed physiological movements, changes in the body and the nervous system that accompanied mental states, and the expression of emotion was a pivotal component of "the subjective experience of emotion" (Wozniak 50).

Bain links anger to both pleasure and the pleasure of power, the latter being a pleasure that goes beyond simply the physical sense of empowerment (as the potential for violence or aggression), to the "consolation of the wounded feelings" – in this case, the pleasure of relief or vindication – which Bain argues forms the empirical basis for a desired sense of agency (*EW* 167). In Bain's taxonomy, the experiential linkages between feeling and action provide a social vision that takes into account the influence of deterministic explanations for behaviour found in many sanitary and social studies of the period, and Bain examines expressions of feeling, and specific behaviours and practices, by their affect not only in the physiological body, but also in the social body. With this in mind, one could look at Bain's philosophical and psychological interest in anger as part of mid-nineteenth-century discourses of feeling, and as part of a larger project of sociability and reform that tried to define the role of emotion in public and political life. If one considers that emotions gain meaning from varying social practices, and this

includes writing and reading, then one should not be surprised that Bain's discussion of anger should include the topic of its representation in literature and the fine arts.

Bain explains art as the "educated outburst of feelings" that guides such expression into "appointed channels" and "takes the place of the wild and transient outburst of untutored nature" (*EW* 65). For Bain, artistic expression of emotion can provide the best means of organizing and mediating feelings and their expression, and he affirms "the varying modes of expressing the feelings constitute a principal class distinction" (*EW* 65). The designation of art as an "educated outburst" is purposeful, since it is a designation of culture as much as class. Language, explains Bain, and especially artistic language, is a much-lauded and refined form of expression: "instead of savage laughter and frantic gestures, the hero of cultivated society finds diffusive scope for his emotions in some lofty strain of poetry or music" (*EW* 14). Emotions manifested in art are "refined" – and by this Bain means both humbled and cultivated – through aesthetic skill; they exist as "remembered or anticipated emotion" (*EW* 38). By this extension, literature provides a means by which to reflect on and even indulge in antisocial impulses, and it provides a place in which to express them. Antisocial emotions make formidable artistic subjects; Bain notes, for instance, that "noble rage" is a lofty aesthetic sentiment and has a certain artistic quality (*EW* 180). Anger's intensity, explains Bain, makes it a theme for "energetic description" and motivation in tragic and comic modes of art (*EW* 182); as such, the representation of anger is particularly useful and even desirable.

In discussing nineteenth-century discourses on feeling, Gesa Stedman envisions

60

Bain's compendium on the subject as being a major example of the "expression-and-control" paradigm, which overlaps scientific and philosophical writings on emotion with "explicit calls for self-control and social order" (152). Distinctions based on feeling, and various expressions of feelings, provide a means of making social (classed) distinctions by way of emotional control. Stedman argues that nineteenth-century authors use this paradigm to create "a stable middle-class *habitus*": a distinctly middle-class set of values whose legibility is predicated on contrasts and class difference. As part of this middle-class *habitus,* the "correct and authentic emotional behaviour" of the middle classes is contrasted with "aristocratic pride and lack of true feeling," and with excessive feeling associated with "lower class immorality and the dangers of the impassioned 'mob'"(Stedman 123).

Bain's psychological and philosophical discussion of emotion relies on the regulation, rather than strict repression, of feeling, since a lack of feeling was, especially in social reform and condition-of-England texts, also problematic. In this respect, Stedman makes the point that the purpose of Bain's discussion of emotions was to "find a 'place' for the emotions to operate safely" (164). Bain's psychology, among other writings on feeling in the mid-nineteenth century, attempted, in finding this safe place, to instill a moral framework for feeling that also considered the consequences of excessive or strong negative feelings. In the case of Victorian melodrama and sensation fiction, Stedman argues that such emotional excesses are controlled and "conventionalized" in a way that is more pleasing than threatening: through highly stylized literary conventions and an attuned reading public who understood these fictions to be entertainment (73).

61

In Bain's "systematic psychology," the goal of achieving equilibrium between objects of the mind and the actions they inspire includes the physiological body.[14] Bodily movements, or "postures," can control the expression of feeling and the feeling itself, but so can social factors such as habit and education. Through habit and "moral discipline," argues Bain, an overly emotional person can be trained to rely on other parts of the mind such as intellect and volition. Bain discusses education as one of the few "artificial barriers" that can "check and repress the bodily manifestations of feeling, especially those of a violent nature" (*EW* 6). In this respect, Bain's treatise shares similarities with other treatises on education and feeling in the early- and mid-nineteenth century, such as Charles Bray's *The Education of the Feelings* (1838), which will be discussed in Chapter Three. While "violent" emotion certainly has consequences for the social body, it also holds implications for the physical body, and this forms the basis for Bain's classification of emotion as calm or "tranquil" and violent: tranquil emotion does not disturb the physical system of the body, and consequently, it has little impact on the will (*EW* 8).

The way that Bain categorizes anger and its antitheses sheds light on the legibility that Bain ascribes to anger and its expression within social relations, and helps one to understand how Bain finds a place for violent emotion to operate safely. Art, as an "educated outburst of feeling," allows for the safe expression of violent feelings; like education, it can modify expressions of emotion. Emotions such as anger are exemplary objects of artistic quality, due to their particular intensity and prominence in gesture or form. An angry outburst expressed in art enables the reader or spectator to engage with their own reactions to the mediated display (*EW* 257). Bain also identifies anger as an

62

irascible emotion and likely borrows this means of classification from historical works on the passions, notably St. Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiæ* (1265-74), which categorizes anger in terms of the concupiscible (directly related to impulse and propensity) and the irascible, which is the result of conflicting demands placed upon the individual by society (experienced as the result of competition or defensive reactions).

As in Hume and Smith's epistemology, Bain's concept of the self, then, is something distinct from (and even in conflict with) society, and is requisite for interpersonal feeling, which is why Bain also discusses emotions of the self as part of his categorization. For Bain, the regard of the self is, above all, introspective; it considers that "feelings and operations of the mind [are] something to be controlled or to be studied" (*EW* 125). Preferring to use the term self-love, Bain admits that, pejoratively, this regard is referred to as selfishness,[15] but he affirms the role of sympathy as the means to keep these emotions of the self under control: it is "our susceptibility to become fascinated and sympathizing with our fellows, and with things out of self, that constitutes the check or counterpoise to excessive" feelings of the self (*EW* 143).

Yet, if individuals admire themselves, and seek the admiration of others, they also want to be feared, and Bain's discussion of emotions of power is necessary to a larger discussion of strong or violent feelings such as anger, hostility or resentment. For Bain, this sense of power comes from "the effects or consequences of our own agency" and a corresponding sense of superiority towards others (*EW* 151). This power, however, is not physical; Bain uses the example of manual labour and acknowledges that while there is an "elation of conquest" in the completion of a difficult manual task, this is not an

emotion of power (*EW* 150). Instead, the sense of power comes from an assessment of one's place (and superiority) in the social world and in relation to others: "There is a great pleasure in bending the wills of other men by force, authority, terror, or persuasion" (*EW 155*). The pleasure of power comes through assessment and comparison: "We measure ourselves by another person whom we utterly subdue and prostrate, and feel elated by the degree that our agency passes his" (*EW* 155). In this respect, the onus on control in Stedman's "expression-and-control" paradigm is apt, but unlike Stedman, I do not think that it is the sole means of forming a nineteenth-century middle-class *habitus*. Bain's discussion of the self and power certainly informs his social vision as one that is distinctly classed (and as such, potentially hostile), but the idea of control has always been a part of discourses of strong and excessive feelings, and part of a discussion on how feelings are represented in art and literature, both before and after the nineteenth century. Bain's assertion that language "civilizes" emotional expression (*EW* 14) implicitly affirms the role of speech (and communicative acts of speaking, writing and reading) and thus, the social and political role of literature.

III. Literature, Narrative, and the Representation of Feeling: Art and Emotion

For Bain, art is cultivated (or mediated) expression, and this becomes particularly pertinent in discussions of strong or violent feelings such as anger. If one considers literature in particular as a place in which such feelings can operate safely, then literature (and narrative) become pertinent to the social legibility of emotions, as a way to "humble" anger (to use Smith's analogy) to more socially-acceptable levels. If the

"unsocial passions" such as anger require mediation in order to gain sympathy from others, literary texts can provide a means of mediating emotion. Smith's example of the angry man, which prompts him to address the limits to and sanctions of anger in regards to sociability, also illustrates another similarity between sympathy and anger: not only do both sympathy and anger require a conception of self, as I have discussed previously, but they also require a narrative (or some other form of disclosure) in order to be socially legible and appropriate, and as such, worthy of sympathy. They require an answer to Smith's framing question, "what has befallen you?"

Hume also understood the force of feeling in literature, and his *Treatise* employs examples from multiple literary texts and a discussion of literary conventions. For instance, for tragedy to be tragic – that is, to be suitably grand and to inspire readers to reflect on the circumstances or respond to *pathos* – the spectator (or reader) must sympathize with the literary hero and his or her changes in fortune (*Treatise* II. ii. VII. 2). Griswold, in considering the ethical model of sympathy in Smith's work on the moral sentiments, explains that "access" to the world and the daily experiences of another – whether story world or actual world – requires, foremost, imagination. Sympathy is, as Griswold puts it, "bound to fall short," since one is not immediately transported to the exact same physical state:

> To paraphrase Smith, we do not grow hungry simply by imagining the situation of a hungry person; we may, however, become terrified when we bring home to ourselves someone else's terrifying situation. The sympathetic imagination is not solely representational or reproductive. It is

also narrative, always seeking to flow into and fill up another situation and to draw things together in to a coherent story, thus bringing the spectator out of himself and onto a larger stage. (116)

To understand sympathy-as-narrative, Griswold argues, explains Smith's recurring use of literary references, which are more numerous than his philosophical allusions, since literature has the potential to "exemplify something of the essential nature of the sympathetic understanding or imagination that is at the heart of sociability as well as of moral evaluation" (116). Literature's import in matters of moral philosophy is that it can demonstrate the sympathetic understanding that is necessary to both sociability and moral judgment. Sympathy, as either a psychological process for the creation of ideas or beliefs, as in Hume's philosophy, or a process of imaginative communication and social evaluation, as in Smith's treatise, can determine how the reader responds to a text and how he or she views the world outside of the story or narrative.

Like Griswold, Dabney Townsend considers Hume's conception of sympathy as it is represented in literature: to be the medium through which to resolve the epistemological uncertainty between self-interest and benevolence. This tension between these two opposing doctrines is temporarily suspended, since sympathy in literature provides a means for ideas and impressions to be shared in a way that does not depend on whether the exchange is guided by egoism or benevolence. In this respect, Townsend posits Hume's aesthetic theory, from essays such as "Of the Standard of Taste" or "Of Tragedy," as the means of resolving the epistemological inconsistencies in Hume's *Treatise.* Sympathy varies depending on the relationships and resemblances to and with

66

sympathizing subject and object, yet sympathy with fictional characters (or fictional situations) cannot happen through relation, since in fiction "no real relation is possible"; rather, it requires resemblance, an antecedent in the actual world (Townsend 100). For Townsend, sympathy from fiction (or for fictional characters) requires, then, an element of realism; despite the fears surrounding fiction in the early and mid-eighteenth century, Townsend does not use the term, realism, specifically. Even though it ignores how abstract or non-representational works of art can still move individuals emotionally, Townsend's point does provide a compelling link between sympathy (as a communicative exchange) and literary forms and modes.

This dissertation examines condition-of-England writing, a wide range of texts that vary in terms of their ideologies and formal conventions, yet all make appeals to feeling (and shared feeling) from readers by way of describing the conditions in the world. In order to use sympathy as a moral and communicative force, these texts must remind their readers of the actual world, however they choose to represent it in their narratives. Rae Greiner uses the term "sympathy" as a "special ability" that enables one to identify with others through feeling; for Greiner, this ability is linked to narrative strategies such as omniscient narration, and free indirect discourse – narrative techniques common to English realist writers (291-92). Smith's treatise, argues Greiner, "provides its nineteenth-century realist inheritors a compelling paradigm for sympathy production through narrative"; rather than emphasizing the visual or spectatorial account of sympathy, Greiner views Smithian sympathy as an "intellectual and imaginative power" that takes a "self-consciously narrative form" (293-94).

67

Indeed, sympathy is both a process of interpersonal communication and an imaginative capacity that mid-nineteenth-century authors use to bridge divisions between the "Two Nations" in an effort to mitigate hostilities between groups. To diagnose the conditions of England and suggest, even demand, amelioration is tied to a realist impulse: both are reactions against the existing misrepresentations or falsities, a particular stance or perspective, and ostensibly, a corrective vision. The imperative to exhibit the ordinary over the dramatic, and to dramatize the ordinary, requires a mediated control of feeling, and in most cases, a kind of moral and aesthetic standard and awareness – it is both an imaginative and intellectual activity and social critique. Since narrative "must begin from the act of taking up a position in the world," explains Fisher, it has "inevitable and unbreakable links" to feeling (251).

This imperative of sympathy and realism in the nineteenth century culminates, most notably, in the moral realism of George Eliot. As the narrator in *Middlemarch* (1871-1872) suggests, "[t]here is no general doctrine which is not capable of eating out our morality if unchecked by the deep-seated habit of direct fellow-feeling with individual fellow-men" (481). Like Bain's discussion of emotion and equilibrium, sympathy can keep both self-interest (or self-regard) and hostilities in check, and Eliot tasks the realist novel with such a responsibility. The aesthetic rendering of feeling is not static representation; by way of the imaginative capacity of sympathy, it can inspire feelings based on those representations. Whereas anger in reality (and in real proximity) may produce certain negative reactions – fear, aversion, resentment – literary representations of anger may provide possibilities for contemplation or examination.[16]

68

In attempting to explain how and why negative emotions are represented in art, Jerrold Levinson argues that art that expresses negative emotions – "that is, art that represents, expresses, or otherwise deals with emotions such as shame, grief, horror, sorrow, anger, remorse, and despair" – has a "propensity to elicit parallel responses" in its audience (29). Levinson puts forward some explanations as to why, in the case of fiction, readers would be drawn to this reaction; like Hume, he points to the example of tragedy as a literary form that requires negative emotions, and produces "parallel responses" from readers, and yet is held in high regard. People, explains Levinson, "rationally desire or value the emphatic experience of negatively emotional art," since its rewards outweigh any momentary discomfort of these negative or violent feelings. Negative emotion aroused by negatively emotional art becomes, for Levinson, part of a comprehensive (and moral) view, "a total experience, an organic whole;" in short, it is part of a realistic emotional experience that bridges the world of the text with the actual world, and one that can provide a kind of contemplative perspective on this experience (29-30). Literary representations of anger, then, can be an exercise of socializing unsocial passions.

The mid-nineteenth century was a period of highly-recognizable social fragmentation, from which contesting ideologies and assertions of power emerge; this has an impact on the way that feelings were represented and granted social utility. In representing the condition of England and in offering varying corrective visions, many mid-nineteenth-century authors attempted to find ways of fostering collectivity by articulating the affinities and hostilities that bind people together. Though differing in

69

political and social visions, and in the class interests that they may serve, condition-of-England texts depend on the restoration of feeling between those who may, by way of associationist principles, not resemble each other, while also providing examples of how feeling, as the distinct property of groups or interests, may breed more hostilities. In representing mid-nineteenth century urban life, with all its prosperities and miseries, these texts usually start with the major premise that sympathy no longer exists in the socially and economically demarcated urban space.

IV. The Historical Grounds of Class Experience: Understanding Class Discontent and the Condition of England

The object of scrutiny in the Condition-of-England Question seems, at first glance, quite general – the overall well-being of the nation, a place encompassing more than 130, 000 square kilometers, and, according to an 1841 census, a population just under 16 million.[17] Yet as a distinct discourse, and a distinct concern, of the mid-nineteenth century, the condition of England encompasses varying inquiries and commentaries: a simultaneous general critique and documentation of the present system alongside the specific portrayal of daily, labouring life. The cellar dwellings and posh interiors of Manchester's poor and rich, respectively, in Gaskell's *Mary Barton,* the London sweatshop in Kingsley's *Alton Locke,* the smokestacks of Coketown factories in Dickens' *Hard Times* – all provide a commentary on the material state of a particularized locale, but they also instigate an exploration of the spiritual and moral state of England in

70

general. Like discussions of feeling, the Condition-of-England Question deals with a

heuristic of contrasts: not solely the contrast between rich and poor, a central tension, but

also between vying cultural spaces that provide the symbolic and literal ground for

contesting experiences of class in the current system. Cultural spaces – such as that of the

factory or urban slum – drive the philosophical inquiry of feeling and the moral urgency

of condition-of-England discourses.

In much mid-nineteenth-century writing, the factory and the city are the two

interconnected symbols of progress – and, for many, the reasons behind the deteriorating

relationships between individuals, labourers and employers, and families. For Carlyle,

and for others, the development of the factory system meant that traditional bonds of

sympathy, loyalty, and benevolence were replaced by the "cash-nexus," artificial bonds

of wages and labour (*SW* 199): "Our old modes of exertion are all discredited, and thrown

aside. On every hand, the living artisan is driven from his workshop, to make room for a

speedier, inanimate one. The shuttle drops from the fingers of the weaver, and falls into

iron fingers that ply it faster" (*SW* 68-69). Carlyle's emphasis on wages and labour is one

that stresses the interrelationship between new modes of production and collective

behaviour, and this emphasis is one that endures in contemporary social history and

Marxist scholarship. In discussing the pivotal differences between eighteenth-century and

nineteenth-century working-class protests and populist movements, E. P. Thompson

points out that in eighteenth-century England, workers were stirred to public action and

outrage by rising prices, especially among daily essentials such as food; a century later,

explains Thompson, "[e]conomic class-conflict in nineteenth-century England found its

71

characteristic expression in the matter of wages," whereby the "bread-nexus" gives rise to

Carlyle's "cash nexus" ("Moral Economy" 79). The increasing mechanization of daily

life implicit in Carlyle's observation could also explain, in a more practical than

philosophical mien: the imperative to represent feeling as a potential antidote to this "Age

of Machinery."

Many writers and reformers of the period widen their object of critique beyond

the factory to discuss the impact of massive urbanization; in the mid-nineteenth century,

the city becomes viewed as the place where sympathy ends in both social and religious

commentaries. Writing about fellow Unitarian minister Joseph Tuckerman, a well-known

social reformer and advocate for Boston's poor, W. E. Channing explicitly links the lack

of fellow-feeling, especially for the poor and marginalized, to the urban landscape: "This

estrangement of men from men, of class from class, is one of the saddest features of a

great city" (7-8). Gustave Doré and Blanchard Jerrold's *London: A Pilgrimage* (1872),

although published decades later, typifies the moral imperative informing the

representation of the city as a place of two distinct nations with little knowledge of each

other, the very impetus for writing about the condition of England. Through a series of

180 illustrations, Doré vividly portrays the contrasts of the city: fashionable society at

leisure in contrast with "work-a-day London" and various industrial work scenes and

east-end slums. The freedom that the city provides in its delights and in its anonymity is,

in Doré's illustrations, the privilege of class, and with its title, Doré's *Pilgrimage* denotes

an exploratory journey of moral significance. Writing about industrial Manchester in the

same decade that Channing writes about Boston, Friedrich Engels also describes the

"Great Towns" of England as alienating impediments to feeling between individuals:

> The very turmoil of the streets has something repulsive, something against
> which human nature rebels. The hundreds of thousands of all classes and
> ranks crowding past each other, are they not all human beings with the
> same qualities and powers, and with the same interest in being happy?
> And have they not, in the end, to seek happiness in the same way, by the
> same means? And still they crowd by one another as though they had
> nothing in common, nothing to do with one another, and their only
> agreement is the tacit one, that each keep to his own side of the pavement,
> so as not to delay the opposing streams of the crowd, while it occurs to no
> man to honour another with so much as a glance. The brutal indifference,
> the unfeeling isolation of each in his private interest, becomes the more
> repellent and offensive, the more these individuals are crowded together,
> within a limited space. (37)

For Engels, the members of the urban throng are devoid of interest in the well-being of

each other, and he, like Carlyle, dismisses the "rotting Blue Books" (10) that attempt

mechanically to document the facts and figures of urbanization without the humanizing

leaven of sympathy. In observing the slums and suburbs of Manchester, Engels points out

that the very layout of the city impedes fraternization between people of different classes,

except in the locality of strict labour such as the factory or workshop (57). Engels, like

Channing, views the city as a site of alienation and estrangement, whereby society exists as groups of individuals with their own interests.

This pointed vision of the city may serve as a means to critique individualism or the philosophical doctrine of self-interest but it also serves, as Asa Briggs notes, to carve out class distinctions in the stratifications of the urban space (7). Raymond Williams argues that images of the city and country in English literature function as symbols for understanding the social and economic changes spurred by industrial capitalism. For Williams, the urban-rural divide – whereby the city is the alienating symbol of modernity and the country a nostalgic place of harmony – is an oversimplified distinction that may well serve, like paternalistic discourses, to uphold the existing order, yet the divide (or contrast) is culturally and historically relevant as "one of the major forms in which we become conscious of a central part of our experience and of the crises of our society" (*The City and the Country* 289). Indeed, the factory and the city loom large in the Victorian imagination as literal and symbolic places of the disintegration of relations between classes, and as a means to discuss these "crises" or conditions of industrial capitalism. More positively, the factory, and factory work, function as the *loci* for new articulations of social identity and agency: as Perkin explains, the daily labour of the factory encouraged punctuality and hardiness, among other attributes, and it also provided the capacity for "comradeship and social action" among labourers (158).

Emphasizing the collective feeling and behaviours of the populace in such spaces becomes vital to how mid-century writers and radicals discuss class. Class, as modern scholars understand it, is a collective identity and category that encompasses more than

74

simply economic status; it also includes strategic moral distinctions that explain particular socio-economic privileges. Thompson describes the rise of this new class structure as a "making," a process requiring a claim to agency rather than a static event (9). As part of this claim, another requisite is a new set of "vocabularies" and narratives discerning one's position and role in society (G. S. Jones 2). Feeling, and specifically how one conceptualizes feeling in the service of class-based distinctions, becomes integral to these vocabularies and narratives. To extend this point, I would like to focus briefly on how the articulation of discontent becomes a pivotal signifying practice for the wider enunciation of class experience and agency.

There has been considerable discussion by social historians about the emergence of class consciousness in the nineteenth century, much of which has focused on issues of "social control" or hegemony. From Marx onwards, social historians often describe class developments through connotations of hostility or struggle. Perkin, for example, in providing a history of the origins of class, focuses on three "battles" (or grounds) for the dominance of one class over another: the control over the dominant morality and particularized (classed) virtues and ideals; the control of educational structures and public opinion; and the control over legislative power and influence (273). For Perkin, contestations on these grounds galvanized class demands and shaped class consciousness; class antagonisms developed not solely through income or its disparity, but through the push to entrench a "consensus image of [a] class in its relation to rival classes" (219). By extension then, violence and its threat were intrinsically linked to the institutionalization of class (Perkin 342).

The "social control" model could explain middle-class fears over working-class literacy and education,[18] as well as the various laws against political and labour combinations – two practices that breed "potential revolutionaries" (Perkin 293). Yet Gareth Stedman Jones raises the point that the social control model does not account for working-class movements and behaviours – the "more mundane material exigencies" of working-class daily life – as it exaggerates the likely affect of punitive measures of control (16). Moreover, this model, argues Jones, treats the "social" as something outside of or prior to language, and as such, does not take into account the linguistic context of class distinctions (7). The language of class, then, is not simply a verbalization or recounting of experience – of the factory or the urban slum – but rather, a "complex rhetoric of metaphorical association, casual inference and imaginative construction" (G.S. Jones 12). Language shapes consciousness; it is not the medium through which consciousness or experience is manifested:

> Language disrupts any simple notion of the determination of consciousness by social beings because it is itself part of social being. We cannot therefore decode political language to reach a primal and material expression of interest since it is the discursive structure of political language which conceives and defines interest in the first place. What we therefore do is study the production of interest, identification, grievance and aspiration within political languages themselves. (G.S. Jones 21 – 22)

The constitution of class and class-based identities involves a spectrum of "culturally signifying practices," and metaphors of social control imply a "static metaphor of

76

equilibrium" that ignores the ways that labourers, artisans, and activists organized their leisure time and their everyday practices (G. S. Jones 8, 77 – 80).[19]

Jones, whose conceptualization of class informs his discussion of nineteenth-century Chartism, asserts that the ideology of Chartism was not separate from the language it used to describe itself (94). Thus, for Chartists, it was not simply the experiential quality of class difference that could make its members and the general public believe that lack of political power was the cause of social inequalities, but the "particular linguistic ordering of experience," whereby the success of Chartism was its ability to persuade individuals to "interpret their distress or discontent within the terms of a political language" (96). I agree with Jones that representing Chartism as no more than a social movement – that is, focusing on "the movement's class character, social composition, or more simply the hunger and distress of which it was thought to be the manifestation"– ignores Chartism's political platform (93). Indeed, Carlyle's *Chartism*, by emphasizing Chartist discontent, does just that, and a number of historians and literary scholars have cited texts by authors such as Carlyle, Kingsley, and Gaskell as representative examples of nineteenth-century authors who envision working-class radicalism as a manifestation of social symptoms or pathologies. Jones also makes the point that in focusing on anger or violence, social historians have deflected the politics of Chartism as an integral part of the movement (97). Chartist historiography, Jones argues, concentrated on emotional capabilities of Chartists, since the first Chartist historians were "embittered ex-Chartists" such as Gammage, Lovett, and Cooper. Moreover, historians characterized the rifts within the movement according to delineations of hostility –

between the "constitutionally-minded artisans" in London or Birmingham, who were followers of Lovett and other moral force Chartist leaders, and the northern and midland factory workers and weavers, the "hostile" and "quasi-insurrectionary," who were followers of O'Connor (G. S. Jones 97-98).

My argument diverges from Jones' in the role that he eventually assigns to anger in the emergence of radical working-class consciousness. For Jones, the characterization of Chartism (and Chartists) in terms of discontent is strictly a means of downplaying the political ideals of the movement; discontent cannot be part of the political platform since "[a] political movement is not simply a manifestation of distress and pain, its existence is distinguished by a shared conviction articulating a political solution to distress and a political diagnoses of its causes" (96). In this respect, feelings of discontentment or hostility exist, for Jones, separately from political ideology, and may even serve to obfuscate, rather than define, a political movement. Yet if the goal of a movement is to interpret this discontent within a political language, I would suggest that this political language requires an articulation of anger, since feeling is not separate from the expression of political ideals and ideology.

In attempting to create a unified language to reinforce their own class distinctions – between employer and labourer, but more importantly, between the politically enfranchised and disenfranchised – Chartists developed their own "vocabulary of grievance" from the Jacobin radicalism of the 1790s (G. S. Jones 102). This vocabulary becomes integral as a rhetorical force for strategic political demands (such as political representation) and social legibility. Chartists were well aware that their political

platform required them to respond to, and anticipate, the charges of hostility and violence, and because of this, Chartists had to conceptualize and justify negative feeling *as part* of their political platform, and in a way that enabled them to demonstrate that such feeling was a vital part of political consensus, and more specifically, of class-based approbation and criticism.

In a period of mass industrialization and urbanization, and in the acknowledgement of great disparities between rich and poor, one could assume that it was difficult not to feel sympathetic to the plights and miseries of the labouring poor, but as MacKay's weeping figure attests, such sympathy may not necessarily be productive. Working-class radicalism, such as Chartism, and a distinctly working-class literature and culture, used feeling and its expression to define their own narratives and vocabularies of class experience – including an articulation of negative feelings such as anger or hostility. Connecting emotions and politics is not unique to this period; seventeenth and eighteenth-century philosophers discuss human passions and sentiments as part of their political philosophy. Yet the social imperatives of the mid-nineteenth century, and the calls for political representation, meant that feeling, especially strong feeling, could ostensibly motivate political action. For many, Chartism was not something to be feared or controlled; instead, it provided a new means of articulating hostilities and affinities between social groups as part of the condition of England. The chapter that follows discusses further the ways in which Chartists represented anger and assigned to it a social and political value, and the way that Chartist authors, such as Ernest Jones and Thomas Cooper, relied on anger as a rhetorical and moral force. Chapter Two will also discuss

Carlyle's *Chartism* (1839) and his contribution to the shaping of the Condition-of-England Question.

Endnotes

[1] Malthusian reformers critiqued both the effectiveness and the humanitarian impulses behind charity. By the 1830s, these critiques culminated in the Poor Law Amendment Act (1834), passed by the Whig government. The new laws discouraged monetary aid and promoted, in its place, workhouses.

[2] See Melissa Shaub for a discussion of social control and sympathy. Various accounts of mid-nineteenth-century industrial fiction have discussed sympathy as a means of class-based control: see Sabin, Sanders, and Wilkes.

[3] In discussing Victorian philanthropy and cross-class relations, Seth Koven posits "slumming," the fashionable act of touring East-end slums, as an act of freedom from middle-class social conventions and a foray into self-realization. See *Slumming: Sexual and Social Politics in Victorian London* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2004). See also Cvetkovich, Jaffe, and Anderson.

[4] Elias Canetti describes crowds as the modern forms of "eruptions," and this natural analogy has also been used to describe spontaneous emotional expression. See also James Averill, "Six Metaphors of Emotion," *Metaphors in the History of Psychology.* ed. Davis E. Leary (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994): 104-132. For a discussion of common analogies used to describe emotion in the nineteenth century, see Stedman, Chapter One.

[5] Hume does maintain a certain distinction between the association of ideas and the association of impressions: "ideas are associated by resemblance, contiguity and causation; and impressions only by resemblance" (*Treatise* II. i. IV. 283).

[6] As an example of sympathy as an impediment, Hume provides a lengthy description of a situation whereby sympathizing with an individual equal in "birth and education" actually breeds contempt or unease. In this example the individual, of good family but "narrow circumstances," goes abroad so as to escape the sympathy of his social equals or blood relations (*Treatise* II. i. XI. 322-24).

[7] See "Compassion as a Virtue in Hume," *Feminist Interpretations of Hume* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State UP, 2000): 15-73.

[8] In "The Natural History of German Life," published in the *Westminster Review* (July 1856), Eliot makes a distinction between a conventional sympathy (which motivates the numerous social and statistical studies of social problems at the time) and an ethical and social one, that like moral philosophy, resides in larger considerations of the moral sentiments: "Appeals founded on generalizations and statistics require a sympathy ready-made, a moral sentiment already in activity; but a picture of human life such as a great artist can give, surprises even the trivial and the selfish into that attention to what is apart from themselves, which may be called the raw material of moral sentiment" (51-56).

[9] In discussing the threat (or monstrosity) of the literate masses, and connecting it with the cultural capital of reading and literary production, Patrick Brantlinger provides a

more sustained discussion of the Frankenstein analogy as it pertains to condition-of-England writers such as Gaskell and Carlyle. Brantlinger's discussion of Hobbes also provides an interesting bridge between eighteenth-century political philosophy and nineteenth-century politics. See Chapter Three, *The Reading Lesson*.

[10] More precisely, Smith qualifies this as "manly character," which opens up considerable discussion about the gendering of anger and its various forms. There has been some attention given to the role of negative feeling in relation to gender. Susan Sprecher argues that negative feelings (such as anger) are most closely related to inequity for both men and women, and she discusses the differences between experiences of inequity for both; see "The Relationship Between Inequity and Emotions in Close Relationships," *Social Psychology Quarterly* 49 (4): 308-21. See also Leslie R. Brody and Judith A. Hall, "Gender and Emotion in Context," *Handbook of Emotions,* 3rd ed. (New York: Guilford, 2010): 395-407. For an overview of these forms of inquiry into emotional theory and gender studies, see Reiser, Chapter 1.

[11] One could use also the term "confession" given that anger, as one of the deadly sins, is also present in religious sanctions or prohibitions, and thus, requires a similar mediation. My intentional use of disclosure aims to consider the term outside of strictly religious contexts, and as something that answers the question, "what has befallen you?"

[12] This may be a reason why studies of anger in social relationships have drawn considerable attention with the emergence of equity studies as an academic discipline,

and with increased examination of the practices of and approaches to social justice and activism. See Sprecher; see also James T. Tedeschi and Mithcell S. Nesler, "Grievances: Development and Reactions," *Aggression and Violence: Social Interactionist Perspectives* (Washington D.CAmerican Psychological Association, 1993): 13-45.

[13] Bain served for three years as assistant to the Professor of Moral Philosophy (1841-1844) at Marischal College, and would, until 1860, work as a lecturer taking a number of short-term appointments, including Assistant Secretary to the London Metropolitan Sanitary Commission and then to the General Board of Health. In the 1840s, Bain wrote a number of articles for the *Westminster Review, Edinburgh Magazine, Fraser's, Chambers's Journal, Papers for the People*, and lectures for the Mechanics' Institute of Aberdeen. Many of his articles and lectures were written for a working-class and popular audience on topics including "Language," "Logic," "Human Mind, and "What is Philosophy?" He also wrote numerous textbooks on education and pedagogy, English grammar, and composition. Biographical information taken from Wozniak.

[14] Feeling, although distinct from physicality, depends on the "material organization" of the body and its surrounding environment (*EW* 3-4). Bain connects the experiential origins of feeling to the nervous system, which transmits signals from the mind to stimulate the corresponding muscles or organs (*EW* 5).

[15] Bain also makes the point that self-love can motivate individuals to look after those that resemble (in Humean terms) them: "As members of a family we may renounce

self, on to another, but assume it in a high degree towards strangers" (*EW* 126). Arguably, the analogy of the family can be extended to include social resemblances and affinities that form the basis of class identity and class interests. Indeed, this is often an underlying assumption in contemporary scholarship on nineteenth-century sympathy that discuss sympathy as spectatorial.

[16] In this sense, my discussion of this aesthetic rendering of feeling evokes Aristotle's idea of *catharsis*, one that endures in much literary and psychological analyses. Aristotle uses the term in his discussion of tragedy and as a response to Plato's devaluing of mimesis. *Catharsis* implies an intellectual endeavour and control over feeling. Such a notion has been used in psychoanalysis as part of the treatment for violent feelings such as anger.

[17] The 1841 census came after the Population Act of 1840, which gave centralized authority to the Register General to conduct the census. As such, the census numbers include both England and Wales. Population data taken from the British government's Office for National Statistics.

[18] See Brantlinger, *The Reading Lesson*. For a discussion of working-class literacy and labour activism that explores specifically gendered labour, such as dressmaking, see Christine Bayles Kortsch, *Dress Culture in Late Victorian Women's Fiction: Literacy, Textiles, and Activism* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).

[19] In this way, Stedman Jones' historical scholarship may well be indebted to Michel de Certeau's work in *The Practice of Everyday Life,* which theorizes how institutionalized disciplinary functions are deflected by anti-discipline practices rooted in daily, and individualized, life: the "'ways of operating' or doing things [that] no longer appear as merely the obscure background of social activity" (xi).

Chapter 2

Discontent as the Condition of England:

The Raging Philosopher and the Indignant Crowd

The period between the 1830s and 1860s is marked by transitions, and calls for reform, in daily, institutional, and political life. With these changes comes the profound need to articulate how such transformations, for better or for worse, affected the character of English society. The Condition-of-England Question – a series of discussions that involve intense commentary on, and scrutiny of, present social and moral conditions, and on the state of relations between disparate groups and classed subjects – is one that contains a nexus of competing and overlapping discourses. It evolves through post-Enlightenment discourses of feeling, the political ideologies and interrogative methodologies of moral philosophy, Romantic idealism, political radicalism, and the cultural assumptions that guide literary production and consumption. With Chartism and working-class radical movements, mid-nineteenth century culture and its public discourses – and this includes literary culture – were also shaped by variant demands for political representation from a movement that argued political exclusion to be the cause of current social and economic disparities. These demands became a potent symbol of the age, prompting writers to discuss them through novels and the periodical presses.

Working-class radicalism – movements organized around democratic or socialist principles that defined their purpose through the articulation of working-class ideals and identities – becomes subject to public scrutiny and praise. In condition-of-England

literature, and in public life, the working-class protagonist (or political leader) emerges as a figure through which representations of social identity and class relations can provisionally operate, insomuch as to document inequities and suggest solutions to current social ills. Using new terminologies to describe the state of English society, and one's position in society, and in attempting to represent (and explain) the rise of political radicalism, authors and journalists were also required to address working-class discontent. Anger – how to alleviate, avoid, utilize, and represent it – becomes a major preoccupation.

The ethical imperative that drives writers to address social and political problems through the representation of feeling also impels them to confront their own antipathies and antisocial feelings through various interpretative frames of, and envisioned alternatives to, anger. Authors as diverse as Thomas Carlyle and Ernest Charles Jones express their sympathy with working-class suffering and class inequities. While they may differ in terms of political ideologies, both express and address anger in their texts and as part of their social critiques in the period following the passing of the Reform Act. By comparing Carlyle, Chartist periodicals, and Jones, this chapter explores the various literary and journalistic responses to Carlyle, whose influence helped shape the tone of, and the very phrase, the Condition-of-England Question. By the 1840s, Carlyle held the distinction of having novels dedicated to him and characters speaking his words, yet his articulation of the Condition-of-England Question, while certainly forceful and influential, was not necessarily unique. Rather, it was a passionately articulated synthesis of many forces within Victorian culture that make claims on the condition of England –

the discourse of political economy to describe social and class relations, working-class radicalism, and the increasing role of fiction and journalism in activism and reform.

The assertion that discontent comes from the current political and economic system becomes the moral imperative of condition-of-England writings, both by Chartists and their opponents. The increasingly political role that discontent plays in the public arena of politics, journalism, and literature compels authors such as Carlyle and Jones to envision more productive means of discussing emotional expression and social change: despite their opposing views, both authors must negotiate a place for the expression of anger and its implications. In *Chartism* (1839), Carlyle discusses the movement as a "delusion" or sickness (*SW* 182-83), a rhetorical description that both dehumanizes and pathologizes working-class expression as much as it corresponds to Victorian concerns around the expression of strong feeling. Yet Carlyle's own choleric tone instills urgency in his message on the state of feeling in England, and in this respect, Carlyle, as the Jeremiah figure assessing and railing against the discontented "spirit of the age," expresses anger in deliberate ways.

Carlyle's style, and the rhetoric he uses to articulate his anger at the Chartist movement and Chartists themselves, inform his identity as prophetic commentator on the condition of England. It seems fitting, then, that Carlyle asks the question, "Why are the Working Classes discontented?" (*SW* 156), since the very fact (and threat) of discontentment also provoke Carlyle's angry attempts to answer his framing question. His oppositional feelings of sympathy and anger towards the labouring poor and working-class radicals, respectively, become mediated through his intellectual (and

ostensibly autonomous) position as author. For Carlyle, radicalism and class discontent are understandable, but given the enervated spiritual mindset of England, he argues, they are ultimately destructive.

Like Carlyle, Chartist writers, among them Jones, also use anger strategically, and this chapter argues that anger and indignation become an intrinsic part of what social historian E. P. Thompson calls "the moral economy" of working-class radicals: a means of community building and political campaigning around shared ideals and shared expressions of feeling.[1] Within this "moral economy," feelings, particularly those associated with anger or indignation, become integral to the constitution of political identity, as much as they become the means of describing current social relations and political injustices. Chartism requires, and produces, sanctioned examples of anger. It also requires its authors to discredit charges of angry revolution or angry disposition. Yet this is not solely as a means of social or disciplinary control, but as part of articulating shared feeling as social protest and community building. Like Carlyle, Chartists represent anger as a rhetorical means of organizing social commentary and framing alternatives to existing models of power.

As early as the mid-1820s, radicals such as William Cobbett stated that the lack of feeling between "masters and men," the very set of industrial relations that holds connotations of struggle or hostility, was the principle reason for class conflict (Briggs 6). The condition of England as one of feeling was a discourse not just of Carlyle's making, or for conservative (or middle-class) thinkers to make class-based arguments as to who should control their emotions, and how. This chapter argues that feeling and its

expression are vital to the formation of class-consciousness, identity, and agency. Within literature, they can be used to address and motivate a readership – linking the act of reading to a capacity or desire for future political or social action.

The emotional reactions of individuals and groups have provoked mid-nineteenth-century authors to make moral distinctions from class-based ideals through feeling and its expression. As many contemporary scholars have noted, these distinctions have been used to disparage or discipline groups of people according to class, race, and gender, as well as to service middle-class ideologies. Yet, feeling also becomes the means to discuss shared experiences and interests and envision political alternatives to the existing structures of power in the mid-nineteenth century. One of the basic requirements of feeling, as a means of articulating shared identities, is that it must be expressed and made legible. For political purposes, it must be expressed in a way that asserts a space in the public discourse, however big or small. John Plotz has noted, for instance, that the British public sphere in the first half of the century was a site of discursive and ideological conflicts that aimed to validate what could be considered public speech, performance, and sentiment (10). Chartism emerged as the mobilization of individuals around a nexus of issues – unstamped press agitation, factory legislation, New Poor Law repeal, unionism, and of course, the call for universal male suffrage. The imperative for unification was both politically expedient and necessary, and one that evolved beyond strictly class-based interests.

In discussing the language of Chartism, Gareth Stedman Jones argues that the focus in Chartist writings was less on class distinctions and more on the language of

political exclusion (34), yet I would suggest that the concern over strong or negative feeling, and the collective expression of such feeling, become a means of consensus-building that included political exclusion. Within Chartist discourses, discontent becomes a collective responsibility – "the duty of discontent," as the phrase taken from an 1853 lecture by Thomas Cooper affirms. Indeed, the language of community that Chartists evoke through the representation of strong, negative feeling becomes vital for mobilizing people for collective political action.

I. The Raging Philosopher:
Carlyle and the Shaping of the Condition-of-England Question

In the mid-nineteenth century, the widening material and ideological gulfs between the working classes and the middle and upper classes – between the toiling and untoiling, workers and masters, poor and rich – become articulated not solely in terms of geographical or spatial separation (the demarcated spaces of the city or the factory that perpetuate class inequities), but also in terms of a separation of feeling: whereby bonds of affection (or benevolence) from paternalistic structures become increasingly replaced by hostility among differing classes in an industrial system of production (Briggs 20). Similarly, Harold James Perkin discusses the modern class structure as one of "horizontal solidarities" between members of the same class, as opposed to the hierarchical ("vertical") relations of dependency and patronage (x). The economic dependency that paternalistic bonds fostered prevented hostilities: "Resentment had therefore to be

swallowed, or sublimated in religious dissent, or, when pressed beyond endurance, it exploded in outbursts of desperate violence" (Perkin 37). In pre-industrial England, argues Perkin, distinctions of rank produced little antipathy because they were viewed as either "accidental" or inevitable (25). These new solidarities, forged around class identities and also kinds of work (such as the factory) and specific skills, provided the impetus for "comradeship and social action," as well as the articulation of hostilities and newly unencumbered resentment (Perkin 158).

It seems fitting, then, that Carlyle starts *Chartism* with the very object of inquiry and contention: "*A feeling very generally exists* that the condition and disposition of the Working Classes is a rather ominous matter at present; that something ought to be said, something ought to be done, in regard to it" (*SW* 151, emphasis added). The existence and "ominous" quality of this "general feeling" become the impetus for writing *Chartism*. For Carlyle to be able to exhibit and represent anger, while chiding Chartists for their own discontent, he must establish himself as the individual who "ought to" articulate such feelings and provide some respite from them.

By highlighting this discussion as being primarily one of feeling, Carlyle makes certain assumptions. Firstly, that the condition of England, like the formation of class-based ideals, depends not on material wants or needs, but rather, on the restoration of virtues within individuals and groups; herein lies Carlyle's attention to the disposition of the Chartists rather than their political demands. Secondly, this remedy can occur through an attention to feeling, a solution that lies outside of the means and power of current government and legislation; thus, it is a radical notion in itself. Historian

93

Gertrude Himmelfarb suggests that Carlyle's radicalism lies not in his message per se, but in his ability to use strong feeling to motivate his readers:

> Carlyle's radicalism consisted not in the answers he gave to the condition-of-England question but in putting the question itself, and in putting it in such a form that it raised the most fundamental doubts about the legitimacy of the prevailing doctrines and class relations. Nothing is more banal than the idea that England, that any country, is divided into an upper and lower class, into rich and poor. What Carlyle did was raise the idea of class to a new level of consciousness by giving it a new moral urgency. (260)

Himmelfarb's observation is apt, yet for other scholars, Carlyle's emotive tone was an object of critique.

In his introduction to Carlyle's *Selected Works,* Alan Shelston attributes the "uneven" quality of *Chartism* to Carlyle's ambivalence: Carlyle's sympathy for the working classes and labouring poor is inadequately reconciled with his implied resolution to social and political problems through authoritarian means of governance (149). In less conciliatory terms, Patrick Brantlinger describes Carlyle's work as being "highly inflammatory," and Carlyle's solutions to radical dissent – universal education and emigration – as shortsighted and politically evasive (71, 81). Yet Carlyle's temper also incited criticism from his contemporaries and later nineteenth-century critics, a fact that is often overlooked in contemporary critiques and analyses of *Chartism.* Reflecting back on Carlyle and his influence in 1885, author and journalist Standish O'Grady argues that

while Carlyle's works may have produced a temporary "moral exaltation" on the part of the reader – a phrase that anticipates Himmelfarb's "moral urgency" – his "discordant and seemingly self-destructive utterances" make him a poor model for an influential political teacher or leader (517). Similar to the critiques of contemporary scholars, O'Grady's argument implies that Carlyle's work affords the reader a momentary, if not smug, sense of self-constitution as moral subject, rather than any sustaining political effect. Carlyle's commentaries on English culture and society are, according to O'Grady, for the benefit of Carlyle himself, and for his readership to feel as if they have contributed to social change from the passive act of reading rather than direct action.

Carlyle's ambivalent sympathy towards working-class radicals (sympathy for their material conditions, anger at their politics) highlights a quintessentially Smithian paradigm: the prevailing contradictions between the disposition to be benevolent and the disposition to be self-interested. While he acknowledges sympathy as a socializing force, Smith must also take into account that sympathy is only as effective as the inclination to be social – that is, to be "bound together by agreeable bands of love and affection" (*TMS* I. ii. III. 1). These "bands" (or bonds) must be mutual and reciprocal, but just as "members of human society stand in need of each others assistance," they are "likewise exposed to mutual injuries" which, in turn, test such affinities in human nature (*TMS* I. ii. III. 1). Smith explains the inevitability of antisocial feelings and behaviours by arguing that hostilities, or "unsocial passions," generally arise from an "undisciplined nature," a flaw in the individual more so than a flaw in human nature (*TMS* I. ii. III. 1). Carlyle's description of Chartists adheres to this model.

95

Sympathetic to the plight of the labouring poor, and to the social and spiritual problems associated with industrial labour and production, Carlyle mounts, in *Chartism*, an impassioned call for more amicable feeling between groups or classes, and he reconciles his anger at Chartists' political demands by concentrating on their "nature" or temperament. Chartism is, for Carlyle, "bitter discontent grown fierce and mad, the wrong condition therefore or the wrong disposition, of the Working Classes of England" (*SW* 151). His reaction to class hostilities resonates as an ethical assessment of their sociability rather than an evaluation of political demands. Yet Carlyle's tone is vital to how he conceptualizes sociability, discontent and the act of authorship; it is his anger, rather than his sympathy, that enables Carlyle to constitute his own identity as author. Further, by envisioning the condition of England foremost as a moral (rather than material) condition, Carlyle enacts and revises the role of the moral philosopher concerned about the sociability and benevolence of the public. In doing so, he justifies his own use of anger at the same time as he degrades the anger of political radicals. Granted, Carlyle's harangues in *Chartism* are hard to envision as political solutions, and my intention is not to affirm them as such. Carlyle's anger is also rhetorical; as such, it is requisite to how he articulates and shapes the condition of England discussion.

In the wake of the French Revolution and Romanticism Victorians display certain suspicions towards sentiment and sensibility; concerns over "emotional extravagance," disorderly feelings or "strange fits of passion," also pervade novels and philosophical treatises in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Pinch 4). Carlyle's critique of Chartism and the general condition of England, however, seems to evoke just such

96

emotional excessiveness: he does not pity or weep; he rages. In *Chartism,* Europe is likened to a "frenzied giant" who tramps "stormfully." On a smaller scale, Chartist radicals are characterized by their "inarticulate cries as of a dumb creature in rage and pain," and the Irish labourers are "noisy" and "vehement" (*SW* 183; 189; 172). If Carlyle opposes anger, he certainly uses it as his impetus: in *Chartism,* anger exists as both a literal and figurative force. As Europe and England storms and stamps, so does Carlyle, and his personifications and hyperboles, while discrediting or avoiding the arguments of Chartism, become instances of the seemingly articulate language of anger as moral critique or outrage. As the raging philosopher, Carlyle likens Chartism, and more generally, materialism, to a sickness in the body politic. This analogy of the diseased body, as in Burke's writings against the French Revolution, is a trope often used by conservative thinkers fearful of populist revolution or insurrection.[2] It is important to note, however, that in *Chartism* this literal and figurative sickness extends to include dumbness and incoherence, and as such, articulates very specific concerns over expression, which is crucial to how Carlyle demarcates his anger from Chartist anger.

Like Himmelfarb, Carlyle's own contemporaries praise his tone, contending that it, rather than his message, is the edifying force behind many of his early writings. In an 1840 review of *Chartism,* published in the *British and Foreign Review,* the author applauds Carlyle's forceful manner:

> But the power of painting, the vividness with which each separate element
> is worked up into the general picture, the brilliancy of colouring, and the
> force with which the whole view is made to strike the imagination, are

exactly such as we have been accustomed to admire in Mr. Carlyle's

writings. We look upon this little book therefore, appearing at such a time

as this, to be a very valuable one; not because it gives us views or

information which we were absolutely without before, but because it

combines the whole subject into a living form, and graphically as well as

forcibly places it before our eyes. ("Article I" 2)

For the reviewer, Carlyle's style – the presentation of his argument – is not angry;

instead, it is described through the actions of "painting" or "colouring," the creative act of

the artist and author rather than the result of a faulty temperament or disposition. Like

Carlyle, the reviewer describes Chartism as "the disordered state of the lower and

working classes, the unjust situation in which the course of modern civilization has

placed them, the bitter feelings of resentment which this injustice calls forth" (4). The

cause of these "bitter feelings" is two-fold: the general state (or disposition) of the

working classes (a premise that equates anger with "disorder"), and the flagrant social

injustices of present-day society. Of the latter, the reviewer purposely avoids attributing

blame, citing, instead, "modern civilization" in general rather than the middle and upper

classes who profit from these social injustices.

Considering this further, Carlyle's concern with a faulty temper, with a disordered

(and delusional) populace, implies an attempt to classify feeling (and social identity) by

way of disorder and order, excess and restraint. Joel Faflak and Julia M. Wright argue

that such a categorization of feeling becomes an indicative Victorian response to

Romanticism; Victorian writers socialize and internalize potentially-destructive feeling in

order to make legitimizing claims for literature and its potential to produce social change (9). In this context, Romanticism becomes identified with either alienated (apolitical) individualism, or an excessive capacity for feeling. Ultimately, Faflak and Wright argue that these conceptions of the Romantic organize and situate the Victorian subject as being "properly feeling" (7). The urgency to which both Himmelfarb and the reviewer of the *British and Foreign Review* allude – what makes Carlyle's social vision so powerful – implies a purposeful avoidance of anger; neither writer charges Carlyle, or his prose, with being angry. Carlyle's "forceful" tone, then, must originate as something *other than* the "wrong disposition" or wrong feeling. His mixture of vehemence and sympathy, of spiritual remedy and scathing critique, is instructive; Carlyle is the "man of feeling," whose refined sensibility (and ability) informs his social and moral vision.[3]

In treating the divide between the "Two Nations" as a failed process of interpretation – between the indifferent rich and the "inarticulate" poor (*SW* 155) – which in turn perpetuates this disorderly resentment, Carlyle stands as a mediatory and prophet who provides a diagnosis of current ills and offers spiritual solutions. Calling Chartism the "general madness of discontent" (*SW* 154), Carlyle also opposes the stoicism of statistical evidence, which ostensibly ignores or obscures this discontent: "The labourer's feelings, his notion of being justly dealt with or unjustly; his wholesome composure, frugality, prosperity in the one case, his acrid unrest, recklessness, gin-drinking, and gradual ruin in the other, – how shall figures of arithmetic represent all this?" (*SW* 159-60). Despite his sustained dehumanization of Chartists, Carlyle attempts to draw a fuller picture of English labourers – the "wholesome" and the "acrid" – in order to demonstrate

99

the futility of using statistical data to represent social and economic relations. This impetus to "represent all" must include feeling, not simply calculations or numbers (*SW* 160). In offering up a corrective vision, and in representing his own feeling as counter to such (short-sighted) statistical evidence, Carlyle – the vehement but wise forebearer of sage-writing in the Victorian period (Holloway 4) – evokes a demonstrable sanction for his expression of negative feeling.

To describe Carlyle's anger as prophetic, as I view it to be, is to emphasize certain characteristics of both style and content in his early writings and to make certain assumptions about the construction of his authorial identity. George P. Landow has noted that as a non-fictional literary mode, prophetic writing is characterized by its tone of castigation and by its intended purpose of both diagnosing the condition of an age and predicting its future (18). Usually, this diagnosis refers to the present condition as one caused by some erosion or neglect of "God's law," which unless rectified, promises further miseries or grievances (Landow 26). The "sharp rebukes" of the prophetic author (Landow 26) are part of the moral urgency that Himmelfarb and Carlyle's contemporaries praise in Carlyle's writings. The "attack upon the audience" that Landow notes in prophetic writing becomes the means by which the author asserts his "superiority" over (or at least, his separateness from) the audience (35) and, in *Chartism*, from the objects of his scrutiny. Carlyle's invectives are directed towards political radicals, but also the more general readership of England. As prophetic author, Carlyle takes a position of "conscious opposition" in order to call attention to present ills and establish his ethos as keen moral thinker and competent wordsmith (Landow 51, 132). The "idealized version

of the author" that Landow argues prophetic writing affirms (162) can also present an idealized form of feelings that were heretofore clothed in pejorative connotations. Carlyle's anger leads to his verbosity and becomes anger-as-expression, providing moral credence as evidence of his elevated insight.

Historically, this relationship has long been legitimized: classical writers have praised the rhetorical potential of anger. Anger-as-expression, often framed as righteous indignation, endures as a means of mediated artistic expression on the present condition of things; it is evoked as a powerful force in the satirical works of Juvenal (as *indignatio*), and in the writings of Aristotle and Cicero.[4] Within Victorian contexts, Bain's systematic psychological study of the emotions implies a similar division between emotions portrayed in the arts, such as literature, and in the world. Bain's "noble rage" is one of artistic merit, whose very energy becomes the motivating factor behind its expression (*EW* 180-82). The "irascible emotion" is of artistic interest because it enables consumers of such works – readers and critics alike – to engage with their own reactions to the emotions represented (*EW* 257). As such, it has the potential to clarify misunderstanding, and even perpetuate meaningful change.

As a rhetorical mode, indignation is predicated on the assumption of authorial control and intention, which, ostensibly, separates it from anger as a destructive, disordered, or deluded form of expression. As indignation becomes framed on behalf of others, opposed to selfishly delusional anger, it becomes morally conceptualized as a selfless expression that addresses perceived wrongs. Thus, Carlyle's anger becomes evidence of a benevolent desire to address present crises, while Chartist anger becomes

101

the potentially violent result of both avaricious excess and material want. For Carlyle, "properly feeling" anger addresses and attempts to correct a perceived wrong, or at the very least, articulates this wrong in order for others to perceive it, while destructive anger attempts to inflict pain or punishment. Carlyle associates the latter with Chartism by severing Chartist anger from abstract conceptions of justice and self-assertion. For Carlyle, what separates the anger of the Chartists from his own is their inability to use it for socially productive (selfless) means. Despite their calls for justice, Chartists speak "a most loud and inarticulate language" (*SW* 180). For Carlyle, anger-as-expression, which is the anger of the prophet-author, differs from anger-as-disposition. By delineating Chartism, and political anger, by way of a faulty disposition, Carlyle grandly implies that Chartist readership or authorship cannot evoke anger-as-expression; thus, his comments speak as much to the literary capacities of classed subjects as to the nature of political radicalism itself.[5]

In discussing the political and ethical implications of anger as indignation, Andrew Stauffer explains that this rhetorical demarcation constructs the emotion as one that is not personal – that is, not linked to personal (faulty) disposition or ideology. "Anger-that-is-not-mine" is purposeful, "a scapegoat emotion to be cast out in favour of a form of indignation or a wrath – even a vengefulness – that the author uses to perform a certain kind of work (be it moral, political, or aesthetic)" (164). Stauffer asserts, however, that as French revolutionary and Napoleonic conflicts started to diminish, so did the need to address anger in the political and public sphere: "Choosing a path towards slow reform, England could afford to relax its attitude towards anger and its

Revolutionary associations" (164). Stauffer's work provides a pertinent connection between Romantic conceptions of, and Victorian reactions to, the epistemology of feeling, although Carlyle's own anger, as well as the hostile feelings that prompt writers to address the condition of England, demonstrate that Stauffer's assertion of a less troubled relationship with anger in post-Revolutionary contexts is short-lived. Indeed, the urgency that Carlyle's angry tone embodies stands as a decided contradiction to Stauffer's point. Existing as a potentially corrective call for attention, anger is essential for the formation of collective identities based on class or political beliefs, and as such, remains pertinent to Victorian debates of political reform and representation.

II. The Indignant Crowd:

Chartism, "The People," and the Political Role of Indignation

In September 1853, cotton workers in Preston, Lancashire asked for a ten percent wage increase and threatened to strike. Mill owners responded by imposing a general lock out so as to circumvent the "wages movement," a cooperative activist tactic that saw labouring workers in some operating mills supporting their fellow strikers (Carnall 32). The strike commenced and lasted until April of 1854. It was significant not solely because of its duration (seven months), or the amount of people who were out of work as a result (Carnall approximates the number to be more than 20,000), but for the large amount of public support and sympathy that it garnered. While mill owners attempted to bring in outside labourers and tried to have the strike leaders arrested, contributions for

the strikers came from other towns in Lancashire and from all over the country. Operatives raised £3,000 a week to assist strikers, and a benefit performance in London was organized to raise further funds (Dutton and King 2). From all over England, newspapers sent reporters to report on events and meetings; the strike leaders, George Cowell and Mortimer Grimshaw became political celebrities. The strike also had an influence on the industrial fiction of Charles Dickens and Elizabeth Gaskell – *Hard Times* (1854) and *North and South* (1855), respectively – and Dickens traveled to Preston to write about the strike for *Household Words* (11 February 1854). [6]

In a *Daily News* article, a journalist reports the announcement of the strike's resolution to a large group of labourers, and the controlled resolve of the workers is likened to an aesthetic moment: "There is something almost sublime in the spectacle of so many thousands of human beings, actuated more or less by angry feelings, waiting quietly while their cause was being decided" ("London, Wednesday, May 3" 4). If this moment is sublime, then it is a Burkean sublime, in which the awe of such strong feeling is always pointedly connected to a certain fear over the power of politically-motivated feeling. The scene is not beautiful, but tenuous, and it is this uncertainty that holds the journalist captive. Of aesthetic interest, then, is the potential for control or the lack of control – the angry crowd frozen in quiet apprehension may just as easily be, mere moments later, the angry mob stirred to destructive action. This underlying worry pervades much condition of England writing, as one sees in Carlyle's *Chartism,* and is one that should be considered in the context of an increasing (and increasingly politicized) readership.

Dickens' journalistic (and novelistic) interest in this labour disruption is significant, for it shows the increasing role that the periodical presses had in mid-nineteenth century political culture, as well as the acknowledged role of the public in literary and social commentary. Kate Flint and Joseph Butwin make compelling arguments for how mid-nineteenth century novels address a public readership increasingly responsive to and familiar with journalism.[7] It seems fitting, then, that in *Signs of the Times*, Carlyle makes the observation that "the true Church of England, at the moment, lies in the Editors of its Newspapers" (*SW* 80) – his comment acknowledges the immense influence that periodicals (and periodical literature) have on public opinion. Butwin indicates that the wider relationship between journalism, literature, and reform is one intimately concerned with audience and readership: "The novel of social reform exists in continuum with journalism and defines its audience within the general public rather than among the community of 'ideal readers' of fiction whose response justifies most literary criticism" (167).

Half a century earlier, Jacobin radicalism afforded writers and editors with a distinct "vocabulary of grievance" (G. S. Jones 102) and the pivotal role of the radical presses was to "establish the right of an outraged people to redress" (Stauffer 1). In Chartist discourses and in radical newspapers of the mid-nineteenth century, the acknowledged readership, or "general public," becomes crucial to the call for collective political action. For Chartists, the radical newspapers were tools for fighting against oppression, and in 1840, Fergus O'Connor boldly declared that the press could destroy parliament (Jones, "Chartist Journalism" 5), a comment that intentionally points to

conflicts between radical newspapers and governmental authority. The force that O'Connor ascribes to newspapers is one that exists through continued appeals and addresses to "The People," as the collective and politically mobilized readership. By making such populist appeals, newspapers magnified the public discourse over feelings such as anger and provided the scope and tone for discussions of class relations. As such, they were an intrinsic part of the Condition-of-England Question.

The designation of "the People" conventionally implies a collective or group of individuals, usually connected by a shared purpose or goal, and the latter quality is what makes the People a distinctly political formation. In 1818, William Hazlitt, the critic and essayist who, like Carlyle, comments on "the spirit of the age," defined the People as: "Millions of men, like you, with hearts beating in their bosoms, with thoughts stirring in their minds, with the blood circulating in their veins, with wants and appetites, and passions and anxious cares, and busy purposes and affections for others and a respect for themselves, and a desire of happiness and a right to freedom, and a will to be free" ("What is the People?" 307). This description is significant since it directly addresses the presumed reader – "millions of men, like *you*" (emphasis added) – and describes the various motivations that bind people to a cause. Desires, convictions, and above all, feeling – "passions" and "affections" – are also, according to Hazlitt's description, linked to physiological states (of hearts beating and blood pumping), and all drive the overarching goal or purpose, which in Hazlitt's case is the cause of freedom.

Hazlitt's works typify the relationship between literature and politics in the decades following the French Revolution, as well as the "dissent, the restlessness, and the

106

idealism of English and European Romanticism" (Mahoney, *Romantics and Renegades* 1). As such, they provide a palpable link between post-Revolutionary contexts and revolutionary anxieties of the mid-nineteenth century. Given Hazlitt's philosophic roots in the eighteenth century, and his preoccupation with feelings and the imagination, it is understandable that he validates emotional responses, particularly in art and political life.[8] Feeling, in its expression and in its empirical origins, may be the common bridge between disparate groups of individuals. In "On Gusto" (1816), Hazlitt argues for the emotional strength of a work and suggests that passionate (and energetic) responses to an artwork are proof of its greatness (21-22). While largely discussing gusto in the visual arts, Hazlitt also provides literary examples: gusto is not a discursive power but an imaginative attachment to the subject and the words used to describe the subject ("On Gusto" 26-27).

In *The Logic of Passion,* John L. Mahoney discusses the role of emotional "gusto" in Hazlitt's criticism in a way that links the possession and expression of stalwart feeling to humanity itself: "To rob a man of strong feeling, [Hazlitt] contended, is to rob him of all that transcends the immediate objects of experience and the artificial ways in which men deal with them and to reduce him to an automaton" (64). Hazlitt's "blustery and flamboyant" style and persona epitomizes this "gusto," explains Mahoney (*Logic* 1). "Gusto" also creates a prominent link between literature and politics implicit in literary addresses to "the People": emotions bind groups of people to a political cause – they are motivating forces for political commitment and engagement, and are integral to the formation of critical judgments.

In the period surrounding the reform acts – with its sustained focus on the

enfranchisement of the populace – Chartists needed to conceptualize strong feelings such

as anger or indignation en masse. Indeed, "the People" becomes, in Chartist discourses,

not only a distinct rallying cry, but also a designation around which political identity and

commitment can be codified. For moral-force Chartists leaders such as William Lovett,

the designation of "The People" is a purposeful distinction from "the masses" and from

the pejorative connotations of populism and potential insurrection. Lovett makes an

evaluative distinction between the "passions" and the "sentiments," a division that

implies the reasoned and socializing quality of the latter. Those who ignore the "elevating

sentiments" appeal, instead, to the "passions and prejudices of the multitude" (7).

For physical-force leaders such as Fergus O'Connor, violence may be the only

effective means of redress against an already physical-force government: military and

police officials who stand against the efforts of "the People" ("O'Connor Upon Physical

Force" 7). Physical-force Chartism is, for O'Connor, a necessity borne out of the miseries

and oppression perpetuated by the current political system. Appealing to the "fustian

jackets" of the north – factory workers – O'Connor cautions against alliances with the

middle classes. The interests between masters and men, argues O'Connor, are at odds,

and those in the service of existing powers, such as shopkeepers and overseers, serve only

middle-class interests. Evoking the language of class solidarity, O'Connor calls the

People "the legitimate source of all power" and rallies a decisive call: "No Union with

the enemy; no surrender!" ("To the Fustian Jackets" 7). In the face of "legislative

oppression and tyranny," physical force is, according to O'Connor, righteous and honourable:

> You see, my view is that man is born with propensities which may be nourished into virtues, or thwarted into vices, according to the training; that persuasion is better than compulsion, that naturally, man loves virtue more than vice; but that artificially, he has been compelled to apply vice to vice to preserve even an existence upon earth. ("O'Connor Upon Physical Force" 7).

By way of deft rhetorical displacements, physical force becomes re-conceptualized as virtue and necessity rather than a character defect. The right to assembly, the right to express discontent collectively, and the right to address wrongs through force become reified as "the best safeguards against oppression and misrule" ("O'Connor Upon Physical Force" 7). Although leaders such as Lovett and O'Connor may differ as to the means by which they would enforce political change, what is contiguous between them is the similar addresses to the collective: "the People" becomes a crowd organized by a distinct political purpose and moral imperative and, like in Hazlitt's designation, shared feeling.

Making appeals to the People also holds threatening linkages with that of the crowd, or the mob, but my contention is that the crowd, the literal embodiment of the People, becomes a distinct force in Chartist discourses that affirms the discontent of the time. After the French Revolution, the crowd emerges as a significant trope for Victorian anxieties surrounding strong feeling and its expression as a modern "eruption of power"

109

(Canetti 54-55). For Gustave Le Bon, the crowd provides a potent model for human psychology and an explanation of social behaviour.[9] In the cultural imagination of the nineteenth century, the anxiety provoked by the crowd, and which pervades descriptions of the crowd, has been its threat to authority, and consequently, its claims for recognition in the public arena. Plotz makes the apt point that by the 1840s, Chartist meetings and demonstrations were often called crowds by those unwilling to grant such collective organization political status (1). The British public sphere from 1800 to 1850 was, argues Plotz, "the subject of a violent contest to determine what sources of discourses would count as central to public speech and performance" (10). As such, the literature of that period becomes intimately concerned with its public role, a fact made evident by the proliferation of condition-of-England novels (or "novels with a purpose") in that period. Chartist demonstrations, or crowds, become new forms of public speech, and in this respect, Plotz interprets Carlyle's *Chartism* as tacitly acknowledging this discursive competition in the public sphere (131, 137).

As literal symbols of dissent, crowds amplify the object of scrutiny while expressing discontent with a current system of authority. In the history of labour activism and trade unionism, worker combinations emerged in the late eighteenth century as a potent means to coalesce around a shared identity – one informed by shared labour – and to air grievances and make negotiations with employers. Motivated by a collective belief or assertion, crowds, by virtue of their composition, embody a consensus between individuals, and as such, a legitimacy to express fellow-feeling. The right to articulate outrage or grievance becomes, argues E. P Thompson, part of the "moral economy" of

110

the poor (79). Thompson's observations on direct popular action can be applied to the Chartist crowd, spurred by political beliefs and like-minded feelings. Like Carlyle's anger in *Chartism*, the indignation of the Chartist crowd has the specific rhetorical function of establishing credibility. Yet the expression of anger in distinctly political contexts is an act of defiance in the face of censure laws that forbid language which could incite hostility or be seditious; for many Chartists, this meant the subsequent threat of imprisonment.[10]

Anger can also be symptomatic of a judgment that one has been unjustly wronged, and, in this respect, anger (often rhetorically, indignation) functions as a temporary means of adjusting social relations and obligations (Averill 101). Like Carlyle's prophetic anger, it can facilitate or express a unique position and insight that demands political and cultural attention. As a collective assertion, a declaration that a particular group or identity has been wronged, it is a highly politicized version of what Barbara Rosenwein has termed an "emotional community," which exists in tandem with other communities in the polity. Rosenwein defines emotional communities as groups who "adhere to the same norms of emotional expression and value – or devalue – the same or related emotions" (2). Such groups of people, sharing some judgment or approbation, demonstrate the sociability of antipathies; anger, and variously, indignation, assumed increasing political significance in the mid-nineteenth century when expressed collectively.

The early and mid-nineteenth-century saw the flourishing of "indignation meetings," both in Victorian England and America, as types of collective assemblies and

emotional communities. Examining the role of indignation in American antebellum politics, Michael Woods describes the indignation meeting, quite rightly, as a "political ritual" that provided an opportunity for the "communal cultivation and expression of indignation"; its aim was to assemble "like-minded" (and like-feeling) individuals together to discuss practical responses to political issues (v). Woods's historical research explores the public reaction to the May 1856 caning of Charles Sumner at the hands of South Carolina congressman Preston S. Brooks, which galvanized northern antagonism to the South and drew much support for the Republicans. The outrage expressed at indignation meetings, argues Wood, granted public outrage with what he calls "moral nobility" (vi). Woods's assertion is not unlike Bain's discussion of anger's ethical and aesthetic rendering in literature and the arts (*EW* 14, 57).

In England, indignation meetings were often announced in periodicals such as the *Poor Man's Guardian* or *The Northern Star*. They provided the opportunity for working classes to convene to discuss grievances, share ideas, and articulate responses or redresses. The goal of such meetings was not solely to express feeling, but also to discuss tangible political results; as organized events, they "ritualized the cultivation and expression of politically-relevant emotions, and they brought like-minded citizens together in a venue which facilitated the formulation of practical responses to all manner of 'public abuses'" (Woods 14). In both Britain and across the Atlantic, indignation meetings became part of the moral economies of the working classes, but also of reformist and political groups wanting to call attention to slavery (and abolition), political representation and exclusion, and systemic brutality or oppression.

112

Indignation, like sympathy, is an integral part of "rhetoric of the marginalized" (Engbers 307) and takes on connotations in both working- and middle-class contexts of Christian, civic, and political duty. Repeated insult, explains one *Northern Star* editor, flushes the cheek with indignation and "produces a resolve" to correct injustice in the "Spirit of the People" ("The Spirit of the People" 4). Writing in 1816, the philologist, George Crabb (1778-1851) distinguished indignation from the baser emotions such as rage or wrath: indignation is motivated by the "atrocious conduct of others" and as such, it is aligned with "the temper of a Christian" (118). Moral indignation and anger can exist simultaneously, but the former was necessary to judgment: "it also fulfilled a unique role in assisting individuals in making moral evaluations. Unlike resentment, indignation responded to the moral aspect of a given situation, concerning itself with abstract judgments of right and wrong" (Woods 23). Nineteenth-century historians and politicians, explains Woods, viewed indignation as a "politically efficacious emotion," one best felt and expressed collectively (10). Making direct addresses to the political power of "popular" or "public" indignation enables writers to situate emotions into the realm of the politically possible. By articulating discontent publically and mobilizing around its expression, Victorian activism – variously abolition, suffrage, and labour and trade unionism – understood, in no small way, the public role of strong feeling. Consequently, the argument that existing powers should do so too, also persists: Jean-Pierre Reed, for example, suggests that along with the sentiment of hope, moral outrage serves as a "revolutionary accelerator" in modern historical conflict (655).

In designating an organizational purpose to the crowd, Chartists can make appeals to the People – an idealized group or readership that stands as a legitimate alternative to the mob or riot. If one considers this attribution alongside Carlyle's version of Chartism, the People can also stand in competition with the solitary author or critic, the well-read "man of feeling." For Chartist radicals, the crowd, like periodicals, can give vent to grievance or disillusionment with the political and social system. Plotz argues for the crowd's political importance by ascribing a specific agency to its formation: despite any pejorative connotations, the crowd was "evidence of both a city's diversity and uniformity, of both public disorder and new sorts of claim-making" (2).

Surprisingly, Chartist historians have paid little attention to the political practice of indignation meetings: P. W. Slosson mentions only in passing "the vast indignation meetings which met all over England to denounce the New Poor Law of 1834" (171). For Slosson, Chartism's effectiveness as an organized movement, and thus, the object of historical interest, was its ability to incorporate the political agenda of multiple working-class movements. Slosson's emphasis on collectivity ignores the role of feeling in the mobilization of individuals into groups. For John Garrard, public indignation meetings were merely "unnerving form[s]" of discontent, designed for intimidation rather than articulation (150). Yet Chartist indignation meetings, along with other forms of combination such as torchlight meetings or the Chartist petitions and marches, are symbolic acts – of literacy, as Brantlinger argues (*The Reading Lesson* 93), and as embodied political or social discontent. Crowds, their formation and their representation,

114

are cultural signifying practices in the polity, in Chartism, and in working-class identity formation.

If the crowd is important to Chartists as a potential locus of authority, then like the crowd, the readership – a sympathetic and informed collective – becomes vital to how Chartists conceptualize their political platform and identity. In literary culture, and as part of appeals to the People, the expression of feeling can make assurances of class-based merits that can mobilize individuals to a platform or course of action. As an organized movement (both regionally and nationally), Chartism develops alongside working-class literature of the period. Chartist poets such as Thomas Cooper, Ernest Charles Jones, and W. J. Linton employ both the rhetoric of Romantic radicalism – a declaration of individual rights and liberties – and its lyrical and conventional forms. Stauffer explains that the "democratization of anger" by the Romantics allowed writers to posit anger as a just reaction to the violation of personal rights (1-2), and it is from this political and intellectual tradition that Chartist literature emerges.

Encouraging a recognizable literary culture becomes crucial to Chartists' expression of political ideals. Anne F. Janowitz emphasizes, for instance, that the political aim of Chartism, "full civic subjectivity through the objective demand for the franchise," is formulated through a distinct Chartist poetics (28). Yet from the 1830s to the middle of the century, Chartist and working-class literature in general undergoes a change in literary models or influences: from Romantic poetic discourse to prose forms, and specifically, the novelistic conventions of melodrama. In her discussion of working-class literature, Martha Vicinus notes that the mid-1840s to the mid-1850s was the most

productive period for Chartist (and working-class) fiction as it developed from this poetic tradition. For Vicinus, the change to prose emerges out of a concern over the role of fiction in working-class life – whether it should be, like early Chartist literature, "exhortative and inspirational" so as to motivate individuals to political and labour activism, or whether it should provide for its readers "a soothing escape from this life or a foretaste of a better life" (95). Ultimately, explains Vicinus, the aim of Chartist fiction during this period is to spark political activity, and Chartist authors do so by combining "the idealism of poetry with the attractive plotting and characterization of fiction" (95). The onus on fiction also allows authors to consider the purposeful selection and representation of the literary protagonist. For Chartist and working-class writers, the working-class protagonist becomes part of the "obligation to portray their class" (Vicinus 97), but also as a figure around which emergent discourses of class identity and class-based feeling could be affirmed or contested.

Similarly, Sally Ledger attributes this transformation in Chartist literature to a newly emerging relationship between "populism and radicalism." The change, argues Ledger, demonstrates an acknowledgement of the popular presses and anticipates, as well as requires, an evolving mass readership (32). In suggesting that Chartist periodicals were consciously (and discursively) battling government and conservative opposition, and competing with popular periodicals that offered "salacious and titillating fare" (42), Ledger implies, like Plotz, that populist literary forms are a means of "claim-making" in mid-nineteenth century politics and literary production. Increasingly directed towards a working-class readership, the conventions of melodrama provoke the exploration of class

116

conflict and political and economic inequalities (Ledger 35). The melding of radical politics with popular fictional forms means a marked attention to affective experiences of reading, and the tacit acknowledgment that feelings motivate actions and exist, like the crowd, as a potentially potent political force.

To be sure, industrial novels at the time attempt to imbue the implied audience with a sense of moral imperative or duty, which should, ostensibly, prompt some sort of ameliorative action. *Hard Times,* a novel inspired by Dickens's visit to Preston and his reportage on a strike delegates' meeting (and more implicitly, working-class expression), is a well-noted example of such an appeal: the "Dear reader! It rests with you and me" (298) that starts the novel's concluding paragraph plays the same rhetorical role as appealing to "The People," a call for collective action. Yet what is specific to Chartist fiction is its ability to both express and attempt to inspire strong feelings such as anger or indignation. Anger and its ilk are not only represented in the story, but Chartist authors also insist that they be manifested in readers as well. Authors such as Thomas Cooper and Ernest Charles Jones admonish the political and economic authorities of the time, while also directing blame or some form of chastisement at readers. Such reprimands could, at the very least, cause readers to reexamine their own political allegiances and moral attitudes – in turn, inspiring them to participate in a movement aimed at alleviating both the grievances and miseries presented in the fictional world, and the world beyond the pages of the book or periodical.

Published almost ten years prior to *Hard Times*, Thomas Cooper's short story, "Merrie England – No More!" (1845), contains a very similar direct address to the reader,

117

although differing, importantly, in tone. The story, written while Cooper was in Stafford Gaol and published in a collection entitled *Old-Fashioned Stories,* is set during 1842, a peak moment of Chartist political activity and labour strikes. It provides a brief sketch of a group of labourers who help a destitute father after his sixteen-year-old son is persuaded by a recruiter to join the army in exchange for money. The story contains many of the characteristic tropes found in Chartist narratives: the narration of poverty and misery; the railing against an unjust order (commonly, military and government officials as the agents of state oppression); a stark contrast between rich and poor; and moments of solidarity and sympathy between labourers. The story, modeled largely as a conversation among members of a small group of labourers, provides ample opportunity for the main points of the Chartist platform to be delivered predominately through oratory (the personalized voices of the characters) rather than the extradiegetic narrator. Particularly distinct, however, is Cooper's concluding paragraph, which, like *Hard Times,* uses this narrator to address the reader directly:

> There is no "tale" to finish about John or his lad, or Jem and his wife. They went on starving, – begging, – receiving threats of imprisonment, – tried the "Bastille" for a few weeks, – came out and had a little work, – starved again: and they are still going the same miserable round, like thousands in "merrie England." What are your thoughts, reader? (59)

Cooper's stark refusal of narrative resolution is, according to Ian Haywood, the story's most radical and remarkable aspect, and Haywood connects this formal rejection of closure directly to Cooper's political outlook: "Having stressed the veracity of his story

118

('these conversations are *real*; they are no coinages') [Cooper] cannot impose a resolution while the struggle was still taking place." Thus, Haywood explains, "Cooper's achievement mirrored Chartism's political goal, which aimed at undermining the dominant means of political representation" (*The Literature of Struggle* 9).

Cooper's tone also affects how the information is presented to the reader, especially in contrast to Dickens' final paragraph. While the address to the reader in *Hard Times* ends with the potentially placating domestic image of the hearth, Cooper's admonition does the opposite: the narrator's calm but scathing tone – his presentation of the fates of his characters as an impersonal list and inevitable cycle – does not, and cannot, mollify his readers. It is not enough that readers are to sympathize with John, Jem, or their unnamed wives; sympathy (and feeling in general) are not enough if they do not motivate political action. Cooper's final address refuses to conjure any obfuscating, tidy conclusion. Instead, it relies on the measured expression of the narrator as a means to stir strong feeling in his readers.

Like Cooper, Jones also shifted creative and political focus from poetry to prose, publishing in his short-lived periodical, *Notes to the People* (1851-52). Ledger cites Jones as the quintessential example of Chartist writers' turn to fiction and, specifically, populist melodrama. This transformation was politically astute, explains Ledger, since melodrama is a "politically adaptable rather than a politically inflected genre," and as such, can serve as a formidable "aesthetic of protest" (49, 46). Yet Jones, as Ledger and others have pointed out, was ambivalent about populist appeals. In "Words to the Reader," the preface to his first volume of *Notes to the People,* Jones introduces his publication by

way of a collective address to the readership. He acknowledges that he is starting this periodical "at a time of peculiar political and social apathy" (iii), and as such, positions his newly-established publication as a deliberate reaction (and ostensible antidote) to such a lack of feeling. Jones provides a mandate for *Notes:* "They were started with a determination not to pander to the sensuality of the public by meretricious writing – not to degrade the literature of democracy to the level of the street-walker" (iii). In answer to the rejoinder that one must "sugar the pill" of instructional literature, Jones argues that democratic principles are too important to be "coupled with anything so impure" and asserts his belief in "the virtue and highmindedness of the people" (iii). Jones' address to his implied readers is telling in what it says about the public role of literature, his conceptions of the People, and finally, his means of representing working-class industrial suffering.

Jones attempts to establish a purpose for populist fiction beyond mere entertainment, and his collective appeals to the People as an imagined group of readers, are meant to incite political action by pointing out the ostensible flaws of the populace. The public's desire to be moved by feelings should not be, argues Jones, sated by the consumption of melodrama or sensation fiction, but by the just pursuit of democracy, and more specifically, political representation. Jones' serialized fiction enables him to direct anger at this mass readership, admonishing readers for their apathy and for their preoccupation with the vulgar and trivial. In this respect, Jones avows that an elevated and deeply feeling readership, rather than an apathetic one, is essential in radical politics. Additionally, by equating populist literature with the "level of a streetwalker," Jones

renders the female body as the grounds of working-class suffering and disenfranchisement. This equation is demonstratively ambivalent: Jones may well be sympathetic to the double victimization of women – economic and sexual – in industrial capitalism, a point he makes clear in his compilation of short stories entitled *Woman's Wrongs* (1852), but the prostitute analogy is ultimately used as disparagement, to signify the commodification of literature and the compromise of "pure" ideals.

Like Victorian melodrama, *Woman's Wrongs* contains stock characters: orphans, vulnerable single women, and villains. By employing familiar plots of crime (Newgate) fiction, as well as seduction plots, Jones exposes these conventions in order to "maximize their radical political affects" (Ledger 50-51). Their familiarity enables Jones to focus on the actions and motivations of his characters, rather than the plot. His refusal of conventional forms of closure is also, like Cooper's short story, politically efficient. Vicinus argues, for instance, that such closure requires that class antagonism and hostility be resolved or displaced from the demands of the plot (114). In *Woman's Wrongs,* the death, seduction, or imprisonment of Jones' protagonists become the likely consequences of political and social inequality and oppression.

As in the "street-walker" analogy, Jones calls attention to the social and economic exploitation, particularly of women. In the Introduction to *Woman's Wrongs* this imperative includes Jones' anticipation of readers' reactions: "If I draw pictures at which you shudder —if I reveal that at which your heart revolts — I cannot help it — it is truth — such is the world that surrounds you — such is the world that made you — such is the world you help to make — go! Try to alter it, and BEGIN AT HOME" (2). For Jones, the

121

fate of his protagonists is harsh but necessarily instructive, and his fiction is aimed at

rousing his predominantly working-class readership both by his subject matter –

subjugation and hardship – and his admonishments for the role of readers in maintaining

the existing world and all its inequities. In *Woman's Wrongs,* anger motivates many of

Jones' characters to action, whether good or bad; it is, ostensibly, what should also drive

readers, as the People, to action.

The presentation of each female protagonist, and her grim fate, is calculated and

systematic: Jones' collection of stories includes women from all classes, from the poor to

the "Lady of Title," and the title of each narrative defines the protagonist by her specific

"work" or labour (Haywood, *Chartist Fiction* xxiii). The first story, "The Working Man's

Wife," ends with the public execution of the protagonist, Margaret Haspen. From the

onset of the story, which starts with Margaret in childbirth, her husband is sullen and

angry (*WW* 3). The narrator maintains, however, that Haspen "was not by nature a bad

man": "he was capable of a sudden generous impulse, though devoid of that gentleness

and feeling which smoothes the intercourse of the home, and wins domestic sympathy"

(*WW* 4). Although Haspen may not be a paragon of fatherly and conjugal feeling, his

surliness and resentment stem from financial concerns rather than inner defect, as he is

wary of having another mouth to feed. Upon finding out that the new addition to the

Haspen family is a girl, his reaction typifies the inequality between the sexes from the

very start of life: "'Curse it, a girl!' cried the husband, dashing his pipe to pieces in anger.

'A girl!' moaned the sufferer, 'all that pain, and then to have a girl!' Such is the child-bed

of the poor – so the poor man's child was born: a curse and a sigh welcomed it into life"

122

(*WW* 4). Any hope of "domestic sympathy" between the Haspens is further dissolved when Haspen's employer, Barrowson, cuts his workers' wages. Haspen initially resists; when he finally recants and asks for his job back, willing to work at the artificially lowered wage, Barrowson refuses to re-hire him. Unemployed and desperate, Haspen devolves from an ill-tempered poor man, worried about providing for his family, to a desperate thief, and finally, to a vengeful murderer.

The Haspens decline both financially and morally; Margaret, initially her husband's social superior (*WW* 5), also sinks into a brutishness – one borne out of financial desperation as well as a sense of maternal protection. In a memorable passage, she attacks her husband with a hatchet after he fails to help their youngest child when she falls into the (literal) fire of their rapidly deteriorating domestic hearth:

> [T]he mother's eyes wandered round in search of something: she stretched her hands – stooped – and suddenly rising – the husband felt the sharp cold blow of a hatchet strike his cheek, and glide off upon his shoulder. Pain made him utter an oath – he was about to dart on Margaret, but with the agility of a tigress, she had already darted into the darkest corner of the room, her child in one arm, the hatchet in her hand. The gleam of her hatchet and of her angry eyes was alone visible in the darkness – the hoarse sound of her quick breath was alone audible in the silence. The man paused suddenly before the fury of the tigress defending its young – he felt fear. (*WW* 11)

123

The scene is highly stylized in its portrayal of anger and in Margaret's deliberate actions. Significantly, there is no dialogue between the Haspens, who are not referred to as husband and wife, nor John and Margaret, but as "the man" and "the mother." Anger is not divorced from its potential for violence: the gleam of the hatchet and Margaret's angry eyes are chilling reminders of anger's possible escalation into violence and murder. Referring twice to Margaret as a protective "tigress," the narrator does not outwardly condemn Margaret's action, but does provide a motive that would gain some sympathy with Victorian readers – instead of the "angel in the house," a domestic virtue later made popular with Coventry Patmore's poem (1854), Margaret Haspen stands as the avenging angel, ready to protect her unfortunate daughter.

Yet Margaret's maternal gesture, however extreme, becomes insufficient in the plot of Jones' short fiction. After her husband is transported for his theft, Margaret and her daughters endure further degradation at the hands of Barrowson, who seduces Catherine, the oldest, and then, being "a most punctilious observer of the decencies" of the time, sends her off to a village outside of town. Margaret is now resolutely submissive: "She uttered no reproaches – she knew they would be laughed at – but she determined in forthwith quitting the neighbourhood, and going somewhere where her misfortunes would not taunt her in the public street" (*WW* 25). The narrator's prosaic tone recounting Margaret's submission (a tone replicated in the narration of her execution) is telling: such a predicament is common in the current condition of England. Margaret has been wronged, to be sure – and in harbouring her husband after he murders Barrowson, she has done wrong also – but Jones points out that her fate is inextricably

tied to these men by way of inevitable (and exploitive) sexual and economic relations. For Jones, it is the "brute force" of the existing laws (of politics and political economy) and the "moral force" of marriage and gender inequality that cause Margaret, among others, to "suffer at her own home-hearth" ("Introduction" 2)

Margaret is punished as an accomplice to her husband's crime, and her execution takes place in front of a boisterous but generally unfeeling crowd. In the description of the execution scene there is a disjunction between the events as they ceremoniously unfold and the narrative voice:

> An execution was to take place at Newgate. It had been announced long beforehand, as an instructive and national solemnity. The press had been pointing attention to it, day by day. Before daybreak, the people began to assemble – the people, so anxious for anything that will tear them out of the dull monotony of their cheerless, routine life! They came, as they would to a public-house, seeking something to drown thought for a few hours. They came, as they had gone the previous evening to the playhouse, to get the amusement of one excitement more! (*WW* 37)

The boisterous mood of the crowd is the antithesis of "solemnity"; the assembly of spectators around the gallows, eager to escape routine drudgery (another inevitability) for a small part of the day, is likened to the crowds that frequent the public house or the playhouse – notorious places of working-class entertainment. By introducing the scene in this way, the narrator underscores the incongruity between the occasion and the feelings

(or lack thereof) of the public, and ultimately, displays an irony to be understood by the reader.

As a writer of fiction, Jones would certainly sympathize with the desire for working-class men and women to seek entertainment, yet Jones' concern is with the kinds of popular entertainment available to the people, and their effects. Public-houses, playhouses, and a sensationalized press imply, in Jones' story, an avoidance of political responsibility (and by extension, moral responsibility) for the singular pursuit of self-interested pleasure. Jones' message explicitly connects to his admonishments in "Words to the Reader," and in *Woman's Wrongs*: daily misery and subjugation is a fact, the result of an exploitive system. For Jones, one cannot escape oppression and subjugation (and suffering or misery) without political action. The Haspens may rage, and they may well be punished, but the narrator's ire is reserved for the spectators, who do not feel enough for the inevitabilities that led to Margaret's execution in the first place.

In the execution scene, the designation of "the People" holds little symbolic value; this is an unfeeling and unorganized crowd, ultimately apathetic and apolitical. As the impatient crowd finally watches the execution, what follows are three separate scenes and paragraphs. The first, highlights Margaret's gentleness towards her youngest daughter: "'Hush! – Mary! – Don't cry so, Mary!' And the soft cajoling tenderness of the mother turned her chocking tones into angelic music" (*WW* 39). In this scene, Margaret turns from tigress to angel, a transformation that harkens back to the hatchet scene. The second is a stark departure from the first: Margaret's "lifeless corpse" dangles before "the careless myriad of spectators." The next scene describes the immediate aftermath: "A

thick soft rain was now falling – the crowd dispersed rapidly in all directions. The busy

monotony of life began to ring on every side: every one went his own way on his

business, few caring for God, and still fewer for their neighbour" (*WW* 37). The

progression of scenes alternates between deliberate contrasts: from the emotional leave-

taking scene, to the terse but macabre climax, and finally, to the dispersion of the

dispassionate and callous crowd, a scene in which the prosaic description of the narrator

negates the more melodramatic elements of the plot. Margaret's dangling body, "a

strange fruit, a symbol of grotesque attraction and repulsion, is oscillating signifier of

social and sexual subjection" (Haywood, *Chartist Fiction* xxiii).[11] Jones offers it up to the

readers only to disparage their passive consumption of it. Drawing upon the public's

fascination with Newgate fiction, Jones criticizes the lack of political feeling behind this

predilection. The narrator's own anger is saved not for those who exhibit strong, even

brutal feeling – since the characters in the story, and indeed, the entire collection of

stories, exhibit anger, rage and vengeance – but directed towards those who exhibit no

feeling, whether sympathy or outrage.

Thus, like the condition of England writer, Jones' narrator addresses the lack of

feeling and sympathy in the world outside the pages of fiction. The appeal to feeling in

Chartist periodicals such as *Notes to the People* assumes that lack of feeling (apathy or

indifference) for the miseries and injustices perpetuated upon people like Margaret

Haspen and her two daughters are tantamount to submission and even approbation. In this

respect, feeling becomes the very grounds for the radical interrogation of existing

authority. Jones' instructive fiction is aimed at rousing his predominantly working-class readership to respond to the systems of inequalities that victimize his characters.

Jones' arrangement of stories, which follows women of different social stratifications, also implies a calculated swipe at singularly deterministic conceptions of working-class disposition or character: the narrative assemblage implicitly suggests that discontentment and selfishness exist as all levels of society. In *Woman's Wrongs,* both men and women brutalize each other; some take advantage of the injustices afforded by a corrupt political and economic system, while others do so with little thought or effort. In this sense, the fatalism of "The Working Man's Wife," which Haywood rightly points out anticipates the naturalistic slum fiction of Gissing (*Chartist Fiction* xx), is extended to other walks of life. Jones' stories warn that anger and rage are consequences of current economic and political realities, as are other base feelings such as envy and covetousness.

Although Jones advocates strong feelings in his audience, he is aware of their destructive potential, and there is a distinction between the crowd with political conviction, the People, and the self-gratifying (or entertainment-seeking) crowd that gathers around Margaret Haspen (or the penny dreadful or stage melodrama) and then quickly disperses. Speaking at a public meeting at the Literary Institute in London a week before the 1848 Chartist Convention, Jones declared that while strength is necessary to mitigate the unfair exercise of power, physical force is not a *carte blanche* for spontaneous rage or vengeance: "Because there is power in your arm, you wouldn't knock the first man down you meet, but it is as well to have that power if he strikes you. Well then, therefore I advocate organization. Without it, a people is a mob; but with it, it

128

becomes an army" ("On Moral and Physical Force" 96). In his speech, Jones

distinguishes between a deliberate anger and one born out of rashness or solely prone to

violence, a distinction that respectively applies to the political crowd, as a Chartist

vehicle for the expression of grievance, and more pejorative connotations of the mob or

riot. For Jones, the former is both an articulate and "organized" force (the people), and a

formidable, and if need be, physical, opponent (an army). As a sanctioned outlet for anger

or indignation, the political crowd and the politicized readership are points of articulation

for working-class identity and Chartist politics.

In Carlyle's *Chartism,* the "right" to articulate anger is a dangerous and

misguided "might" in the hands of Chartists. Conscious opposition to, and anger with,

the present condition of England is, instead, the perquisite of the author-prophet and his

keen political insight. Given Jones' attendant political engagement (and imprisonment),

the author does not necessarily have to stand separate or superior to his object of scrutiny

in order to maintain such insight. Indeed, as the conclusion to "The Tradesman's

Daughter" makes clear, the author may well be complicit in economic exploitation.

In "The Tradesman's Daughter," Jones' scathing narrator draws attention to, and

critiques, the elevated status of literary labour and the devalued status of domestic labour.

Like Margaret Haspen, the protagonist, Laura Trenton, is bound to an exploitive domestic

situation, and to her father, an "honourable man of business" (*WW* 71). Unlike Haspen,

Mr. Trenton never loses his temper, yet Laura's subjugation is equally insidious. In her

"genteel exploitation" (Haywood, *Chartist Fiction* xxiv), Laura is figuratively chained to

her clerk's desk and her ledgers in the counting house until she is expediently married off

to her father's business partner. Laura's cousin and love interest, Edward Trenton, dismisses Laura as a calculating machine:

"As to my cousin Laura, I'll say nothing — that's all one can say of her. Just fancy a pale young girl, with large blue eyes, and false over-sleeves of green cotton, to prevent her gown being soiled — and gloves upon her hands to keep her fingers from being inked! She keeps the day-book — enters orders — scores up accounts — writes a fine Italian hand — and — that's all." (*WW* 71)

Edward himself is the other extreme of a London tradesman: as a Romantic and aspiring author, Edward remarks on his inability to be like his uncle; his dismissal of Laura is based on the faulty assumption that, like her father, she is suited for such cold and calculating labour, not that it is extracted from her (*WW* 71). He assumes, naïvely, the superiority of his own, less mechanical literary pursuits, connecting them to his superior disposition and elevated means of feeling: "'I look to the paths of literature — my heart beats when I see a new work. I don't know how it is, but I don't hear of a new author without feeling almost angry — for it appears, that, while I wait, *my place is being forestalled'*" (*WW* 72, original emphasis). Edward's acknowledged "almost" anger is the result of his artistic potential and of a supposedly elevated disposition. Yet for all his self-glorifying soliloquies, and for a man claiming a refinement of feeling, Edward is either horribly indifferent or cruel to Laura: she balances his accounts for him and receives only his scorn at her willingness to continue her "monotonous, withering and horrid" life; when she attempts to talk to Edward about literature, he recoils at her lack of knowledge

130

(*WW* 74-75). Emotional clod that he is, Edward assumes that Laura's coldness towards her opportune marriage is further proof of her emotional inferiority, rather than, as the title of the story suggests, her dutiful commitment to her father's wishes.

In contrast to the monotony of the counting house, Edward's intellectual labour takes place after business hours, when he retires to his garret to read and write, and evoke "dreams of literary fame" (*WW* 77). While the now-married Laura has since moved to the country, Edward returns to London to become a vocational man of letters, only to learn that the reality of the literary profession is one of both physical and mental toil, equally menial:

> Edward soon began to discover that literature was a monopoly among a privileged oligarchy of letters, that its humbler walks are so overstocked with surplus labour, that few have the change of employment, and that none can obtain and keep employment unless they sell their honor, their brain, and their independence into the lowest grades of a debasing wage slavery. (*WW* 90)

The inversion between Laura and Edward is purposefully instructive and underscores Edward's folly; like in the factory or the counting house, Edward's once handsome figure is transformed, through his exploitative literary labour, into a "gaunt, thin, skeleton-like, attenuated frame" (*WW* 90). When Edward appeals to a "celebrated author," the aptly named Mr. Sucknoodle,[12] for an interview, the meeting eventually seals his fate. Sucknoodle, as his name suggests, is a "literary vampire" who steals Edward's works and publishes them as his own (*WW* 92). Edward's discovery of this perfidy is ostensibly

directed towards the reader rather than towards the dying and ineffectual Edward. The narrator sums up Edward's case as being simply one of many: "Thus, nine-tenths of *our* cheap literature is concocted by vampires living on the most dastard robbery!" (*WW* 92, emphasis added). By moving from the third-person pronoun to the collective address, the narrator refers to the corresponding reality outside of the fictional world; Edward's fate is actually all too common, and this diminishes the potential pathos of his demise. Moreover, the use of the collective pronoun explicitly connects Edward's mistake, and death, to the reader, disparaging the reader as a participant in this exploitive set of practices. The final injustice occurs after Edward's death, and thus, is maintained solely for the reader: upon hearing of Edward's death, Sucknoodle publishes a fictitious letter from Edward citing him as the patron and friend and requesting him to publish his final works. Banking on the commercial merit of an untimely death, "Sucknoodle gathered a golden harvest, and golden opinions also for his noble act of disinterested generosity" (*WW* 99). The finely bound copy of Edward's work, grossly deemed the product of sympathetic patronage, provides, as in "The Working Man's Wife," much dramatic irony for the reader.

Read against Carlyle's own angry assertions, Jones' story negates a singularly prophetic position. Literature, as labour, is subject to the same faults within the capitalist system of callous indifference, competition, and (considering popular literature) the desire for entertainment. Mr. Sucknoodle's success is based on his willingness to exploit, rather than an inherent ability; it does not rely on an elevated or refined disposition or sense of feeling, since it is Mr. Sucknoodle's *lack of feeling* that allows him, like Mr.

132

Trenton, to succeed in business – in this case, the business of literature. Jones argues that it is the privilege of money and social position, rather than an artistic or intellectual insight, that secures success – an accomplishment that requires the devaluation and exploitation of other forms of labour, such as the domestic, and the exploitation of individuals.

Although Jones does not necessarily come to mind when discussing sage writing and prophetic authorship – designations used when referring to the writings of Carlyle, Mathew Arnold, John Ruskin, and Henry David Thoreau in the nineteenth century – his periodical fiction follows the "prophetic pattern" that Landow identifies: an attack upon the audience, a warning, and a "visionary promise" (27). Indeed, in *Woman's Wrongs,* Jones' narrator recurrently points blame at readers and more generally, a mass public. Jones' warning to this working-class crowd is that these "wrongs" may affect any one of them: destitution and exploitation could well follow. Yet Jones' "visionary promise" depends upon responsive readers, and requires, above all, the conviction that the unfeeling crowd can (and will), through its inherent "virtue and highmindedness," evolve into the political crowd, one unwilling to let such systematic exploitation and political exclusion to continue ("Words to the Reader" iii). In this respect, anger is not the property (and proof) of the prophetic author, but for Jones, a mindful reaction to the attendant miseries of political disenfranchisement.

It is on this point that I discern a significant difference between Carlyle's condition-of-England writing and Chartist writing, and subsequently, their uses of anger: Carlyle's anger does not come buttressed to the same validations of the working-class

133

public that Jones' anger seems to imply. For Carlyle, the crowd is discordant and inarticulate, a "distracted incoherent embodiment" of political principles and calls for representation, and he cites "thuggery, political or union-driven meetings by torchlight, secret pacts and assassinations, riots" as examples of these crowd-driven excesses (*SW* 152). Carlyle's vision requires, instead, a virtuous hierarchical authority, rather than a public one. In *Chartism,* the "bellowings" and "inarticulate cries" serve as proof that the working-class public, a "dumb creature in rage and pain," is asking to be governed (*SW* 189-90); in *Woman's Wrongs,* the working-class public can govern themselves through political engagement and mobilization prompted by sympathy and anger.

III. Carlyle and Jones in a "Model Prison":
Subjectivity, Authorship, and Political Engagement

In *Past and Present* (1843), Carlyle begins his historical and social commentary with an objection to the proclivity of condition-of-England publications:

> The condition of England, on which many pamphlets are now in the course of publication, and many thoughts unpublished are going on in every reflective head, is justly regarded as one of the most ominous, and withal one of the strangest, ever seen in this world. England is full of wealth, of multifarious produce, supply for human want in every kind; yet England is dying of inanition. (1)

The question as to the current state and future of England was one that Carlyle, years earlier, had prophetically coined and shaped, yet he is quick to disengage his contribution

134

from the numerous and ostensibly ineffective publications currently in print and being circulated in public discourses. His opening observation implies that the frequency of these publications seems to have little effect on the actual state of England; despite the appetite to print such literature (and presumably to read it), and England's economic prosperity notwithstanding, the country is undernourished. For Carlyle, demand and opportunity, along with a promised readership, do not necessarily imply a necessary social and moral improvement.

In this sense, the condition-of-England author, as much as the present condition of the country, becomes the object of scrutiny. Carlyle's objection to the proliferation of condition-of-England writings implies his cogent acknowledgment that literature and criticism of the time – the right to express an opinion on the condition of England, and discontent at the present conditions – are part of a discursive battle for public attention and readership; they must also contend with the "dismal sciences" of political economy and statistical studies, as well as with working-class literary culture and the language of radicalism. Carlyle's consistent exaggeration and hyperbole in *Chartism,* his descriptions of Chartists as "wild, inarticulate souls" (*SW* 155), becomes critical to his commentary: an idealized (and highly stylized) anger that castigates his readers and implies a critical and ideological distance between the populace (variously the crowd and Carlyle's readership) and Carlyle himself. This distance enables Carlyle to position himself discursively as the credible and competent articulator of the "present grievous condition" (Landow 26) and forecaster of future woes.

Moreover, Carlyle's prophetic anger enacts his moral outrage at what he deems the age of "barren self-worship" and machinery (*SW* 224), and it implies an urgency to mitigate such conditions. His prescribed solutions to Chartism – education and emigration – have been criticized as apolitical anodynes that avoid the causes of radical unrest in the first place, but for Carlyle, the solution has more to do with a transformation in feeling, which will, in turn, guide interpersonal relations and inspire the reevaluation of principles and practices. Carlyle's anger may well be the vehicle for his social critique, but as moral outrage, it also affirms his meditative vision.

If one considers Christopher Lane's discussion of anti-sociability in nineteenth-century fiction, Carlyle's anger functions as a proof of his "thwarted subjectivity" (72), the result of his inability to reconcile his affection for society with his censure. Lane explains anti-sociability, and its attendant antipathies, as the expression of contradictory and unresolved forces: a concern over the social body (and social problems) and their improvement, and a pervading misanthropy (34). Anti-social behaviour, argues Lane, is marked by a disdain for "conformity" and manifests into a nostalgia or elevation of the past (28, xviii) – criteria that certainly call to mind Carlyle as the raging philosopher and commentator on present social ills. Ultimately, however, Carlyle relates authorship to a profoundly ethical concern; his discussion of the man of letters in *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History* (1841), which will be discussed in the subsequent chapter, demonstrates the high regard he has for the vocation of (non-fiction) writing.

Part of Carlyle's need to concentrate on the social and emotional characteristics of Chartism, rather than the movement's political program, may well be his inadvertent

136

delineation between intellectual exploration and political loyalties – in Bourdieu's terms, between "the obligatory alternative between autonomy and commitment, between pure culture and politics" (340). Philip Rosenberg argues, for instance, that for Carlyle, action and understanding are mutually exclusive, and as such, Carlyle is unable to consolidate his own conception of political action with the symbolic and historical forces that he envisions as shaping society (vii). Ultimately, Rosenberg believes that Carlyle chooses "the idea of [political] action over action itself" (143), a position that seems to imply that Carlyle's anger is a result of a personal crisis over his role in the cultural fields of Victorian authorship and literary production. [13]

The historical connection between Jones and Carlyle in "Model Prisons" (1850) is particularly illuminating as to how Carlyle distinguishes literary work and identity from the competing discourse of political radicalism. Carlyle's essay, a critique of liberal prison reform, describes visits to various prisons, one of them presumably Tothill Fields Prison, Westminster, where Jones was imprisoned on a two-year sentence for sedition.[14] Carlyle mentions Jones as an inmate, not by name but by the moniker "Chartist Notability." His depiction of Jones is, unsurprisingly, critical, but what makes it interesting is that Carlyle's focus falls not on Jones' politics, but on his credibility and reputation as a literary author:

> Notability Second, a philosophic and literary Chartist, walking rapidly to
> and fro in his private court, a clean, high-walled place; the world and its
> cares quite excluded, for some months to come: master of his own time
> and spiritual resources to, as I supposed, a real enviable extent. What

"literary man" to an equal extent! I fancied I, for my own part, so left with paper and ink, and all taxes and botherations shut-out from me, could have written such a Book as no reader here will ever get of me. ("Model Prisons" 69)

Carlyle's self-proclaimed envy is mocking, but it underscores a nuanced competition with literary radicalism over readership – indeed, the term "notability" implies a kind of celebrity that requires a large and ardent readership. Carlyle constructs Jones as ultimately detached from the world and its responsibilities, but it is an indulgent break rather than a position of critical insight and meditation. Implicitly, Carlyle's taunt implies that the indignation that Jones displays in his own writings is not the product of this insight, but rather, something feigned or self-interested. The sage of Chelsea's mocking invective caused Jones to defend himself in the *Red Republican* (10 August 1850). In the editorial, Jones proclaims that having been denied ink and paper in prison he wrote his books with "the aid of blood and memory" ("Ernest Jones to the People" 64), an assertion that attempts to regain his credibility as a dedicated author as much as a dedicated political leader.

Carlyle's comment implies suspicion of Jones' motivations for his political engagement, one that plagues nineteenth-century radical leaders,[15] but it also suggests that as a credible (as opposed to notable) writer, one must live in the albeit faulty world, with all its "taxes and botherations." Carlyle implies that he, as opposed to Jones, does just that. Carlyle may rage against the signs of the time and the present condition of

England, but his anger also functions rhetorically, as proof of his engagement and his credibility, as much as it drives his genuine moral outrage.

The rise of the radical periodical presses and Chartist fiction demonstrates that feelings, particularly those of anger, are a significant component of political mobilization. In studying the connections between political movements, revolutions, and feeling, Reed trenchantly argues that the "political is emotional" (655). Politics necessarily involve interpersonal relationships, judgments of the actions of others, and the fashioning and maintenance of collective identities: social and cognitive endeavours in which emotions have a pivotal role in political decision-making. Like Carlyle, Chartists use anger rhetorically to make judgments and critiques of society in general, and society as an association of actual, rather than idealized, readers.

Jones equates anger with political conviction, which is required for organized protest, and this further unsettles the distinction between rational (political) action and the ostensible irrationality or disorder of anger. With direct addresses to their readers, Chartist writers such as Jones and Cooper envision the act of reading not as passive reception (or consumption), but a means of rousing a (potentially) political force. This call to action, explains Butwin, is largely linked to the influence of journalism in the mid-nineteenth century, whereby reading becomes the motivator of a "multitude of acts that may include the joining of societies and the writing of checks" (167). The authors presented in this chapter all ultimately desire that their readers – as potential political and moral agents, and agitators, of change – both read and feel in a way that will ameliorate current hostilities and apathies. Admonishments to their respective audiences reaffirm

139

Haywood's point: radical politics are "explicitly characterized in terms of writing and reading" (*Chartist Fiction* xv).

Chapter Three will continue with a discussion of Carlyle, given his prominent influence on the Condition-of-England Question, but will consider his later work, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History,* by exploring examples of "right" feeling and "right" disposition that Carlyle provides by way of heroic figures. For Carlyle, heroism – the elevation of historical (and mythological) individuals as models of conduct and feeling – may well serve as potential nullifiers to what he rages against in *Chartism*: a lack of viable political leaders and leadership. Considering these models of conduct, the following chapter will also discuss concomitant concerns of social reform: education and self-help as the means of social and individual progress. I contend that the pursuit of knowledge and self-improvement, popularized in the period between the two reform acts, are symptomatic of a profound anxiety over sociability (and its antitheses) in the public sphere.

Endnotes

[1] Thompson's "moral economy" specifically applies to the eighteenth-century food riot, but he asserts that the crowd functions as part of a "moral economy" that legitimizes their organization. Thompson explains this legitimization as follows: "men and women in the crowd were informed by the belief that they were defending traditional rights or customs; and, in general, that they were supported by the wider consensus of the community" ("The Moral Economy" 78). Although Thompson considers the food riot as not being political, he also makes the point that it cannot be described as an apolitical phenomenon. My use of the term in the context of Chartism affirms that the "moral economy" of the nineteenth-century crowd is decidedly political.

[2] See Brantligner, *Reading Lesson*, 55. In "Dyspeptic Reactions: Thomas Carlyle and the Byronic Temper," Kristen Guest provides an interesting argument for Carlyle's use of the body-politic metaphor, and his "Byronic temper," by linking it to his dyspepsia. Carlyle articulates his own physiological and emotional temper with Romantic excess, explains Guest, and contrasts it against the seemingly "healthy" or robust progress of materialist society. See *Nervous Reactions: Victorian Recollections of Romanticism.* 141 -61.

[3] "Man of feeling" is taken from Henry Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling* (1771), which preceded the interest in the sensitive male figure in Romantic novels. One could argue that the moral vignettes of Mackenzie's sentimental novel envision the sentiment (and feeling) of this figure to be exemplary, part of a unique disposition and perspective.

[4] Stauffer makes a similar point in his discussion of anger as a "primary tool of artistic communication" (28) in classical works by Juvenal and Longinus, providing a persuasive link between *indignatio*, sublimity, and the Romantic tradition. See Stauffer, Chapter 1.

[5] This could also be applied to condition-of-England novels written after *Chartism*, such as Kingsley's *Alton Locke*, in which angry and potentially destructive political expression becomes pitted against literary indignation.

[6] For a more in-depth discussion of the Preston strike and its literary influences on Dickens and Gaskell, see Carnall.

[7] See Butwin, 173, and Flint's introduction to *Hard Times*.

[8] Roy Park provides a major study of Hazlitt's criticism in connection to the fine arts and poetry in *Hazlitt and the Spirit of the Age: Abstraction and Critical Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971).

[9] See Le Bon's *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind* (1896).

[10] "Two Bills" of 1795, or the "The Gagging Acts," and the Seditious Meetings and Treasonable Practices Bills, forbade large meetings and political lectures. Nineteenth-century legislation continued in the form of The Six Acts (1819) and the Combinations Act (1825).

[11] The description of "strange fruit" used by Haywood also evokes the lynching of African Americans in the American south.

[12] Haywood makes the argument, based on biographical details, that Sucknoodle may be modeled on G. W. M. Reynolds (xviii), the British popular fiction writer, journalist, Chartist leader, and the founder of *Reynolds Weekly,* a radical newspaper in Jones' time. When Reynolds accused Jones of embezzling Chartist funds for his own means, Jones brought, and won, a libel action against Reynolds.

[13] Claire Williams argues that Carlyle's separation of labour (as an ideal) from economic production (as a reality) becomes a poignant means of struggling with his "phantasmal sense of subjectivity" (171).

[14] Jules Seigel also discusses this visit, and affirms its historical accuracy, 81-83.

[15] Partly responding to the ideal of the self-made man, critics of political radicalism assumed that working-class radical leaders, despite their denouncements of the middle classes and middle-class cooperation, used politics as a means of social mobility, and as such, were motivated by self interest rather than heartfelt political vision. This was a charge leveled against Thomas Cooper and Fergus O'Connor, among others.

Chapter Three

Heroism and the Education of Feelings:

Moral Philosophy and Victorian Models of Conduct

> I shall begin by a portrait or two; they are simpler than large pictures, and they speak of real men and women who once lived on this earth of ours – generally of remarkable and noble men – and man should always be interesting to man.
>
> – Charles Kingsley, *Politics for the People* (1848)

> Do not Books still accomplish *miracles,* as *Runes* were fabled to do? They persuade men.
>
> –– Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes* (1841)

For David Hume, nothing is more active than the imagination, yet because ideas

and perceptions cannot be combined by imagination alone, Hume's moral philosophy

attempts to provide reasons behind patterns of human action. The impulse to act comes

from feeling (or "passion"), which in turn comes from associating experiences to those

feelings in the first place. In *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1739-40), Hume explores how

experiences produce recognizable feelings that can motivate similar behaviours,

specifically through the laws of association, and through what Hume conceives as the

abiding characteristics of the human disposition: the tendency towards sympathy and

comparison. The disposition to sympathize and the disposition to compare are therefore

both at work whenever one feels something akin to respect or contempt (*Treatise* II. ii. X.

389-391). As an intersubjective process, sympathy enables individuals to make moral judgments of one another, and the tendency to compare implies the requirement of a model – another individual to which one can measure one's own feelings and actions. This comparison may well cause averse feelings, such as pride or envy, but Hume notes "in the greatest part of men, it rests at respect and esteem" (*Treatise* III. iii. II. 595). Humankind's imaginative capacity – to sympathize and to compare – has enduring implications for conceptualizing Victorian models of conduct. It would be beneficial, first, to explore the place of sympathy and comparison in Hume's own discussion of social interaction.

Hume implies that the communication of feeling ensures a varying effect between people, but an effect nevertheless:

> So close and intimate is the correspondence of human souls, that no sooner any person approaches me, then he diffuses on me all his opinions, and draws along my judgment in a greater or lesser degree. And tho', on many occasions, my sympathy with him goes not so far as entirely to change my sentiments, and way of thinking; yet it seldom is so weak as not to disturb the easy course of my thought, and give an authority to that opinion, which is recommended to me by his assent and approbation. (*Treatise* III. iii. II. 592)

At best, sympathy can alter one's opinions or feelings; at the very least, it produces a kind of intersubjective "authority" that creates either agreement or disagreement between

individuals. As a fundamental characteristic of human nature, sympathy does not imply acquiescence, as one may still be sympathetic even when in opposition.[1] For Hume, the sentiments of others affect us insofar as they become our own, "in which case they operate upon us, by opposing or encreasing [*sic*] our passions, in the very same manners, as if they have been originally deriv'd from our own temper and disposition" (*Treatise* III. iii. II. 593). Negative feelings one may experience upon comparison are unavoidable – for Hume insists that such feelings are "requisite" in human nature – yet the force of sympathy, as well as the "laws of good breeding," hold them in check (*Treatise* III. iii. II. 597). Thus, Hume's discussion of sympathy, and its inevitability in interpersonal relations, argues that some form of "good breeding" – variously conceptualized in both eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as manners, conduct, and refinement – provides a necessary limitation to possible hostilities.

Considered by Hume to be an artificial (and thus, social) virtue, good breeding works to limit the expression of self-interested feeling and guide it into the bounds of sociable conduct:

> We have, all of us, a wonderful partiality for ourselves, and were we always to give vent to our sentiments in this particular, we shou'd mutually cause the greatest indignation in each other, not only by the immediate presence of so disagreeable a subject of comparison, but also by the contrariety of our judgments. In like manner, therefore, as we establish the *laws of nature*, in order to secure property in society, and prevent the opposition of self-interest; we establish the *rules of good-breeding*, in order

146

to prevent the opposition of men's pride and render conversations

agreeable and inoffensive. (*Treatise* III. iii. II 597, original emphasis)

Hume's mention of good breeding seems fleeting (even digressive to his larger theory of sympathy), which may explain why so few scholars have discussed its importance and purpose. Yet considering the philosopher's considerable attention to the artificial virtues,[2] one can consider his mention of good breeding as part of this category: created by society to ensure its proper functioning. For Hume, good breeding saves individuals from the "disagreeable" effects of pride, and as such, ameliorates conflicts that may arise between groups or individuals (*Treatise* III. iii. II. 597). More specifically, it provides a necessary check to the "indignation" that may arise from competing or contradictory interests and enables the establishment of common rules that make sociability possible. The moral philosophy of Hume, argues Dabney Townsend, recognizes the need for this legibility: "When the passions are unstable and unable to provide social norms, they become a form of madness" (35)

Importantly, Hume's use of the term "good breeding" only briefly asserts the "deference and mutual submission" individuals (must) make according to customs of rank. For Hume, rank and station are fixed by birth and fortune, so to extend the applicability of good breeding he also includes the possibilities of "employments, talents or reputation" (*Treatise* III. iii. II. 598-99), which suggest the possibility of mobility or personal improvement. In "Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences" (1753), Hume extends this social vision by including politeness and respect (or at least the appearance of these) as virtues for conduct required in civility. Like good breeding, these

147

artificial virtues can be taught to ensure the civil functioning of society, and in this respect, Hume's discussion of human nature is, according to Susan James, organized around a set of principles common in eighteenth-century moral philosophy, of which "the most fundamental is the idea that passions are manifestations of a striving that is an essential feature of all human life" (56). James explains the centrality of feeling in the works of eighteenth-century philosophers such as Hobbes, Malebranche, and Hume in this manner: "As individuals, and arguably also as groups, human beings try not only to keep themselves alive, but also to improve their condition, and their passions function as guides in this process" (56). In Victorian culture the principles of self-improvement and education, as a means of social and moral betterment, are, arguably, expressions and outcomes of this desire to improve.

Hume's emphasis on the regulatory nature of good breeding provides an important bridge between eighteenth-century moral philosophy and nineteenth-century social and political thought. In *Treatise* and in his political essays, good breeding helps to control the passions (especially those related to the self) so as to maintain civility with others.[3] In "Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences," civility is also related to a free and democratic government, since the arts and sciences require effort and freedom and cannot, therefore, flourish in "despotic governments" (*Essays* 118). In this respect, Hume's good breeding is more than a concern over etiquette; in connection to artistic developments and scientific endeavours, it emerges as a kind of knowledge (or pursuit of knowledge) about the world. Good breeding also designates the concerted effort to maintain civility by regulating self-interested passions through custom – a kind of

148

training that produces "facility" and tendency (or inclination) towards certain thoughts and action (*Treatise* 2.3.5 422).

In Victorian contexts, refinement and manners take on distinctly more self-conscious purposes: as a means of social mobility and as markers of respectability that could ostensibly signify privilege and class. Yet as part of mid-nineteenth century social reform (and as part of the political strategies of educational Chartists), knowledge and conduct are a means of both personal self-improvement and social progress. The period's zeal for scientific and mechanical advancements is concomitant with its zeal for addressing and mitigating social ills. Alan Rauch explains how such sentiment is not designated to strict academic or professional disciplines, but part of public sentiment as well: "The most prominent disciplines of knowledge production – science and technology – had already found their way into the increasingly industrialized provinces, and having done so, moved into the realms of popular discourse" (2). Popularizers of science, and more generally, knowledge, envision its dissemination as part of social and self-improvement.[4] Rauch explains this pursuit of knowledge as one that can be traced to the empiricist thinking of the Scottish Enlightenment, in which "knowledge stood apart from mere belief or opinion and somehow had validity grounded in the actual world." Rule-governed practices enable, argues Rauch, the pursuit and accumulation of knowledge not as an "aggregate of facts or information," but a systematic inquiry into the world that opens up wider discussion as to what does and does not count as "useful" (14). This pursuit, then, affords a wider civic role of knowledge and education.

As part of its cultural value, knowledge and conduct increasingly become coupled with the idea of progress and correspond to what Rauch aptly calls the "need for socially responsible individuals in the world" (16). In much reformist discourse, knowledge – whether institutionally afforded or self-motivated – emerges as a restorative to multiple social issues: the general erosion of morality, the imperative to find models of good governance and leadership, and as a curative to bad habits and lack of good breeding.

The writers discussed in this chapter all attempt to explain knowledge and conduct as part of the project of sociability and as part of their commentary on the condition of England. Charles Bray, Thomas Carlyle, and Charles Kingsley impart paradigms of conduct for both social and self-improvement; they do so by proposing models of feeling and action that are (radically) ameliorative or transformative on a larger, political scale. The arguments that they present are varied, yet all three writers attempt to bridge the acquisition of knowledge (through self-improvement and training) to embodied examples: derived from daily and domestic life, as in the case of Bray; from history and even mythology, as in Carlyle's discussion of heroes; and through fictional protagonists (and a pseudo-autobiographical subject) that bear resemblances to actual literary and political figures, as in the case of Kingsley.

The emphasis on feelings, here, is of particular interest, since these three authors confront the issue of how to take the potential and intensity of strong feelings and utilize them for social good rather than simply personal assertion. The models of conduct discussed in this chapter are manifestations of a "striving" (to use James' term) that are based, in various degrees, on the inter-social effects of comparison and sympathy – upon

150

which Hume's epistemology of feeling rests. Models of conduct provide an imperative for readers: they demonstrate patterns of behaviour that take into account the sociability of feeling, and present to readers an ideal to which they can aspire to improve their own conditions. Providing examples that the reading public can emulate is part of the "Education of the Feelings," a doctrine that attempts to explain the connections between feeling, thought, and action. Given the reality of social and class conflict of the mid-nineteenth century, these authors also attempt to understand unsocial feeling and categorize it into the realm of sociability. In this way, the "Education of the Feelings" is a series of instructive (and corrective) strategies for individual conduct that posit feeling as the basis for thought and action and define proper and improper models of conduct. My argument here is not that these authors are explicitly drawing from the work of Hume – indeed, in "Signs of the Time" (1829), Carlyle mentions Hume only to disparage his skepticism and its inability to mitigate the problems of the age (*SW* 68). Carlyle's critique implies, however, that the tribulations of Hume's time are those that still must be addressed in present (Victorian) society; in this respect, the principles of moral philosophy, and its philosophical thinkers, are not only culturally familiar, but also relevant.

Crucially, the right measures of cultivation and training of the feelings become a necessary step towards improving the conditions of individuals, and each major work discussed in this chapter stands as a kind of "knowledge text" (Rauch 2) – it attempts to impart information that can be useful to the present condition of things and their subsequent amelioration. Bray's educational treatises, *The Education of the Body, An*

151

Address to the Working Classes (1836) and *The Education of the Feelings* (1838), are most self-consciously "knowledge texts," purposefully directed to a growing readership of literate labourers and artisans – the working classes that predominantly comprised the Chartist movement – and incorporating the possibility of both political commitment and personal improvement. For Bray, the expression of feeling is crucial to how people communicate with each other, yet ultimately, feeling should be mediated rather than strictly controlled or repressed. Thus, the *Education of the Feelings* is an attempt to espouse a "systematic treatment" of how feelings "are to be trained and cultivated" (*EF* i) – an announcement that evokes Hume's "science of human nature" and Bain's "systematic exposition of the human mind" as the ostensible purpose and scope of *Treatise* and *The Emotions and the Will,* respectively. This approach requires Bray to express a means of negotiating antisocial or angry feeling and to understand the place of such feeling in the context of sociability and class identity.

In *The Education of the Feelings,* Bray aims at mediating fears over emotional expression, especially expression among the working classes, by emphasizing the importance of appropriate educators and role models. This education must start in childhood and Bray's treatise contains many examples of how to properly rear children that will, in turn, grow to be pragmatic and yet feeling subjects. In this respect, Bray's treatise grants women a central role in ameliorating societal as well as domestic problems. Bray does not construct a potentially repressive view of feeling – an approach that has often provoked pointed disparagements towards the emotional dispositions of marginalized groups such as the working classes and women – but an inclusive one,

152

whereby the communication of feeling – even strong and negative feelings such as anger – has a social objective.

Carlyle's *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History* (1841) provides a series of lectures on a group of "Great Men" to which individuals can compare themselves and against whom they can evaluate their present leaders. Disparaging the thinking of the Mechanical Age in "Signs of the Time" (a kind of thinking that, for Carlyle, has its basis in eighteenth-century empiricism), Carlyle's discussion of heroes and hero-worship provides a set of exemplary figures and subsequent spiritual ideals. These figures provide patterns of conduct and most importantly, leadership, which can ultimately guide or affect broad social change. Within Carlylean heroism is a profound attention to the emotional capacities of hero figures, and the primary markers of Carlylean heroism are sincerity (the genuineness of feeling) and sympathy (the communication of feeling). My examination of Carlylean heroism considers how heroism and hero-worship are composite of larger concerns over the merit of political leaders and the role of fiction in enacting change. These anxieties also dominate much of Kingsley's novel, *Alton Locke, Tailor and Poet: An Autobiography* (1850), and his essays and lectures on social and sanitary reform. For Carlyle, books, like heroes, persuade individuals, guiding feeling and altering thinking and action (*On Heroes* 160), and Kingsley's novel provides its own means of instruction. His social and political commentary serves as an important amalgamation of Bray and Carlyle's respective theories of education and heroism.

In *Alton Locke,* Kingsley provides his own "Education of the Feelings" through a fictional autobiography of the eponymous protagonist during the Hungry Forties. From childhood to early adulthood, Alton Locke is instructed by different role models (or heroes) with their own pointed visions of social problems. Locke continually stumbles as he relies on a contrasting set of political and literary models for comparison and emulation. Yet despite his failures, it is through Locke's capacity for hero-worship that Kingsley manages to impart his vision of Christian Socialism as the means to overcome class apathy or anger.

Given Kingsley's assertion that "men should always be interesting to men," quoted in the epigraph, it seems appropriate that Kingsley presents this sustained literary portrait of the development and progress of an impassioned, albeit flawed, individual and poet. This "portrait" becomes the means to explore the larger scope of the condition of England. Kingsley's statement presents another interrelated assumption: that if readers should be interested in "remarkable and noble" individuals, it is imperative that people know who those individuals are, or at least ought to be, in an effort to find adequate political leaders as opposed to demagogues or agitators. In attempting to provide appropriate models of both spiritual and political leadership, Kingsley affirms the moral and intellectual capabilities of working-class radicals and intellectuals, yet questions the potentially alienating effects of class divisions and loyalties.

I. Anger and its "reasonable limits":

Self-Improvement, Social Action, and the Working Classes

Eighteenth-century conduct books were a popular literary form before the dominance of the novel, and as Gregory Sill has argued, "the reformation of the passions" also become part of the development of the emergent fictional form. Novels of manners, such as those by Francis Burney or Charlotte Lennox, demonstrate "the importance of subordinating passions to manners" (Sill 2). By subjecting the passions to a set of disciplinary codes of manners or conduct, one could prohibit them or they could assume a certain benevolence or utility in the novel form, which, in turn, can moderate the passions of readers (Sill 11).

Early and mid-nineteenth-century desires for social reform articulated a social need for mass education and knowledge, and this was reflected in the societies, publications and periodicals of the period. The establishment of educational movements, groups, and institutions – lending libraries, discussion groups, educational Chartism, Mechanics' Institutes – were also directed towards the self-improvement of the middle and working classes. By the 1840s, educational journals such as *Eliza Cook's Journal* (1849-54), *The Family Economist* (1848-60), and *The Family Friend* (1849-1921) aimed to teach daily practices of self-education. Founded largely by religious organizations, these journals appealed to "better-educated working families who saw their interests as divergent from the poorer members of the working class" (Vicinus 117-18). Penny magazines, radical periodicals, Working-Man's Companions, and compendiums of

"useful" knowledge all helped "institutionalize a genre of cheap and accessible knowledge texts" (Rauch 41).

The major premise of programs aimed at self-improvement was that individual enhancement would ultimately strengthen relations between the classes. Edwin Chadwick's influential *Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain* (1842), for instance, attempts to inform a largely middle-class audience of the financial and social separation between the middle and lower classes, and to impart knowledge as to the way the other "nation" lived. Chadwick presents his information through a variety of methods: through the seemingly objective collection of data, through the insistence of a "common moral culture" so as to minimize material differences, and through shared standards of "moral judgment and beliefs" (Childers 125). In Chadwick's report, as in the writings of Kingsley, the need to improve sanitary conditions and moral education coincides, whereby the rates of disease and descriptions of slums function in tandem with sermons and appeals for right conduct. Alongside the obvious calls to improve sanitary conditions (such as concentrated disposal, the clean-up of refuse, and the improvement of water supplies), Chadwick stresses a "refinement in manners," the purpose of which is to elevate the moral as well as physical conditions of the working classes (425).

To be sure, the political implications of this movement were complex. Rauch points out that many working-class groups "believed that knowledge was foisted by the powerful and the wealthy on the working classes in order to indoctrinate them into a culture where knowledge validated a simple work ethic" (23). In commenting on the

156

physical and moral conditions of England's labouring population, reports such as those

by Edwin Chadwick or James Kay-Shuttleworth also address the possibility and fear of

social upheaval that such conditions produce. In *The Moral and Physical Condition of the*

Working Classes Employed In the Cotton Manufacture in Manchester (1832), Kay-

Shuttleworth cautions that when the labouring poor inevitably compare their squalid

surroundings with those of the middle and upper classes (as in Hume's dictum they are

disposed to do), the "wealth and splendour, the refinement and luxury of the superior

classes might provoke the wild inroads of a marauding force" (71). Mary Poovey notes

that Kay-Shuttleworth's acknowledgement and proposed amelioration of moral and

physical conditions rests on the middle-class domestic ideal (62).

In response, working-class radicals advocate their own educational texts, ones that

ostensibly serve working-class life and ideals. Radical strategies attempting to unite the

working classes through education and improvement is also part of the Chartist platform,

which includes finding suitable and ennobling literature for the mass readership. In a

series of letters address specifically "To the Young Men of the Working Classes,"

Thomas Cooper advocates education and the creation of a distinctly working-class

literary tradition and culture, which would elevate conduct and "respect" amongst the

literate working classes. Oratorical, like his fiction, *Eight Letters to the Young Men of the*

Working Classes (1851) incorporates direct addresses to a specified readership and

stresses the importance of education as part of Chartism's political goals:

> What shall we do, – do you say, – to prove that we are animated by these
>
> high, but rational emotions? I answer – strive, in spite of all difficulties

157

and deprivations, and with the cheering faith that they *for you* are but temporary, to raise yourselves morally and intellectually, – and so, shame those who say you are not fit for the franchise into the perception that you deserve it better, perhaps, than themselves, and that you must and will have it. (4, original emphasis)

Stressing the pedagogical and moral benefits of writing poetry, Cooper encourages, as part of this education, fellow labourers to write verse as a means of self-reflection and self-improvement (*Eight Letters* 17-18).

For Bray, social progress functions along a similar trajectory that links an improvement in outward action and manners to an elevated inner condition. Like Chadwick, Bray's goal is to educate or inform his readership: not through statistical or documentary details, however, but through a series of pragmatic lessons or examples that position the working classes not as objects of study but as subjects of progress. In this sense, Bray's *Education of the Feelings* takes the format of Harriet Martineau's *Illustrations of Political Economy* (1832), which provides a series of lessons about political economy directed to the literate working classes. Both Martineau and Bray provide a clearly topical discussion along with a case study or example that serves as the illustration: Martineau's examples employ fictional modes, such as the development of individuated characters and the mechanisms of plot, to provide lessons on subjects related to labour and wages; Bray provides examples of how properly to rear children, the future inheritors (and mediators) of social divisions and problems. *Illustrations* consists of individual short stories followed by a summary of a particular principle. Bray's

158

organizational structure in *The Education of the Feelings* appears pedagogically similar: Chapter 1 sets out his categorization of propensities, sentiments, and faculties; Chapter 2, titled "Example," provides the illustrative consequences of having improper educational models of feeling. By Chapter 4, Bray starts to discuss feelings individually, and each categorical subsection provides a definition of the feeling, its origins, and its effects on others, as well as its application to daily life through an example.

As a ribbon manufacturer, Bray had a familiar understanding of social and labour issues and established numerous programs of education for industrialists and labourers: he helped establish nonsectarian public schools; by 1872, *Education of the Feelings* was abridged and used as a textbook for secular schools; and he campaigned for the legalization of trade unions and other cooperative labour projects. Bray also wrote extensively on labour issues,[5] and in 1843, he helped establish the Coventry Labourers & Artisans Co-operative Society. Throughout the 1840s, Bray was a manager of the Coventry Mechanics' Institute and the Coventry Provident Dispensary. As an Owenite, he was markedly influenced by the socialist philosophy of Robert Owen (1771-1858), who also proclaimed education as a means of individual and collective improvement and a way for individuals to escape deterministic conditions.

For Bray, education was essential not only for the middle classes, and their children, but also for the children of educated industrial labourers and artisans.[6] In his preface to *The Education of the Body,* Bray offers his definition of education: "It is generally thought to mean learning from books, being taught to read, to write, and to cast accounts; but this is a very confined sense of the term, and does not include one-third of

159

what ought to be included when we speak of Education" (*EB* 5). Bray's definition

assumes education to be a general striving for improvement through diligent attention to

interrelated concerns: "Education, in its proper sense, is that kind of treatment

commencing at *birth*, and therefore not necessarily confined to *school,* by which the

body, the feelings, and the mind or intellect, can, by perseverance, be brought to the

highest perfection of which our nature is capable in this world" (*EB* 5, original emphasis).

A comprehensive term, education for Bray consists of the training of the body, the

feelings, and the intellect, and he makes explicit the connection between the physical

body and the mind by declaring that the "health of the brain depends on the health of the

body" (*EB* 6).

The mediation of the feelings is one-third of this curriculum, and Bray shows

these components of education as ultimately complementary, since "[t]he cultivation of

the feelings, or moral training, bears the same relation to happiness, which the observance

of the laws for the due regulation of the body, does to health" (*EF* 4). Bray also illustrates

the physical and cognitive connections between mind, body, and feeling in his later work,

The Philosophy of Necessity (1841):"The abuse of the propensities, or these feelings in

excess, constitute envy, hatred, malice, jealousy, anger, fear; and all act injuriously on the

bodily system" (341).

Bray categorizes feelings into two basic groups, which he refers to as *genera:*[7]

propensities (those related to the instincts of humans and animals), and sentiments

(divided among those shared by animals and those relating to humans in particular) (*EF*

7-8). The division between propensities and sentiments is distinct; the propensities relate

to one's own "preservation" – an impulse or instinct – while the sentiments are "those feelings which have reference to the opinion of others" (*EF* 12). Thus, while propensities are related to the self, sentiments are ultimately related to others, and are integral to interrelations and sociability. Furthermore, Bray makes the distinction between two orders: feelings (which includes both propensities and sentiments) and the intellectual faculties (*EF* 10-11). For Bray, the intellectual faculties are mediators: they "direct the propensities and sentiments to their legitimate object and mode of gratification" (*EF* 13). The regulation of instinct and the cultivation of the sentiments and intellectual faculties are necessary, explains Bray, insomuch as both feeling and reason require each other for progress and improvement (*EF* 16-17).

Training requires, firstly, a systematic understanding and categorization of feeling, and Bray again uses the analogy of the physical body: "For the proper management of the feelings and dispositions, it is quite as necessary to know what they are, as it is to know the functions of the different organs of the body; and it is as important to treat each mental faculty separately, as it is that we should not apply remedies to the lungs, when the stomach is the organ requiring regulation" (*EF* 4). With this recurring comparison, it seems probable that Bray is considering, foremost, the same readership of his earlier treatise on the body: the literate working classes, specifically labourers and artisans. Bray's involvement with working-class education and cooperative programs makes this seem likely, yet the omission of a direct address to the working classes – such as the one found in the full title of *The Education of the Body, An Address to the Working Classes* – seems significant. I suggest that in *The Education of the*

161

Feelings, Bray expands his scope. By arguing that such education or training should begin in childhood, Bray is not only directing his text to labourers and artisans, the members of Mechanics' Institutes set up for adult education, but is also implicitly addressing women, the primary care-givers. Given that Bray's examples of proper rearing includes comments on the conduct of servants or governesses, this implies a expanded readership: working-class women employed in domestic service, and possibly, the middling classes in the industrial economy – public servants and clerks, merchants – who could feasibly have the income to employ domestic servants. Bray's attention to daily (domestic) life is significant: in this respect, domesticity becomes, not the idealized alternative to an angry or dissatisfied (work) "force," but a necessary sphere of influence and education.[8]

Bray's emphasis on training means that the cautionary moral tone that prevails in many reports on social and sanitary conditions, such as those by Chadwick and Kay-Shuttleworth, is largely absent. For instance, Bray commences Chapter Four, in which he categorizes separate feelings and their social consequences, with the propensity of "appetite," which Bray variously discusses as both "gluttony" and "drunkenness" (*EF* 32). Predominantly, Bray conceives of appetite as a physical rather than moral concern, and as something that develops from childhood; in this respect, the propensity of appetite is discussed on the practical basis of nutrition rather than restraint. Accordingly, Bray gives examples of how to ensure a healthy appetite in children and suggests ways to gratify appetite without encouraging abuses such as gluttony. Through the exercise and

training of such a propensity, Bray's ultimate result is to teach children "to judge wisely for themselves, rather than by restricting them to a certain allowance" (*EF* 33-34).

Bray continually critiques strictly prohibitive injunctions by parents and care-givers towards children; for instance, that "many parents seem to think it sufficient to tell their children that they *ought* not to feel and act, so and so, without taking pains to direct each feeling to the legitimate mode in which it may be indulged" (*EF* 26, emphasis in original). Multiple examples of both proper and improper ways of dealing with those feelings most experienced in childhood are provided, and Bray briefly cites the consequences for adulthood if such practices continue completely unchecked. Of Bray's introductory example of appetite, it seems significant that he only briefly mentions adult forms of intemperance, such as drunkenness, without sufficient expansion, since it implies decidedly more serious consequences than a penchant for "sweetmeats and other delicacies" (*EF* 37). In social and sanitary reports by Chadwick and Kay-Shuttleworth, intemperance becomes the culprit for the large-scale moral and physical deterioration of the working classes. Alongside warnings about "drunkenness," for instance, Chadwick provides a series of decidedly more extreme examples of alcohol-induced "violent deaths." Bray may well be acknowledging conventionally class-based representations of "appetite," but he chooses to focus, instead, on the genesis of this propensity, as it manifests itself in the daily lives of children.

In considering the consequences of having improper educational models for children, Bray explicitly considers how women are reared or educated: "frequently do we find, that a girl, unfit for any other occupation, is placed as the companion and guardian

163

of a child" (*EF* 21). His recurring critique of "ignorant" and "selfish" nursemaids or other

female care-givers (and here he includes mothers as well as paid guardians) is a larger

critique of the status of feminized education and conduct: "Engaged in the frivolous

pursuits of the world, introduced in society at an early age, dressing, dancing, visiting –

when they are called to the most momentous duties, they are obligated to rely upon an

ignorant nurse, to trust old wives tales, for what ought to have been correct knowledge"

(*EF* 21-22). According to Bray, children who are reared by indifferent or ignorant

guardians or mothers cannot be expected to "*feel* properly," for at best, such rearing is

more about restraint than moral direction (*EF* 23, emphasis in original).

Bray's attention to personal conduct and training coincides with a larger

imperative of working-class radical texts that attempt to regulate the propensities of

individuals as a means to raise the quality (and reputation) of working-class life.

Increasingly in the 1830s and 1840s, Chartist organizations and periodicals emphasized

the importance of temperance or restraint, not only in discourses of personal conduct, but

also in politics, whereby the control of this propensity becomes in itself a political

activity. If the goal of universal male suffrage was to become a reality, Chartists

promoted spending less time in gin houses and more time pursuing self-education and

self-improvement.[9] Anna Clark explains that as part of their political campaign, Chartists

tried to transform "the old masculine plebian public of beershops and workshops into a

more integrated, disciplined public sphere" (221). I would add that this public sphere

includes a readership, and in this sense, Chartist fiction, with its direct addresses to

readers, advocates for the improvement of populace literature and more politically engaged readers.

Emphasizing temperance was not limited to working-class radicalism alone – women's movements also appealed to similar doctrines of respectability and self-restraint. Yet Bray's opening treatment of appetite, in eschewing a didactic tone and refusing to rely on stark or extreme examples to mark its import, sets the pattern for the crux of his arguments and concerns: that one must continue to regulate and exercise propensities and feelings in order to establish "reasonable limits" rather than rely on repressive (and class-based) injunctions to establish order and proper conduct. For Bray, the scope of the education of the feelings is to "restrain and regulate the selfish propensities, so that they may be exercised only in accordance with the dictates of the moral feelings and intellect; to strengthen the moral feelings, and to direct each feeling, both selfish and moral, to its proper objects, and mode of gratification" (*EF* 25). His focus on the cultivation of feeling, as opposed to strict repression, is best exemplified by his discussion of negative feelings.

With this in mind, it is interesting that Bray does not include a section titled "Anger" in his categorical breakdown of individual feelings; the word anger is used sparingly, appearing only four times in *The Education of the Feelings*. Instead, Bray chooses to describe various kinds of anger, which he separates into categories such as "combativeness" or "oppositiveness" (*EF* 54-60) and "destructiveness" (*EF* 60-65) – distinguishing the forms by their potential physiological effect, their object or mode of gratification, as well as their social utility. This approach significantly anticipates neuro-

165

anatomical theories of anger that describe the feeling as something necessary, even skillful. A. D. Craig explains that historically, "from Darwin on, [anger] has been associated with a unique cognitive capacity;" it is both a facial and bodily response "designed to overcome an obstacle" (273). In discussing anger's connection between mind and body, Craig squarely (and correctly) attributes this change in thinking to Darwin's work on emotion. In this respect, Bray's own philosophical (and pre-neuro-anatomical) treatment of anger is an important predecessor. His definition of "combativeness" is strikingly similar: the "feeling of opposition which rises, in the mind, when any obstacle presents itself to its desires" (*EF* 54).

Anger is a felt response, and Bray's two treatises explicitly make this connection between emotion and the body. To designate anger as being bodily has, historically, been used to denounce its expression; similarly, the body in the mid-nineteenth century becomes a "site for the contestation and resolution of socio-political conflicts" (Hall 5). Donald E. Hall observes that the physical body functions as a model, or metaphor, for the present conflict: the threat from the "lower" body of the radical working classes (and the potential diseases of the urban slum and the Great Unwashed), and as a "site" upon which classist, racist, and imperial beliefs are inscribed (6). Bray's valuation of the body, as a site of regulation connected to the intellect and the emotions, links the body directly to social reform and the spirit of self-improvement; as such, the body exists simultaneously as a site of regulation and agency. Conscious exercises and routines of the body can have an impact on one's interior condition – intellectual, as in the case of Bray, or spiritual, as in the case of Kingsley's Muscular Christianity.

Attributing to anger a social function and effect also enables Bray to discuss the feeling beyond strictly repressive or negative parameters. For Bray, anger "requires directing rather than restraining; for "its active exercise is necessary to eminence in any pursuit" (*EF* 54). To the "judicious trainer of the feelings," combativeness has the capacity to motivate individuals and groups, providing necessary stimuli, the "energy and power to overcome" difficulties or problems (*EF* 54).

If individuals are predisposed to the communication of feeling, then it is through this disposition that Bray establishes the "reasonable limits" of combativeness. The "manifestation of the feeling in one individual rouses it immediately in others," which is why, insists Bray, "the more tenacious the one may be of the point in dispute, the less will the other be disposed to give it up" (*EF* 55). In this sense, while combativeness may provide the motivation for an individual to overcome an obstacle, within interpersonal exchanges, it may lead to a kind of obstacle (or impasse) itself. In addition, the tendency to exert authority with "a sharp angry tone" can be injurious to those subjected to that authority, who are then motivated to act, or avoid undesirable actions, out of a sense of fear (*EF* 56-57). There are, then, significant qualifications for the sociability of anger. Bray provides, however, a condition for the rightful exercise of combativeness: "the disposition to contend and dispute should never arise, without the voice of conscience urging the question, 'Is it consistent with the rights of others, with truth and justice, to contend this point?'" (*EF* 59). So stipulated, Bray assumes that feelings of combativeness can be in accord with necessary and practical applications, rather than solely with self-interested aims. By aligning it with the concepts of "truth and justice," Bray envisions

167

that the pursuit of contention can instigate or stimulate the process to overcome obstacles and injustices.

Like combativeness, Bray considers the ominously-coined "destructiveness" in a similar (potentially necessary) light, since "nature bestows no qualities which are not intended to conduce to the good of the individual to whom they belong, or his fellow-beings" (*EF* 60). Destructiveness "in its right application exerts a beneficial effect upon the character and conduct of man." Rather than simply destroy for one's own sake, the feeling involves "the power and energy to inflict pain for wise and benevolent purposes" (*EF* 61), and this designation implies an inter-social objective outside of personal feeling or gratification. In this light, destruction for the purpose of noble or "benevolent purposes" has the potential to be radically ameliorative: "As, in this world, we must cut down the briars and thorns before we can plant the flowers and fruit – as we must often probe the wound we wish to heal" (*EF* 61). The natural analogy that Bray uses to describe a benevolent (and ultimately just) anger implies that destructiveness has a natural place in the world – and the recurring image of Nature as a self-regulating force is one that Bray consistently uses as his ideal exemplar. Within the "limits of benevolence," destructiveness evokes the attributes required for interrogation of unjust authority or conditions and their removal. In this respect, Shuttleworth's "marauding force" has been divested of its pejorative (and self-gratifying) connotations.

Bray's claim for the usefulness of destruction and contention is made possible by the establishment of "reasonable limits" – the parameters that guide one's conduct by demarcating action motivated by self-interested feeling and that which is designated for

168

benevolent aims. These aims are variously described as the collective moral aspirations of social progress and improvement: Bray's destructive individual has the potential to guide action and lead by example, and, to return to Bray's potent analogy, to "cut down briars and thorns" to make way for new possibilities and new growth – a suitable analogy in the context of Bray's own political progressivism. When personal feelings such as anger are properly trained or cultivated, by proper guardians or care-givers, and when they are directed at proper objects, they are able to move beyond strictly individualistic purposes of self-gratification or pleasure, operating, instead, through principles of cooperation and benevolence. This provides the potential for a more nuanced discussion of political radicalism that goes beyond the middle- and upper-class fear of riots and mob violence; moreover, it is not divergent from Chartist claims over the necessity of anger as both a literal and rhetorical force in politics.[10]

Bray's emphasis on regulation, like Bain's systematic study of the emotions and the will, implies a series of checks and balances between feeling and its mediation, something that also becomes apparent in Carlyle's vision of heroism. Despite his earlier disparagements of Chartists and other political radicals, Carlyle designates the hero as having "wild feelings" coupled with an "iron restraint" (*Heroes* 48), and much of his own lectures on heroism attempts to strike a balance between such conflicting forces.

II. Carlyle's Heroism as a Model of Conduct

For Carlyle, the "prime characteristic of a Hero" is sincerity, and this implies the possession and expression of genuine feeling (*On Heroes* 147). Like Bray's emphasis on proper guardians, Carlyle's lectures on heroism articulate a set of criteria for representative models of leadership and conduct. As a historical and moral principle, Victorian heroism encompasses both personal and collective action: how one should act, or what should motivate one to act, is a direct reflection on the given time, and thus, has historical significance. The representation of heroism also becomes the impetus by which to comment on the necessity of political and social change and reform, and how such change should occur. Richard Salmon notes that Carlylean heroism is spurred by "a rationalist disenchantment of religion and an irrational worship of new gods" – a dialectic between idolatry and idoloclasm (2-3). For Carlyle, heroes are the "leaders of men," and this ambiguous designation enables him to draw from a divergent rota of figures: from Mohammed to Napoleon, from deities and clerics to authors.

The common nineteenth-century critique of *On Heroes and Hero Worship* was that Carlyle's choice of examples followed no discernable logic. More contemporaneously, Salmon notes the "secular drift of Carlylean idolatry" (2) – and the designation of "drift" implies a kind of meandering lack of order. Reviewing the book for *The Christian Remembrancer* in 1843, the Anglican priest William Thomson argues that Carlyle's selection of heroes includes a puzzling mixture of "real and mythic persons, sane and crazy, moral and immoral, honoured and execrated, self-restraining and wildly

self-indulgent" (126). In a letter written to the same periodical, F. D. Maurice, author, theologian, and a leader of the Christian Socialist movement, comments on the anti-ecclesiastical "tendency" of Carlyle's writings. Maurice argues that Carlyle only looks to the past to find suitable spiritual models, and for Maurice, this was proof of Carlyle's underlying belief that religious and political "forefathers" were "better and truer men" then the leaders of the present (452). By accusing Carlyle of a kind of nostalgia for past leaders, Maurice expressively links heroism and hero-worship to the political discourses of the present.

Maurice's criticism deals with a presumed exigency of the era – an eagerness to find recognizable (and present day) models for conduct and leadership. For many, the Reform Act of 1832, and the ascension of the young (and unmarried) Queen Victoria to the throne in 1837, meant that the country lacked viable authority figures in a period of transition.[11] Carlyle's lectures on heroism are indicative of a wider imperative to find suitable models of conduct and leadership, and Maurice's charge of nostalgia is one that can be widened to include Victorian discussions of heroism in general, since they often entail a kind of lamenting for a lost or past leader. In his poem "The Lost Leader" (1845), Robert Browning both critiques and laments Wordsworth's later conservatism and desertion of radical views; Victorian heroism becomes the search for and confirmation of an immortalized and public individual, whose actions and ideals form the "pattern [by which] to live and to die." Inspiring such devotion, Browning's (lost) leader must, like Carlyle's hero, be moved to act by a sincerity of feeling and purpose – motivated by a conviction of larger ideals and causes, rather than "a handful of silver" and personal gain.

171

For many Victorian authors, the qualities of the hero are those that may be missing in present-day society. Discussing the possibilities of Victorian heroism in authors as varied as Mill, Carlyle, and Arnold, George Levine explains that heroism and hero-worship fulfilled multiple purposes; above all, it was a recognition of "stale conformity" and a declaration that one must transcend not only the self (and self-interest), but also the daily world (49-50). Herein lies the central paradox of heroism: in providing models for individual identity and action, heroism ultimately relies on a transcendence of self and material conditions. It requires, as Levine notes, a deliberation on the self, and yet the impulse to "obliterate selfhood" (50). For Levine, this "paradigmatic progress" is embodied in Carlyle's Teufelsdrockh, whose moments of suicidal despair are overcome by his spiritual journey into the "Everlasting Yea." Teufelsdrockh's progress relies on emotional crisis and *catharsis* to understand, ultimately, that one is more than the sum of one's sensations, desires, and feelings (Levine 64).

Victorian heroism also follows the intellectual tradition of Romanticism and the cultural emergence of the Romantic hero, whose moral values centre on feeling, sentiment, and sensibility (Peckham 11). The Romantic hero eschews the conventional; he strives, instead, for the singular, and in this sense, emerges as the quintessential exemplar of strong-willed individualism. Importantly, however, Carlyle also stresses the practice of hero-worship – the need to find these "patterns" of feeling and action – as a means of social recovery. Hero-worship provides an opportunity for Carlyle to illustrate and assess suitable and unsuitable leaders in history, and the historical (and biographical)

figures whom he employs as models demonstrate an important aspect of his contribution to the critique of existing political and social systems.

In Carlylean philosophy, heroic duty is directly opposed to the largely empirical theory of action argued by Bentham, which assumes that human behaviour is motivated by the individual pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain. For Carlyle, duty evokes a higher principle of motivation beyond that of self-interest; sincerity of feeling is that which inspires a person to act beyond (or in spite of) the goal of achieving pleasure and avoiding pain. Dutiful action may be painful or costly to oneself, according to Carlyle, and herein lies its importance. In this respect, Carlyle's version of heroism, like Bray's treatises, assumes that for feelings to be socially valuable, they must move beyond their origins in the self (and utilitarian egoism). Carlylean heroism requires both a consideration of individual feeling, as a marker of heroism, and heroic feeling as it affects or motivates others.

From the very first lecture, which describes the hero as a divinity, Carlyle presents a theory of individual motivation:

> But the thing a man does practically believe (and this is often enough *without* asserting it even to himself, much less to others); the thing a man does practically lay to heart, and know for certain, concerning his vital relations to this mysterious Universe, and his duty and destiny there, that is in all cases the primary thing for him, and creatively determines all the rest. That is his *religion;* or, it may be, his mere skepticism and *no-religion:* the manner it is in which he feels himself to be spiritually related

173

to the Unseen World or No-World; and I say, if you tell me what that is, you tell me to a very great extent what the man is, what the kind of things he will do is. (*On Heroes* 2-3, emphasis in the original)

For Carlyle, personal belief[12] may not be acknowledged or even articulated, but it is, foremost, felt. Thus, personal belief is, above all, a question of sincerity – of "laying to heart" – that goes beyond "profession and assertion" (*On Heroes* 2), and this is what motivates action as opposed to affirmed allegiance to an organized movement or cause. It is presumably this contention that roused Maurice's criticism over Carlyle's tendency to disregard present-day ecclesiastical authorities.

Carlyle's selection of heroes follows what he sees as the social and cultural progression (and transformation) of authority and power, distinguishing how heroic individuals gain influence (and thus, hero-worshipers). Given this trajectory, the hero as a divinity, being "the oldest primary form of Heroism," gives way to the hero, not as a god, but as "God-inspired" (*On Heroes* 3, 42). As his lectures progress, Carlyle extends his discussion of heroism and hero worship beyond religious leadership, and to other leaders that shape social thought: writers (poets and men of letters), military leaders, and kings. These leaders, spiritual and secular, have the ability to inspire hero-worship and thus, influence large-scale change; their emotional dispositions become the requisite objects of influence. In describing Mohammed as a hero-prophet, for instance, Carlyle distinguishes the religious leader as having both "wild strong feelings" and an "iron restraint" over them, and he asserts that in this combination lies "the characteristic of noblemindness, of

genius" (*On Heroes* 48). The hero must have strong feeling, but Carlyle qualifies that the hero must not be guided by feeling alone.

Restraint does not minimize or thwart one's vision; rather, it allows the hero to focus his energies and understand, clearly, the object of his passion. "I know nothing so intense as Dante," declares Carlyle, yet for all his intensity, Dante "has a great power of vision; seizes the very type of a thing; presents that and nothing more" (*On Heroes* 92). This balance between feeling and precision is what makes Dante a heroic example, a balance that requires both the communication and sincerity of feeling: "In the first place, he could not have discerned the object at all, or seen the vital type of it, unless he had, what we may call, *sympathized* with it, – had sympathy in him to bestow on objects. He must have been *sincere* about it too; sincere and sympathetic: a man without worth cannot give you the likeness of any object" (*On Heroes* 93, original emphasis). Feeling becomes the grounds for a focused insight, an epistemology and a moral ability that Carlyle designates as heroic: "[A] thoroughly immoral *man* could not know anything at all! To know a thing, what we can call knowledge, a man must first *love* the thing, sympathize with it; that is be *virtuously* related to it. If he has not the justice to put down his own selfishness at every turn, the courage to stand by the dangerous-true at every turn, how shall he know?" (*On Heroes* 107, original emphasis).

In the cash-nexus, Carlyle's heroes – and later, his Captains of Industry – replace "relations of monetary exchange with relations of love" (Garafalo 293). Carlyle's inclusion of widely divergent figures signals a kind of availability of heroism to those in the actual world – not simply those long dead or long glorified. By discussing Robert

175

Burns, explains Salmon, "Carlyle signaled the availability of the category of 'hero' to a much wider population than was customary of the time" ("'The Unaccredited Hero'" 177). In this respect, one can more closely tie the idealism of Carlylean heroism to a deliberate comment on the age and on the need for social and self-improvement. The Carlylean hero, whether monarch or poet, influences others and as such, Carlyle's conceptualization of heroism requires the practice of hero-worship alongside the exemplary conduct of heroes: as society develops, and heroes evolve, they are nevertheless united by "the transcendent admiration of a Great Man" (*On Heroes* 11).

Given the calls for political reform and for changes in political leadership during the early and mid- nineteenth century, Carlyle's heroic exemplars strikingly demonstrate the difficulty in situating themselves within the period that has created and even worshipped them – as Carlyle's discussion of the literary lionization of Robert Burns demonstrates. They also pose a particular problem: using historical examples of "great men" to help inspire change in a period so different from their own. Thus, the difficulty that Carlyle faces when envisioning heroism is how to posit the hero as being both superior to demagogues (or "quackeries," a recurring term in *On Heroes*), yet still the product of his time. For Carlyle, the hero's leadership provides the model for generations to come, but his "outward shape" is determined by the "time and the environment he finds himself in" (*On Heroes* 115). It is unsurprising, then, that in the midst of what Carlyle calls the "social pestilences" – dominant schools of thought such as Benthamism, Chartism, and more generally, the "Gospel of Mammonism" – heroism becomes more necessary, albeit more difficult (*On Heroes* 170-175). In *Alton Locke,* Kingsley takes up

176

this very concern and incorporates a search for viable heroic models as the principle motive of his narrative. This search becomes, for readers, its own education of the feelings, one conducted through the merits and failures of the eponymous protagonist.

III. Hero-Worship as the Education of the Feelings: Kingsley's *Alton Locke*

As the exemplar of right conduct and selfless duty, the Carlylean hero provides the leadership necessary to a time in want of guidance. Significantly, Carlyle attributes the same function to (great) books as he does to (great) people: both persuade others towards right duty and conduct. This is most strikingly manifested in Carlyle's chapter on the Hero as a Man of Letters, which provides a modern model for literary commentary and vision. The nineteenth-century preoccupation with heroism, particularly within the works of both Carlyle and Kingsley, indicates larger concerns regarding the merit of political leaders, how individuals should act in an increasingly fragmented (and antagonistic) society, and finally, the role of fiction in enacting change. In his own lecture on "Heroism," written in 1850 and later published in *Sanitary and Social Lectures* (1880), Kingsley argues that readers turn to fiction for "the study of human nature" and to find heroes for the present age, one he deems, like Carlyle, to be unheroic (*SSL* 225-228).

Kingsley couples his comment on the lack of leadership and guidance with observations on the status of fiction. Regarding the popularity of sensation fiction, he points out that it provides an outlet for readers' own unrealized capabilities for feeling and action: "conscious, poor souls, of capacities in themselves of passion and action for good and evil, for which their frivolous humdrum daily life gives no room, no vent" (*SSL*

177

227). Ultimately, it is the "humdrum" of daily life in a mechanical age (a quintessentially Carlylean assertion) that thwarts heroic potential, and present-day individuals must turn to fiction to explore heroic "passion and action." Kingsley's hero is anyone who stands "superior to *his or her* fellow creatures," someone who does not squander capabilities for feeling and action (*SSL* 229, emphasis added). One of the most obvious differences between Carlyle and Kingsley's heroism is the latter's refusal to distinguish sex as a marker of the heroic. Carlyle's heroism depends on the designation of "great men," and a kind of sensibility of both "passion" and "restraint" typified as masculine. Kingsley's vision of heroism, however, like Bray's treatise, includes a consideration of women as viable models and leaders.

Advancing the condition of England requires, for Kingsley, addressing an increasingly divided audience in order to instill the importance of proper forms of guidance that can bridge divisions between different classes of reader. Kingsley's desire to consider a varied readership has been attributed as a novelistic failing on his part. Catherine Gallagher has discussed the divided narratorial voice in *Alton Locke* as the product of two contrary philosophical states: Kingsley's Coleridgean Romanticism and the empirical determinism that dictates his ideas surrounding social reform. Gallagher describes Kingsley's novel as a faltering attempt to create a cohesive format for the emergent social form of the novel, a text that must depict a society that is, itself, divided (109). Lee Louise describes the novel similarly: "The quest for social cohesion results in a nervous, twitchy text as Kingsley makes constant, self-correcting attempts to state and re-state his position, in order it appears, to propitiate as many readers as possible" (6). As

a "hopeful authorial amalgam, the novel is not, according to its critics, fully determined (Lee 2); rather, it absorbs the literary forms, ideologies, and the "knowledge texts" of period: the industrial or social problem novel, the *bildungsroman*, the (pseudo)autobiography, the political manifesto, the educational treatise, and the social and sanitary report.

The novel's generic hybridity demonstrates how ardently Kingsley tries to appeal to different readers (as do the varying responses from Kingsley's contemporaries). A reviewer from *Fraser's* pronounces the novel an essay on political economy covertly written under the guise of fictional entertainment. For this reviewer, readers of novels should expect "pleasure, with, perhaps, a few wholesome truths scattered amongst the leaves" ("A Triad of Novels" 575). Kingsley's novel is both entertainment and education, yet for others reviewers, it is a brand of "Revolutionary Literature" under the guise of philanthropy and concern for the conditions of the working classes (Crocker 490). By attempting to sympathize with the eponymous hero – a working-class poet, intellectual, and political radical – and encouraging his readers to do so, Kingsley provides, ostensibly, a tacit approval of radicalism. Kingsley's attempts to address everyone, so to speak – an attempt that undermines the narrative cohesion of the novel – create, instead, an uncertainty about political allegiances that manifests itself through a suspicion of Kingsley's sympathy.

Self-consciously labeling the novel an "autobiography" also implies a certain discomfort with fiction or novel reading and writing (Childers 140). Kingsley seems unclear as to the purpose of his novel – whether to educate or to entertain – and this

partly explains its mixed reception. Considering the claim made by the reviewer in

Fraser's about the pleasure of novel reading, Kingsley's text offers to the reader a new

set of criteria in order to distinguish the social problem or condition-of-England novel as

its own distinct form. Childers explains the establishment of the social problem novel as

something deliberately opposing entertainment and pleasure: "Reading a social-problem

novel should not be 'agreeable'; quite to the contrary, if the novel is a success as social

criticism, reading it should have been one of the most disagreeable of occupations for the

Victorian reader" (141). Childers' claim implies a fruitful connection to Carlylean

heroism: the act of reading the condition-of-England novel is a selfless act, and the

"disagreeable" effects that Childers describes become proof of this sincerity. The grim

urgency of the condition-of-England novel is intentional, a means to create an affective

reading experience beyond that of entertainment.

Moreover, Kingsley's use of fictional autobiography brings to mind Carlyle's

Sartor Resartus (1833-34) and the "revelatory potential of autobiographical narrative"

(Fleishman 33). For Avrom Fleishman, the autobiographical mode enables Teufelsdrockh

(or Carlyle) to face the object of his scrutiny, society itself: "the would-be social reformer

must communicate his radical, if not revolutionary, critique to the very society he finds

blind and corrupt; the pharmacist-physician of social disease must adjust his prescriptions

to the clap-trap of political shibboleths" (33). Teufelsdrockh's "progress" is, importantly,

both an interior and spiritual journey, whereby the spiritual autobiography becomes the

appropriate medium for this constructed persona.[13] Kingsley chooses to discuss the

development of Alton Locke through a similar form, and by making Locke a tailor,

Kingsley conceives of him as the literal embodiment of Carlyle's clothing philosophy, whereby clothes represent the symbolic structures and beliefs that govern society. As a tailor, Locke must stitch his failures and successes together into a coherent autobiographical narrative, which becomes, like in *Sartor Resartus,* a traditionally introspective mode of self-development and formation.

Despite its obvious indebtedness to Carlyle, Locke's narrative is also, as Salmon notes, "a conscious simulation of a textual object which had already begun to proliferate in authentic form by the 1840s: the narrative of working-class self-development" ("'The Unaccredited Hero'" 167). Autobiographies such as those by John Bethune, Alexander Sommerville, and later, Thomas Cooper, helped perpetuate the Burnsian mythos of the working-class poet and intellectual (*On Heroes* 185-194) – one that established a cautionary discourse, variously advocating class loyalty and warning of the ill-effects of literary lionization that continues in Kingsley's novel.[14]

Kingsley's own awareness of the separation and division of the classes (and on a more microcosmic level, his readership) largely contributes to the "diagrammatic" and didactic quality of the novel (Cripps xvii). There are, for instance, frequent pauses in the story's action to make comments on or provide statistics about the working conditions of tailors or needlewomen in London, about popular working-class reading material; these exist alongside summaries of the daily routines and habits of Cambridge undergraduates. Other times, Locke apologizes to his "high-born" or "aristocratic readers" for recording the vulgar speeches that take place in the workroom (*AL* 19-20; 27). Yet similar to Bray's example of "gluttony" in *Education of the Feelings*, these apologies operate less

181

as invectives against the crudity of labourers and more as a means to elaborate on the importance of education. As Locke notes early on in his life's narrative, manners and personal conduct differ greatly between those in higher or lower ranks, but the well-educated poor person can still make "a fit companion for dukes and princes" (*AL* 21). Commenting on his own lack of education as well as that of his fellow labourers, Locke explains that the "difference in income, as you go lower, makes more and more difference in the supply of the common necessaries of life: and worse – in education and manners, in all which polishes the man" (*AL* 21). Locke's observation explicitly assumes the importance of education and conduct to sociability.

This marked attention to a divided readership is most evident in Kingsley's two Prefaces to the novel, published in separate editions: "Preface Addressed to the Working Men of Great Britain" (1856) and "Preface to the Undergraduates of Cambridge" (1862). In the 1856 Preface, Kingsley discusses the nature of demagoguism: of having false models of conduct for political action, and the folly of trusting improper leaders or heroes. Kingsley's tone, however, is optimistic, almost congratulatory, as he asserts that demagoguism, as well as the rule of the "mob orator," is no longer a prevalent force ("Preface Addressed to the Working Men of Great Britain" 16). For Kingsley, this change from revolutionary sentiment is followed by a more collective public sentiment, whereby social cooperation and the right of political representation function along the axis of self-sacrifice and self-control: "Remember always that Democracy means a government not merely by numbers of isolated individuals, but by a Demos – by men accustomed to live in Demoi, or corporate bodies, and accustomed, therefore, to the self-

182

control, obedience to law, and self-sacrificing public spirit, without which a corporate body cannot exist" (19). Like Bray's destructive individual or Carlyle's passionate hero, this newfound public spirit is marked by a social commitment or action not guided by self-interest or personal assertion.

Kingsley's reminder about the days of mob rule and mob orators in his 1856 Preface also conjures up a formative childhood memory. In his lecture "Great Cities and the Influence for Good and Evil" (1857) he recounts, as a boy, seeing the new gaol on fire in the midst of political riots. Kingsley describes the memory as the moment he discovered "the dangerous classes" and how he initially "loathed" them (*SSL* 190). As an adult, however, Kingsley explains that he considers these to be moments "not of decrepitude, but of youth; not as the expiring convulsion of sinking humanity, but as upward struggles" (*SSL* 189). Memory and reflection prompt a kind of social epiphany about collective movements and their great strides and potential for missteps. For Kingsley, the raucous mob may initially breed hostility, and as such, is not the right course of action, yet it may also count as the growing pains of a new movement – a kind of action that, despite its failings, has its place in the evolution of political progress and social consciousness. His concern over the development of this unruly discontent into a campaign of just social and political cause is similar to his concern over the development of his eponymous protagonist.

In the same way, the emotional capabilities or deficiencies of characters in *Alton Locke*, their ability or inability to control their passions and actions, are equally necessary; they dictate the course of political action and make political action possible.

183

Locke's autobiographical narrative provides an account of both his political and literary development as he attempts to discern proper role models for his political and spiritual views – and as a Christian Socialist, Kingsley sees these as intimately connected – and for his aspirations of becoming a poet and author. Salmon argues that Kingsley's application of Carlylean heroism was one profoundly concerned with demagoguism: "Nowhere is Kingsley's indebtedness to Carlyle more evident than in the novel's relentless pursuit and zealous unmasking, of the false ideals of heroism into which its narrator and protagonist frequently stumbles. Idolatry is unquestionably Alton's besetting sin, castigated on numerous occasions throughout the text" ("'The Unaccredited Hero'" 173). Yet Salmon also notes that "the capacity for hero-worship" – that is, the worship of appropriate models as opposed to demagogues – is pivotal to the Carlylean argument that "hero-worship is an essential predicate of true heroism" ("'The Unaccredited Hero'" 174). This pursuit, variously idolatry and hero-worship, has implications for narrative coherence, however, and in the same way that Carlyle's series of lectures were criticized for their lack of logic, Kingsley's novel suffers a similar charge: Gallagher suggests that the idolatrous Locke exists in the narrative not as a coherent identity, but as a series of "indeterminate selves" (99). Gallagher's observation is apt, since it points to the pitfall of extreme sympathetic (or intersubjective) identification – the possible loss of individual identity rather than a kind of self-reification often discussed by contemporary scholarship on sympathy. Yet, I suggest there is a purposeful order to be had in Locke's capacity for idolatry or hero-worship: Kingsley's novel is structured around a series of lessons in how to interpret representations of political and spiritual conduct appropriately.

Locke's capacity for feeling is what drives his capacity for hero-worship. It is also what initially sets him apart as he narrates his childhood and his strict Calvinist upbringing by his mother and her priestly confidants. Initially, he feigns a tone of resignation to his mother's views of Providence, representing it as a kind of class loyalty akin to religious faith: "I do not complain that I am a Cockney. That, too, is God's gift. He made me one, that I might learn to feel for the poor wretches who sit stifled in reeking garrets and workrooms, drinking disease with every breath" (*AL* 5-6). Locke's early attempts at self-education and self-expression are thwarted by his mother's emotional and intellectual repression, which entails a type of innocence and lack of understanding; feelings are to be distrusted because his mother decrees that "'[t]he heart of man is, and ever was, equally at enmity with God'" (*AL* 17). Locke reflects on the effects of his mother's education as a kind of sheltered inexperience, one that positions him as "a lamb in the midst of wolves" when he starts his apprenticeship in a workshop (*AL* 21).

In sharp contrast to the often-silent austerity of his mother's house, the workshop is filled with lively banter, rhymes, and chants, yet Locke recoils from what he calls the "ribaldry" of the workers, and is drawn, instead, to Crosswaithe, an avowed Chartist (*AL* 27). Crosswaithe inspires an interesting combination of hatred and respect from his fellow workers. He is "[s]ilent, moody, and pre-occupied," and it is this combination of restraint and thoughtfulness that initially draws Locke to him. The presence of Crosswaithe in the workroom provokes a kind of authoritative tonic to the doggerel verses and indelicacy that Locke reports to his implied readers. The presence of Crosswaithe in the narrative also implies an important qualification: that even in the

midst of such expressions, the pursuit of self-improvement comes not from the masters, but from working-class individuals themselves (*AL* 27). Crosswaithe is one representation of working-class conduct; in comparing him with the other workers, Kingsley also implicitly points out that rather than "an ideal theoretical construct" (Clark 177), the designation of "working class" encompasses a breadth of people, and subsequently, a range of manners and codes of conduct.

Locke's dissatisfaction with both the "moral tone" of the workroom and his mother's religious education is what initially causes him to look elsewhere for appropriate models or "guides" (*AL* 28, 30), and he finds these in the form of Crosswaithe and the Scottish bookshop owner, Mackaye. Yet, as educational guides or models, the two men differ greatly on the very topic of education: Crosswaithe is a Chartist and Mackaye is a "literary portrait" of Carlyle himself ("'The Unaccredited Hero'" 175). Mackaye advocates self-education – "'who'll teach a man anything except himsel'?" he asks Locke (*AL* 35) – and for the Carlylean pedagogue, liberal education is a kind of thoughtless privilege rather than sincere form of moral or intellectual improvement: "'It's only gentlefolks and puir aristocrat bodies that go to be spoilt wi' tutors and pedagogues, cramming and loading them wi' knowledge, as ye'd load a gun, to shoot it all out again, just as it went down, in a college examination, and forget all aboot it after'" (*AL* 35). Mackaye's words conjure up the example of Locke's middle-class cousin, George, whose Cambridge education does little to install any conviction outside of the decorous and self-interested.[15] Crossthwaite, on the other hand, espousing the politically radical cause of liberty, envisions education as a right and expresses outrage at

186

Locke's wasted genius: "'The form of the brain alone, and not the possession of the vile gauds of wealth and rank, constitute man's only right to education – to the glories of art and science'" (*AL* 48). For Crossthwaite, Locke's attempts at reading and writing mean little in the current political system that thwarts his potential. When the owner of their tailor shop decides to switch production to home piecemeal work, Crossthwaite cautions Locke: "'Little time, or heart, or strength, will you have to study, when you are making the same coats you make now, at half the price'" (*AL* 106). According to his new pedagogue, Crossthwaite, the personal liberty that Locke craves can only be realized through political enfranchisement and class fidelity.

When Locke finally approaches Crosswaithe for advice, he gets his first lesson by way of a heated confrontation between Crosswaithe and a soldier. Locke insists that the soldier is only following orders – "And what business have they to let themselves be ordered?" retorts his new mentor (*AL* 45). Through Crosswaithe's angry outburst at the officer, Locke learns that his radical pedagogue resents blind obedience to governmental and religious authority – the powers that he explains are responsible for social inequalities – and this begins Locke's progression into radical politics. In this exchange, class loyalty is expressed through, and akin to, a kind of anger, one that continues to grow as Locke matures:

> Above all, that I had known it on that night, when first the burning thought arose in my heart, that I was unjustly used; that society had not given me my rights. It came to me as a revelation, celestial-infernal, full of glorious hopes of the possible future in store for me through the perfect

development of all my faculties; and full, too, of fierce present rage,

wounded vanity, bitter grudging against those most favoured than myself.

(*AL* 50).

His newly planted seed of class discontent continues to grow, particularly with his

idolatry of the Dean's daughter, who becomes both his poetic muse and an additional

catalyst for his increasing class hostility. Locke defends his burgeoning enmity in posing

the question: "Why have I not as good a right to speak to her, to move in the same society

in which she moves, as any of the fops of the day?" (77). The narratorial Locke reflects to

the reader how young Locke's anger is manifested for his own sake – the gratification of

possessing his love-object. As the reminiscent Locke summarizes the mistakes of his life,

he nevertheless provides reasons for his own anger, as well as the anger of others of his

class. In the "soulless routine of mechanical labour," explains Locke, the working classes

must "either dream or agitate" (*AL* 84).

Locke's other model, Mackaye, teaches his own lesson in class fidelity, and it is

one that emphasizes sympathy rather than alienating class hostility. In their first meeting,

Locke accidently stumbles upon Mackaye's shop when he discovers *The Life and Poems*

of J. Bethune on a shelf outside. Thumbing through the daily trials of the working-class

poet, the impressionable Locke considers Bethune's experiences to be a "sad presage of

[his] own" (*AL* 32). With their similar upbringings, their ambition, and their "stern battle

with social disadvantages," Locke finds in Bethune a kindred spirit: "And tears of

sympathy, rather than selfish fear, fell fast upon the book" (*AL* 32). It is this manifest

expression of feeling that draws Mackaye to address Locke and invite him into his shop

in the first place. In this respect, Mackaye becomes, if not Locke's political mentor, his literary and moral one (for Mackaye, as for Carlyle, the two are intertwined). Crosswaithe's angry outburst and Locke's sympathetic reading of (and identification with) Bethune's life occur in respective chapters, a contrast that deliberately emphasizes them as related examples and experiences.

According to Crosswaithe, Mackaye may have sympathy for the labouring poor, but he too contentedly "'lives by the present system of things, and he wo't speak ill of the bridge which carries him over – till the time comes'" (*AL* 47). Sympathy is not enough in Crosswaithe's mind, for it alone cannot overcome the present systems or institutions that disadvantage the working classes. Instead, argues Crosswaithe, political involvement must go beyond complacency and obeying "'the powers that be'" that is taught by church, state, and Mackaye (*AL* 49). Locke acknowledges that he is "not likely to get any very positive ground of comfort from Crossthwaite" (*AL* 53), yet nevertheless, his newfound radicalism forces Locke to confront his mother's blind obedience to religious authorities and Calvinistic dogma, which culminates in his ejection from her house and pushes him increasingly under the influence of Mackaye. Kingsley's organization of his novel as a series of lessons is coupled with the equally illustrative consequences of those lessons, a structure remarkably similar to the examples in Bray's own treatise. Locke himself seems to imply that this series of lessons is the purpose of his autobiography: "But this book is the history of my mental growth; and my mistakes as well as my discoveries are steps in that development, and may bear a lesson in them" (*AL* 70). Importantly, Locke's personal history is one that charts the interrelated growth of his

literary reputation, a relationship that enables Locke, as the mouthpiece of Kingsley, to make statements about the role and status of literature in mediating the politically-charged period of the 1840s. The lesson of literature – its role in mediating interpersonal (and inter-class) relationships and in shaping both people and public opinion – is framed as another series of conflicts in Locke's development.

As an aspiring poet, Locke battles between maintaining his class fidelities and socially elevating himself as a published author. Indeed, Locke's divided loyalties demonstrate the paradox of the working-class intellectual: how does one strive for self-improvement yet escape middle-class determinations of identity?[16] In the same way that Locke is quick to engage in hero-worship and follow his political models and pedagogues, he too easily emulates his literary models. Forays into writing verse were initially personal pursuits, romantic escapism from his thoughts and "private sorrows" (*AL* 84), until Mackaye furthers his lesson on class fidelity and sympathy, this time in the service of literary development. As a mentor, Mackaye becomes Locke's first reader and critic; the bookshop owner's decor resembles his own brand of literary criticism, as books he does not like – High Tory and Benthamite – hang "impaled through their covers, and suspended in all sorts of torturing attitudes" (*AL* 64). For Mackaye, Locke's literary subject matter should be his immediate world, a moral aesthetic imperative that suggests that poetry, like charity, begins at home (*AL* 88). Locke takes this lesson to heart and in the following chapter, entitled "Poetry and Poets," he makes explicit how he is to shape his craft: "My subjects were intentionally and professedly cockney ones. I had taken Mackaye at his word. I had made up my mind, that if I had any poetic power, I must do

190

my duty therewith in that station of life to which it had pleased god to call me, and look at everything simply and faithfully as a London artisan" (*AL* 94). Indeed, as the plot develops, Locke's vocational identity as a tailor becomes increasingly eclipsed by his development as a poet and as a Chartist; artistic achievements, rather than labour realities, become increasingly intertwined with political convictions.[17]

Locke's artistic development mirrors his political one as he vacillates between escapist and political writing (and thus, between disengagement and political involvement). In doing so, he must also find a balance between sympathy and anger, which are ultimately manifestations of class loyalty rather than strict oppositions. In light of Mackaye's literary tutelage, Locke dutifully foregoes his verses, the manifestations of his childhood desire for personal escape of his present conditions, to write what he calls the poetry of "disfigurement" (*AL* 93). This turn to the subject matter of London's labouring poor instills in Locke what he calls a sense of "Werterism" (*AL* 95). This is also a Carlylean concern: named after the eponymous protagonist of Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774), Werterism is defined by Carlyle as a state whereby "feelings which arise from *passion incapable of being converted into action*" (*Critical and Miscellaneous Essays* 54, original emphasis). Locke's Werterism becomes the unfortunate result of an undisciplined emotional engagement, a kind of sentimentalism and excessiveness comprised of unchecked melancholy and rage. In the Carlylean sense, it implies the opposite of heroism – an indolence rather than sincerity of feeling. For Locke, the struggle becomes how best to represent the suffering of everyday life without offering up one's own sympathetic feeling as the substitute for action. The answer is one

191

that Locke increasingly finds lacking in Mackaye's mentorship (and presumably in Carlyle's). Consequently, Locke must search again for leaders and models that will instill strong feeling that leads to action.

For Locke, the chapter that follows, "How Folks Turn Chartist," provides a solution, albeit temporary, and he turns more purposefully towards political radicalism as a means of mediating or bridging this divide between meaningful feeling and productive action. After his first Chartist meeting, Locke comments on the eloquence of the men (*AL* 113). His remark overtly considers (and disclaims) Carlyle's own assessment of Chartists as being "inarticulate" (*SW* 155) and suggests a pointed ambivalence towards Carlylean creed. Locke's increasing radicalism proves equally limiting, however, a realization that comes during his employment at the *Weekly Warwhoop*, a newspaper run by the fiery-tempered O'Flynn (the literary incarnation of Fergus O'Connor). As the name of the paper implies, O'Flynn's newspaper panders to the "fiercest passions" (*AL* 247), which Locke admits is self-satisfying, and therein lies its appeal: "It pampered my own self-conceit, my own discontent, while it saved me the trouble of inventing remedies" (*AL* 192). Thus, if Werterism signals an indolent emotionalism which fosters the inability to act, then Locke's literary labour for the *Warwhoop* becomes, in itself, a kind of radical Werterism, a similar personal indulgence under the guise of political discontent and class fidelity.

Despite the obviously negative effect that Locke's hack writing has upon his temperament – "I became daily more and more cynical, fierce, reckless" (*AL* 190) – Kingsley has Locke remark on the similar tactics of conservative periodicals and those

directed to middle- and upper-class readers. For Locke, these periodicals also express and provoke fierce feelings or passions. Although he may well apologize for the ribaldry in the tailor's workshop, in the same breath he charges these periodicals with "cowardly execration and ribald slander" (*AL* 27). Thus, Kingsley does not direct his criticism strictly towards Chartist periodicals, but political discourses that attempt to evoke strong feelings with little attempt at resolution or action. At the same time, however, in criticizing reckless and self-indulgent feeling, Kingsley does not advocate its antithesis, stark or intellectual detachment from politics and the politics of feeling.

Just as the oppositional lessons of Mackaye and Crossthwaite serve to highlight patterns of behaviour and conduct, Locke's indebtedness to the fiery O'Flynn becomes increasingly contrasted to the "peaceful intellectual luxury" of Dean Winnstay, who scrutinizes Locke's radicalism (*AL* 192). Under the literary tutelage of the Cambridge dean, Locke is advised "'to give up reading those unprincipled authors, whose aim is to excite the evil passions of the multitude,'" and to omit political messages from his poems, the former which certainly evokes Edmund Burke's conservative fears of the rioting masses (*AL* 152, 179). Like O'Flynn, the dean is a purposefully faulty figure, and Locke eventually realizes his new mentor and patron's shortcomings: the apolitical dean attempts to mould the working-class intellectual and "man of feeling" into a man of science by a regime of math and logic, and he persuades Locke to lessen, even delete, the political rhetoric of his verses (*AL* 165). Kingsley does not advocate for either extreme but for a balance, whereby the "reasonable limits" (to borrow Bray's term) of political anger are neither expressed for their own sake (or for profit, in the case of O'Flynn), nor

do they thwart action and potential change. Locke's tutelage under the dean is ultimately

necessary: it is through his interactions with him that Locke understands that his anger at

the upper classes is the result of misplaced class loyalty.

By addressing and illustrating the importance of educators or heroes in one's life,

Kingsley attempts to enlist a succession of contrasting yet illustrative models and

educators. The ultimate lesson for Locke is "common humanity" (*AL* 162), the guiding

principle of Christian Socialism. Locke's series of would-be educators, then, are a

necessary part of this common humanity: they expose Locke to all the forces that divide

individuals. Rather than placing faith in movements or institutions, the memoirist

explains that he had learnt "that the only thing to regenerate the world is not more of any

system, good or bad, but simply more of the Spirit of God" (*AL* 111). It is this desire for

unification (one which Kingsley paradoxically expresses through a disjointed narrative

and varying addresses to a divided readership) that reigns as Locke's cumulative lesson,

and it is in this lesson that links Locke's personal development to Kingsley's own

example, Muscular Christianity.

Like Bray's "Education of the Feelings," and Carlyle's heroism, Muscular

Christianity is both an "ideal and a working code of conduct" (Harrington 15). To be

sure, Locke is far from a specimen of Muscular Christianity – the narratorial Locke often

takes great pains to describe his physical weakness. Arguably, Locke's body matters less

because he sheds his (faulty) physical form in his evolutionary dream state, only to build

it back up again, a fit vessel to be filled by the force of God. Locke's revelation – that

social amelioration will come from a transcending of class divisions, from the combat of

personal selfishness, and from the inculcation of self-improvement and regulation – is not unlike the tenets of Muscular Christianity. Locke's "Spirit of God" replaces Locke's earlier spirit or "duty" of discontent – and the memorable mob from Kingsley's childhood – with another potent force to be used for social amelioration.

Under the moral direction of Eleanor Staunton, the female embodiment of iron resolve, sympathy, and strong feeling,[18] Locke learns the cumulative follies of his "frantic and fruitless passion" (*AL* 357). Christian Socialism functions as the final mediation, the important amalgamation of all the conflicting lessons. Locke's conclusive lesson (and revelatory moment) occurs on his deathbed, and so it is one directed towards the reader; his failings as both a heroic man of letters, a working-class poet, and a political leader and radical are ultimately the readers' lesson, an ostensible source of both entertainment and instruction.

Kingsley's literary hero and protagonist is governed by the dictates of his temperament (whether positively or negatively) as much as he is ruled by the demarcations of literary culture and class politics. Thus, Kingsley's text addresses a divided readership in order to show how such divisions make collective cooperation difficult and even breed ignorance or contempt. Like his intended reader, divided and estranged, Locke's own development via a series of often contrasting political and literary role models stretches across extremes: the apolitical intellectualism of the dean, Mackaye's own sympathetic and charitable class loyalty, Crosswaithe's political radicalism, and finally, O'Flynn's incendiary opportunism. These divisions, while continually provoking Locke to misguided action, culminate with the Chartist petition on

195

10 April 1848, and the underlying threat of class uprising (the result of continual social and political divisions). This particular moment is likened to the building of the biblical Tower of Babel, a project doomed from the start as it is led "by mistrust, division, passion, and folly" and by builders who do not speak a common language (*AL* 362-63). Kingsley and his fellow Christian Socialists, such as F. D. Maurice and J. M. Ludlow, were well aware of the potential for failure in political reform among divided and uncommunicative groups; their periodical, *Politics for the People* (1848-49), published shortly after the Chartist petition of 10 April, combines Christian principles with the aims and aspirations of labourers and artisans and places great importance on the communication between the classes.

In its inaugural issue, *Politics for the People* addresses the social differences between its editors and its intended readers. The opening "Prospectus" outlines the periodical's scope and purpose. Under the subheading of "Workmen of England" comes the following mandate:

> We who have started this Paper are not idlers in the land, and we have no great sympathy with those that are. But we do not work with our hands; we are not suffering hardships like many of you. Therefore you may think that we shall not understand you. Possibly we shall not altogether at first, but you can help us. Many of you write clearly and nobly; you can tell us what you are thinking and wherein we have mistaken you. . . We, who do not, properly speaking, belong to your body or theirs [richer classes], shall

not try to make out that our interests are in common with either.

("Workmen of England" 2)

Common understanding and humanity requires both the articulation of differences (an answer to Smith's question, "what has befallen you?") and a willingness to overcome said differences. After expressing their sympathy with the mistreatment of workers in England, the editors then turn to address the "Gentlemen of England," and this begins with a similar assertion of commonality: "Truth belongs to no class or party. Virtue is no heir-loom of the monied or titled classes. Freedom is no privilege. We say this to the masses, we say this to you also" ("Gentlemen of England" 2). These separate addresses manifest themselves again in the multiple prefaces to *Alton Locke*.

Similar to the final lesson in *Alton Locke,* the editorial mandate of *Politics for the People* implies that social and political progress can only be achieved by common feeling and a common exchange of ideas – not by an ostracizing class loyalty or identity. Exclusions and differences breed strong and negative feelings (anger, melancholy) that can thwart action, or at least provoke misguided or ineffective means of reform and progress. Locke's ability to be moved greatly by emotion is necessary to poetry and politics, yet both require an education that is able to instill limits and checks to Locke's "frantic and fruitless passion" (*AL* 357). The insensible poet or insensible radical – one who does not feel strongly – is unable to exist either. Locke may ultimately fail in his pursuit of political and literary reputation, yet he deserves his place as the central figure or hero in the plot because of his capacity for feeling.

IV. Conclusion: Why Humans are Interesting to Humans

In *British Moralists, Being Selections from Writers Principally of the Eighteenth Century* (1897), L. A. Shelby-Bigge explains that eighteenth-century British philosophers, whether moralists or skeptics, espoused a "psychology of ethics" by attempting to explain what motivates individuals to act and how these individuals make judgments between right and wrong action. In addressing the general characteristics of this period of moral philosophy, Shelby-Bigge summarizes the importance of its emphasis on benevolence as a "revolt" against the doctrine of self-interest, one characterized by an "appeal to the plain man's experience of disinterested benevolent affections (3). My contention is that this preoccupation extends well into the nineteenth century with the articulation of conduct, and within the project of sociability – one that insists, likewise, that fellow humans should be interesting to humans. It exists with particular urgency, especially given the alienating effects of industrialization and the disparities between rich and poor.

It is significant that Shelby-Bigge emphasizes the "plain man," the ordinary person or citizen as opposed to the god or monarch, and the intended trajectory of Carlyle's heroic figure as he moves from past forms to the present. For Carlyle and Kingsley, heroic individuals are "remarkable and noble" ("National Gallery – No. 1" 6), yet they are leaders who motivate ordinary individuals to right action. The concern over right conduct is a fundamentally political one; it coincides with the preoccupation of finding proper political leaders, and the consequences, real or imagined, of strong feeling in the realm of politics, and it extends, also, into discourses of self-help and education

198

and produces categorical imperatives in politics as well as literature. Given the political and social climate of the 1840s and 1850s, the consequences of improper leaders or role models are significant: Locke's disastrous attempt to become a political leader inadvertently incites a looting mob. Right leadership begins with strong feeling, which must, in turn, be appropriately directed or regulated to "reasonable limits." For those like Bray, Carlyle, and Kingsley, the nature of these limits becomes paramount.

The chapter that follows continues with the discussion raised by Kingsley's novel – a divided or ambivalent sympathy towards the suffering and inequities of the labouring poor – by examining Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton* (1848). Like *Alton Locke*, Gaskell's novel has been described as having a similar identity crisis. I suggest that this has basis in the very nature of sympathy, and in particular, sympathizing with suffering. As Chartists such as Jones, Cooper (and Crosswaithe) denounce the complacency and subsequent inaction of readers (or spectators) in the face of large-scale urban poverty, they necessarily point to the political dimension of sympathy with suffering: to sympathize with suffering requires a kind of mitigating, or even revolutionary, redress. As such, it requires the confrontation with, and possibility of, anger and burgeoning resentment.

Endnotes

[1] "For it is remarkable, that when a person opposes me in anything, which I am strongly bent upon, and rouses up my passion by contradiction, I have always a degree of sympathy with him" (*Treatise* III. iii. II. 592).

[2] Hume's artificial virtues have far-reaching consequences for the project of sociability. They include: justice, modesty, national (and personal) loyalty or allegiance, chastity; see *Treatise* (III. I).

[3] Scholars have rarely discussed Hume's conception of good breeding as something that goes beyond a consideration of pride. Páll S. Árdal notes that pride may well be a kind of favourable self-evaluation, it is also an "essential feature of a man of honour," a socially and culturally-sanctioned individual or hero figure (388-390). For Hume, the "heroic virtues" of an individual include self-esteem (*Treatise* III. iii. II. 599-600). For Árdal, "good-breeding prohibits boastfulness even when one is justifiably proud" (391). See "Hume and Davidson on Pride." *Hume Society* 15.2 (1989): 387-394. More pointedly, Hume's essay "Of Refinement in the Arts" (1752) links the development of the arts with refinements in customs and manners. Christopher J. Berry argues that Hume's connection between the arts and conduct is one that envisions a progress in humanity as well as manners, and as such, is important for both individuals as well as government leaders. See Berry's "Hume and the Customary Causes of Industry, Knowledge, and Humanity." *History of Political Economy* 38:2 (2006). 291- 317. Hume

himself makes the connection between refinement and social happiness by considering its effects on both private and public life ("Of Refinement in the Arts" 269).

[4] Rauch includes texts such as Thomas Dick's *On the Improvement of Society by the Diffusion of Knowledge* (1833), and cites the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge (1826-1848) as a major manifestation of the spirit of self-improvement, which suggests that acquired knowledge would have a moral effect on the individual. See Bernard Lightman's *Victorian Popularizers of Science: Designing Nature for New Audiences* for a discussion of science and scientific knowledge and its role in popular culture (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2007).

[5] See Bray's *An Essay upon the Union of Agriculture and Manufactures: And upon the Organization of Industry* (London: Longman, Green and Co, 1844); *The industrial employment of women: being a comparison between the condition of the people in the watch trade in Coventry, in which women are not employed, and the people in the ribbon trade* (London: John W. Parker & Son, 1857).

[6] In *Education of the Body: An Address to the Working Classes,* for example, Bray includes a chapter on Nursery Education in which he recommends infant schools to his readership. Began by Robert Owen in 1816, this system of schools promoted both moral and social training and physical education for children of labourers and artisans.

[7] Bray's discussion of human nature and motivation does not rest on the empiricist assumption that one's rational nature is what distinguishes one from animals – in this sense, his assumptions predate Darwin's own work on emotion and heredity,

which claims humans share the same emotional capabilities (and physical manifestations of feeling) to animals. See Darwin's *The Expression of Emotion* (1872). Bray argues that humans have 23 instincts, and that 15 of these – and here Bray uses feelings and instincts interchangeably – are shared between humans and "lower animals" (*EF* 14).

[8] In the wake of reform measures, both working-class radicals and middle-class women increasingly made organized demands for political representation and critiqued the division of labour, albeit for different aims. While early feminists and working-class radicals may have had similar organizational tactics, this is not to say that they were sympathetically aligned. Anne Clark discusses the ideological rifts between working-class masculinity and feminist calls for equality.

[9] Most notably, this position is advocated by Chartists such as William Lovett and Henry Vincent and was a topic of debate at the National Charter Association Convention in 1842. Chartist organization around this issue included the collective actions and practices: the establishment of coffee houses as meeting places (as opposed to traditional taverns), the marketing and selling of "Chartist Beverage" (a cheap coffee substitute), and public petitions and pledges, such as the *Chartist Circular and Temperance Record for England and Wales* (1840-41). See also *The Chartist Legacy*, edited by Owen Ashton, Robert Fyson, and Stephen Roberts (Suffolk: Merlin, 1999).

[10] In this respect, Bray's discussion of anger and its variations shares some of the later claims by physical force Chartists, who argued that wrongs could only be addressed (and overcome) from a similar point of rightful destruction and cooperation. Peter

Murray McDouall encouraged "union, energy, perseverance, and continued agitation at the present crisis," a stance that emphasizes both the cooperation and motivating energy upon which Bray's own discussion of combativeness and destruction seems to rest. See P. M. McDouall, "What Have We Done, and What Are We to Do?" *McDouall's Chartist and Republican Journal* (April 24, 1841).

[11] In the context of Carlyle's (and Maurice's) urgency for heroes, the Duke of Wellington was, for many, the quintessential hero and leader: praised for his combination of duty and personal conduct. Known for his capacity to be emotionally moved by losses in the battlefield, Wellington was also referred to as the "Iron Duke," a moniker that implied his stern resolve in upholding his political principles, even in the midst of impeding reform. In summarizing Wellington's legacy in the mid-nineteenth century, Peter W. Sinnema evokes the language of Carlylean heroism: "Wellington was mythologized as a modern-day hero in whom traits of the great ancient warriors and statesmen were fused" (315). At a time when a female monarch was unknown to many and anathema to some, Wellington was, for England, the "the Hero King, one of those Carlylean 'missionaries of Order' in whose person resided promise for the better management of the world" (Sinnema 319).

[12] Carlyle's conception of "belief" differs from how I use the term in my discussion of Hume's philosophy. Unlike Hume, Carlyle envisions belief as an *a priori* condition of human nature; it is, foremost, a (personal) moral assertion, even when not tied to any particular institutional (ecclesiastical) authority.

[13] In discussing Carlylean heroism, scholars tend to emphasize the heroic potential of Teufelsdrockh, the intellectual and authorial stand-in for Carlyle. It is an oversight that Levine, Fleishman, and Peckham's discussions of heroism and Carlyle centre on *Sartor Resartus,* and make little or no mention of *On Heroes.*

[14] Salmon notes how Locke makes overt literary allusions to many of these working-class autobiographies, as well as *bildungsromanes* such as Edward Bulwer Lytton's *Ernest Maltravers* (1837), Thackeray's *History of Pendennis* (1848-50), and Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* (1833-34). See Salmon's "'The Unaccredited Hero'" (186).

[15] George's decisions in love, friendship, and vocation are not based on any sincere feeling but are guided by self-interested opportunism. It is his willingness to participate in a system of sweatshops and piecemeal work that literally kills him: he contracts typhus from his coat, custom-made by Jeremy Downes, George's working-class foil who also has few political and moral convictions.

[16] Scholars have discussed this tension in Kingsley's novel: see Chapter 4 of Gallagher; Richard Menke, "Cultural Capital and the Scene of Rioting: Male Working-Class Authorship in *Alton Locke.*" *Victorian Literature and Culture* 28.1 (2000): 87-108.

[17] Conveniently, this progression is reinforced by the dismissal of all the workers at the tailor shop for poorly-paid piecemeal work. This episode not only reveals the avaricious practices of greedy merchant and manufacturers, and thus demonstrates Kingsley's criticism of labour and political economy, but also serves as a plot point in Locke's development as an author, since it provides the opportunity for him to find

204

alternate employment as a periodical writer. There is, after this turn in focus, little discussion of Locke's vocation as a tailor.

[18] That Locke's ultimate model or hero is female may certainly suggest a final turning away from Carlylean doctrine in favour of Christian Socialism.

Chapter 4

Resentment: A Political Response to Sympathy and Suffering

> "Why are the rich so hard towards the poor? It is because they have no fear of being poor. Why does the noble have such contempt for a peasant? It is because he will never be a peasant. . . . Do not, therefore, accustom your pupil to regard the sufferings of the unfortunate and the labors of the poor from the height of his glory; and do not hope to teach him to pity them if he considers them alien to him. Make him understand well that the fate of these unhappy people can be his."
>
> -- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Émile* (1762)

There has been significant philosophical attention given to the subject of suffering; most interesting to this project are the responses to suffering, whether as sufferer or sympathizer. In the myriad responses, there exists an unpalatable connection between the witness to suffering and the negative feelings that can precede retribution towards the cause (real or imagined) of said suffering. To reiterate the words of Charles Taylor, "the politics of compassion" are intimately connected to the "politics of resentment" (99). Thus, the sympathetic representation of suffering, whether through visual images or discursive narratives, must take this uneasy (yet potentially productive) affinity into account.

In *The Theory of Moral Sentiments,* Adam Smith also makes due concessions: determined to make sympathy central to the project of sociability, and a means of moral approbation, Smith admits that individuals are more inclined to desire others to sympathize with their resentments than with their joys; generally, sympathy with suffering is more common than sympathy with joy (*TMS* 1.1.2.5; 1.3.1.1). This may have

some relation to the fact that in Smith's moral philosophy, resentment has its own social function as a defense against social ills and violations: "[Resentment] is the safeguard of justice and the security of innocence. It prompts us to beat off the mischief which is attempted to be done to us, and to retaliate that which is already done" (*TMS* 2.2.1.4). In this way, the desire to have others sympathize with one's suffering is a thoroughly pragmatic inclination: the attending (and expectant) resentment that arises can lead to a kind of retaliation, or the reassertion of just conditions that may mitigate "the mischief which is attempted to be done to us." Smith qualifies the mitigative role he assigns to feelings of anger and resentment: "Before resentment, therefore, can become graceful and agreeable, it must be more humbled and brought down below that pitch to which it would naturally rise, than almost any other passion" (*TMS* 1.2.1). The subject of just how resentment can be "humbled" (within the bounds of sociability) is taken up by political radicals and authors who feel compelled to represent suffering while also acknowledging how sympathy with suffering can produce unsocial responses.

Chartist discourses, in particular, characterize the experience of suffering as that which can be mitigated by collective political action. In this sense, resultant anger or resentment is not enough to inspire lasting change, but it is, nevertheless, a potent force that can be channeled, whether to affirm (working-class) merits or instigate political actions. Writing about the role of working-class fiction in Victorian culture, Martha Vicinus notes that Chartist activists and writers such as Ernest Jones use feeling for both such ends: "Descriptions of injustice and oppression could anger workers, but appeals to their idealism could focus that anger and channel it towards political anger" (101).

In critiquing the existing political and economic system, Chartist periodicals also scrutinize two prevailing responses to suffering: apathy and complacency. Apathy implies a distinct absence of feeling, and by extension, a lack of interest, in the circumstances of the labouring poor – a state often described by many middle-class reformers as one based on ignorance rather than a fundamental lack of sympathetic virtue. Complacency, on the other hand, is not a lack of feeling but a lack of *specific* feeling; the complacent individual is satisfied or content with the condition of England. More specifically, complacency is the distinct absence of strong and negative feelings, such as anger or indignation. For Chartists, it is not to be lauded for its moderation or restraint. Instead, a lack of strong feeling becomes a personal flaw rather than a virtue: those not galvanized by their witness to or experience of suffering are no better than those apathetic to it. Apathy and complacency signify the lack of impassioned response to suffering, and this distinction demonstrates how political radicals categorize feelings as part of public discourses and politics.

The politics of suffering resound in industrial fiction of the 1840s and 1850s, and with the representation of suffering, and discussions of its alleviation, come concerns over its political and social consequences. Nussbaum explains that, historically, those advocating for more sympathy consider it necessary for "ethical life," while others claim that excessive sympathy with suffering can motivate irrational actions, and precedes the desire for revenge (354). This cautionary view is the tacit argument behind many modern institutions of law and political economy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, whereby "the task of a strong society is to contain and control the inclination to revenge"

through systematic and institutional structures (Nussbaum 363, 393). Thus, like other general discussions of anger and its effects, the emphasis in these mid-nineteenth-century writings, radical or otherwise, falls on the mechanisms and strategies for the mediation of strong (yet typical) feelings of resentment that come from experiencing suffering, injustice, or being sympathetic or empathetic[1] to the suffering of others.

In this respect, my final chapter will examine Chartist periodicals and their discussion of suffering, and Elizabeth Gaskell's first novel, *Mary Barton* (1848), a text simultaneously praised and admonished for its portrayal of suffering among Manchester's labouring poor. While it garnered admiration for its sympathetic portrayal of daily working-class life, it was also criticized for its potential to stir antagonistic feelings between classes in a period already marked by revolutions across continental Europe. The conflicting critical reception of the novel points out the structural flaws in the narrative: the divergent political and romantic plot lines of John Barton and his daughter, Mary, respectively; and the novel's tidy conclusion of emigration, a much criticized solution also proposed by Carlyle in *Chartism*. At first glance, the original impetus for Gaskell's novel seems to echo Carlyle's views on Chartism, particularly in the Preface, yet I intend to point out some fundamental philosophical and political differences.

In Gaskell's novel, personal narratives and moments of disclosure provide alternatives to strictly spectatorial perspectives of suffering (a topic under much discussion in contemporary Victorian scholarship), encouraging readers to consider their own responses to the suffering depicted in the stories, as well as their own potential for suffering. I want to distinguish between narratives and disclosure, for while disclosure

may be conveyed and understood through narrative – a representation of a sequence of events – it is not necessarily, in the strictest narratological sense, a narrative. Disclosure is an act of expression that offers some information about the self and the other, not as a confession of misdeeds, necessarily, but as an exposure of vulnerabilities, fears, sufferings that serve as realizations about oneself in relation to others. Ultimately, it is a reflective practice of making sense of the world (or a system).[2] Within the politics of suffering, personal narratives and disclosure can impact interpersonal (and inter-class) relations by making legible the commonalities between individuals, or by envisioning alternatives to hegemonic discourses of difference.

By juxtaposing *Mary Barton* with Chartist writings, one can see alliances in the political theories of suffering between the texts, which calls into question the common criticism of the novel as being ultimately apolitical or overly indebted to tidy resolutions through feeling. Instead, Gaskell makes the argument that shared feelings, even those of anger, are necessary for social amelioration and the mitigation of class hostilities. Gaskell creates the memorable example of John Barton, her would-be eponymous hero, to illustrate this connection between suffering and resentment. Barton is greatly struck by the suffering he witnesses in the lives of his fellow workers and the suffering he experiences in his own life. Suffering, the novel's narrator implies, explains his turn to Chartism and radical politics. In this sense, the novel charts Barton's emotional progression as he vacillates between bitter rage and despair towards what he sees as the apathy of the factory owners, the complacency of his close friends, and his own moral and physical deterioration and failings. In this sense, Barton becomes the explanatory

210

model of Gaskell's vision of suffering and of its ethical and social import, which like Rousseau's imperative in *Emile*, is instructional for both middle and working-class readers.[3] Through the complementary (rather than oppositional) plots of John and Mary Barton, Gaskell demonstrates how sympathy with suffering can instill a moral and political commitment or how, as spectacle, it can breed resentment. Despite the obvious political differences between Gaskell and Rousseau, Gaskell's politics of suffering in *Mary Barton* revisit Rousseau's lesson: responses to the suffering of others, to be truly sympathetic, must imagine the same suffering or "fate" could happen to the sympathizing subject. Otherwise, such sympathy can do little to mitigate suffering and its potential for perpetuating resentment or redress.

The general consensus among post-Enlightenment philosophers and those studying the mutability of emotions remains that to be sympathetic to the suffering of another involves the following criteria: first, one must believe that the other's suffering is indeed serious but unwarranted; and second, the person feeling sympathy or compassion towards another must believe that in some respect, there is a possibility that the circumstances that brought on such suffering may also happen to them (Nussbaum 306-07). Rousseau's question regarding the disregard of the wealthy towards the poor is answered in his dialogue: the division of wealth and power becomes an impediment to fellow-feeling, and more specifically, inspires an apathy that perpetuates suffering and misery (224). Thus, for Rousseau, and for many radicals after him, the compassionate response to suffering requires an acknowledgement that one lives in the same world, and as such, has the same "possibilities and vulnerabilities similar to those of the sufferer"

211

(Nussbaum 316). This criterion depends on the capacity of the imagination to extend these sympathies to others, yet it also must be able to overcome the very differences that perpetuate suffering in the first place. Nussbaum makes the point that the "recognition of one's related vulnerability"– the sympathetic individual's ability to put herself in another's proverbial shoes – is an "epistemological requirement," and the very basis for the recognition of commonality (319, 342). For Rousseau, as for nineteenth-century radicals (and by way of the above criteria, I am including Gaskell), the impediments to sympathy with the suffering of another are the very material distinctions of rank and class. In the mid-nineteenth century, Rousseau's examples of the unfeeling noble expands to include the emergent political and economic powers of industry – the merchant, the factory owner, and even the would-be social reformer – and these figures variously become the agents of suffering and the objects of resentment in mid-nineteenth-century England.

I. Smithian Sympathy as Spectacle, Social Difference, and Suffering

It may seem problematic to extend Smith's examples of sympathetic feeling to nineteenth-century middle-class ideology and culture; Smith, writing in the mid-eighteenth century, cannot be answerable for a class bias that has not yet been institutionally established. Yet in discussing mid-nineteenth-century culture, contemporary scholars have relied on Smith's conception of sympathy as the grounds for a series of exchanges that point to wider economic, political, and moral assumptions. Discussing the rhetoric of "fallenness" in Victorian culture, Amanda Anderson

212

emphasizes the middle-class assumptions inherent in sympathetic spectatorship, arguing that the discomfort that the middle-class spectator feels when looking upon suffering is a fear of a similar, social, economic (or moral) fall. In this formative moment the self produces a fear of its own instability, whereby "fallenness" becomes constructed as that which lacks coherence or autonomy in order to dispel fears about the self.[4] By interrogating the tension between materialism and idealism in its relation to self-identity, Anderson's treatment of fallenness does not concentrate on one source of mechanistic or disciplinary control, but rather, examines how such rhetoric emerges through contesting and contradictory forces over selfhood and intersubjective relations.

For Anne Cvetkovich, class-based conceptions of sympathy problematize the claims to truth in the representation of social problems, whereby the representation of social problems through appeals to feeling, or resolution through feeling, underscore social inequalities. Cvetkovich argues that as the objects of sympathy and suffering, socially-marginalized figures are transformed into "exemplars of cultural value" that quite conveniently enable the resolution of social problems (21). Similarly, in *Scenes of Sympathy,* Audrey Jaffe connects sympathy with visualized representation and spectatorship, a relationship increasingly situated within the market of production and consumption, labour and capital. Jaffe's designation of "scene" is explicit to her argument that sympathy is, above all, a fact of representation requiring a visual referent (3). Jaffe links Smithian sympathy to spectacle[5] from the onset, but implies a particularly exemplary form of this relationship within Victorian social identity. It is through spectacle that the Victorian middle-class subject encounters him or herself as an

economic subject, since the visual referents in narratives "render visible, otherwise invisible determinations of social identity" (8). Since Smith's conception of sympathy is ultimately imaginary, Jaffe argues that when the spectator and the object of sympathy are from different classes, what circulate in the spectator's mind are cultural fantasies of the other's social position:

> And it is because of the interdependence of and continual oscillation between images of cultural identity and degradation . . . – products of the imagination of a spectator positioned, phantasmatically, between them – that I consider Smith's scene of sympathy to stand both as a primal scene in the history of sympathetic representation and as a visual emblem of the structure of middle-class identity. (4-5)

Jaffe's work is attentive to the material markers that were, for Victorian novelists and readers, vital ways to construct and maintain coherent conceptions of identity. Yet ultimately, scholars such as Anderson, Cvetkovich, and Jaffe articulate Smithian sympathy within the specifically middle-class imagination, and in the case of the latter, as a hegemonic enterprise. Jaffe makes the important point that sympathy functions as the "vehicle for the circulation of effects and identities between classes" (20), and it is on this point that I take up my own scholarship on sympathy in the mid-nineteenth century. More specifically, however, my interest lies in how sympathy operates within and dictates relations between classes in a way that is interpersonal and social – what I see as the imperative of eighteenth-century philosophical benevolent theories of the moral sentiments – rather than self-constitutive, self-serving, or distinctly classed, and in this

respect, I argue that in *Mary Barton*, Gaskell uses suffering to illustrate this ethical distinction.

In discussing middle-class identity and its formation, contemporary Victorian scholarship tends to criticize what they see as the inherently disciplinary nature of sympathy and its discourses. "Scenes of sympathy"– usually involving sights of industrial and urban suffering – are discussed as a series of spectatorial relationships, codified through visual images and material cues rendered through documentary-like details and descriptions, the hallmarks of Victorian realism. As constitutive exchanges, they privilege the position of the (middle-class) spectator, who gazes upon the sufferer, and are decidedly unidirectional: the affective experience is that of the spectator's rather than the sufferer's. At the same time, being a spectator to suffering inevitably implies that the suffering is a kind of performance, the conscious or unconscious organization of experience, which can obscure the credibility of the suffering in the first place. The scene of suffering, then, must be taken in by the spectator and judged accordingly by a set of claims or criteria that depend solely on the spectator. This same paradigm continues in sociological scholarship on suffering. For instance, in attempting to construct a genealogy of suffering, its theoretical and political development from the seventeenth century onward, Cynthia Halpern envisions the modern relationship between the spectator and the sufferer as one that follows this expectation of performance, and looks to Rousseau's revolutionary politics: "In the public spaces created by the architectures and technologies of the enlightened modern world, [Rousseau] is a spectator, who judges that the suffering he observes in the majority of the men around him, in the masses, the poor, the

oppressed, is not legitimate (18). According to Halpern, it is Rousseau who uncovers or acknowledges suffering and judges it accordingly, and sufferers are, simply, cues or signs that give the performance its appropriate meaning.

Given that Smith designates the sympathizing subject as the "impartial spectator," one could assume that Smith was endeavouring, unsuccessfully, to avoid the charge of self-interest. The "problematic individualism" of sympathy that Hirschmann discusses is understandable, given that the tradition of philosophy was concerned with the determination of selfhood, but sympathy can, and should, provoke the recognition of and openness to that outside the self. Scholars who have tied humanitarian altruism to political theory, such as Charles Taylor or Luc Boltanski, have variously argued self-determination (and in this case, self-constitution) can come from a moral commitment that transcends the egotistical ideal. Boltanski contends, for instance, "when confronted with suffering all moral demands converge on the single imperative of action" (xv). Having knowledge of suffering demands the obligation of assistance on the part of the spectator-turned-participant, and this commitment can be a form of self-realization.

The prevailing view of sympathy as spectatorial also explains a common, but short-sighted, approach to theories of suffering – that the experience of suffering is inexpressible. Indeed, philosophical criteria of what constitutes suffering may vary across epistemological, political, and eudiamonistic grounds,[6] but its quality of inexpressiveness draws considerable consensus. Halpern asserts that suffering – more specifically, the pain associated with suffering – is beyond representation, "an otherness that cannot be encapsulated or sufficiently communicated" (9). According to Halpern, "suffering always

216

exceeds expression in words and is not merely a metaphysical but rather a physical, bodily, and psychological, even spiritual, matter" (95). There are, as Holly Faith Nelson discusses, various articulations of the concept of suffering, since it "speak[s] to the ineffable – that which appears to transcend or operate outside of language or that which is challenging or impossible to represent" (xv). Similarly, in discussing the sociological import of suffering in modern contexts, Iain Wilkinson argues that suffering is often conceptualized as a "problem" – a problem of representation – for it can both evade articulation and leave the very sufferer inarticulate; further, the attempt to put into words the very experience of suffering can trivialize the experience (1, 18).

To call suffering inexpressible is problematic, since it obscures the various social and political practices and agents that seek to, or benefit from, silence, and in doing so, it privileges the perspective of the spectator. Articulating the experience of suffering from the subject position of the sympathetic spectator can exist as a censure, or an insistence of illegibility, that ignores any responses from sufferers, and as such, potentially avoids the political and moral efficacy of redress. Sympathy with the suffering and misfortune of others may well be a means of middle-class hegemony or a mechanism of disciplinary power, in the Foucauldian sense, as many Victorian scholars have aptly pointed out, but to theorize it solely as such ignores the radical potential of suffering, whereby the experience and spectatorship of suffering can necessitate a call to ameliorative action and instill a sense of moral and political commitment.

Halpern argues that the challenge of representing suffering is a political one: it is tied to notions of justice; it raises questions as to what is morally right and wrong, and it

217

questions authority, existing models of power, and conceptions of agency (10). If suffering is both a moral experience and a political concern, one that motivates individuals to articulate known causes and demand remedy or expiation from those who have the power to do so (Halpern 1), then limiting its expression to the spectator in the sympathetic process severely impedes its ethical potential. Responses to suffering on the part of the sufferer are forms of disclosure that can alter the spectatorial (and unidirectional) character of sympathy. They serve as intermediaries of intersubjective exchange, "formulated in a way which enables us to join together a description of the person suffering and the concern of someone informed of this suffering" (Boltanski xv). To be clear, speech alone does not address or redress suffering; rather, it imparts the knowledge of suffering that demands the obligation of assistance and commitment: "For speech to reduce the unfortunate's suffering, and for it to be regarded thereby as a form of action, in the sense that 'speaking is acting,' a different kind of instrument is needed: *public opinion* engaging directly with political institutions" (Boltanski 17-18, original emphasis). In this respect, the impetus to represent suffering, as a means to engage public opinion, can be a kind of pre-condition to action.

This kind of political agency is particular to post-Enlightenment contexts. In early, pre-modern societies, suffering was considered inevitable, according to the will of a deity, and something outside of human control. The sufferer was expected to submit and endure. Modern-day notions of suffering, which acknowledge known or perceived causes that are within human power to fix, suggest an accountability that is different from ancient or medieval conceptions (Halpern 2). Similarly, Wilkinson explains suffering as a

218

means of acquiring agency, since responses to suffering acquire "political resonance and the powers to effect social change" (111). The experience of or witness to suffering not only binds individuals into groups, but gives these groups a common motive for reform – the alleviation of suffering, and, as Wilkinson notes, the creation of a more humane society (113).

II. "Wrongs Long Endured": Suffering, Submission, and Victorian Political Radicalism

The politics of suffering that form much of Rousseau's legacy continue to inform the political discourses surrounding the reform acts, particularly in radical politics. In Victorian culture, suffering – its representation and alleviation – commands sizeable attention and serves a multitude of purposes. Considering the rise of investigative journalism, literary realism, and sanitary reform in the early and mid-nineteenth century, Nancy Metz aptly describes how the "awakening of Victorian culture to suffering on an unknown scale was most often expressed through the motif of exploration and discovery" (72). In these cases, the suffering body – carefully detailed and documented in medical and social studies, periodical articles, and novels by middle-class authors – stands in as a synecdoche for the body politic and becomes the ethical imperative for social reform. Exploring the cultural and political significance of the working-class body, a representative figure of nineteenth-century industry and political economy, Mike Sanders argues that the physical toil and suffering that such a system inflicted on industrial

labourers was unsettling to the middle classes, whose social legitimization was predicated on moral respectability and "humanitarianism" (313). The humanitarian response to suffering, argues Sanders, was an "emphasis on the knowability and traceability of causes combined with a commitment to ameliorative action" and "a belief in society's capacity to control and thus, mitigate (and ultimately perhaps even to remove) the causes of human distress" (314). Sanders contends that this "knowability" operates as a middle-class coping strategy. Authors of the numerous sanitary and occupational health studies of factory workers, published in the period, faced the untenable problem of how to discuss and categorize the miserable conditions of industrial labour – to mark the cause of suffering – in an effort to provide solutions, without squarely placing blame on the current system and its "affirmed capitalist interests" (Sanders 314-15).

Specifically, Sanders discusses C. Turner Thackrah's *The Effects of Arts, Trades, and Professions, and of Civic States of Habits of Living, on Health and Longevity* (1832), one of the first comprehensive studies of the effects of factory work, as an exemplary text that grapples with this very tension. Employers have a responsibility for the health and safety of their operatives, Thackrah insists, but he also qualifies this claim by asserting that employers' indifference towards the moral and physical well-being of their workers is rooted in a lack of awareness (knowledge) rather than a lack of sympathetic virtue.

Such an explanation enabled middle-class reformers to admit to the problems and abuses of the industrial economic order, and the authoritative and moral ethos of providing detailed evidence as part of the realist impulse, without admitting or affirming that they were caused by the present system. The working-class body becomes the

220

substantiation upon which the Victorian humanitarian narrative rests, "a piece of irrefutable empirical evidence with which to deny or contest the authority of political economy" (Sanders 317). Yet the working-class body is "morally neutral as an object of knowledge," subject to external forces and as such, "incapable of autonomous agency;" instead, it is the observer's response to and the recognition of the (suffering) working-class body that is the moral act, and in this configuration, it is the observer (or reader) who emerges as morally superior to both the sufferers and those who inflict the suffering (Sanders 317) This self-serving paradigm places the moral agency largely on (middle-class) reformers and readers. The impetus and approach to documenting suffering that Metz and Sanders outline becomes, necessarily, contested in Chartist and working-class narratives. As spectators as well as the very subjects of suffering, working-class radicals and labourers envision differently, the questions of agency (and accordant blame) inherent in the philosophical and political extensions of suffering.

Rousseau's series of pointed questions about the prevailing attitudes of the ruling and monied classes towards the poor overtly concentrates on the "contempt" of the rich towards the poor, the result of enduring class distinction. In this sense, it is not a lack of feeling, or apathy, but instead, a feeling of "contempt." This deliberate division culminates in Victorian social commentaries on the condition of England: in Disraeli's terms, two nations unfeeling, or at worst, bitter, towards the lives and fates of the other. More complex, however, is Rousseau's acknowledgement that suffering requires both a recognition of one's own potential for suffering, and how such a acknowledgment must transcend rank or class. If one considers sympathy as strictly spectatorial, Rousseau's

221

injunction to transcend rank or class loses any revolutionary potential, since spectatorial sympathy constitutes the spectator within a distinct social identity heretofore invisible.

For radical writers such as Frederich Engels and Karl Marx, the apparent apathy (or even contempt) of the rich and powerful towards the suffering poor is one that closely mirrors the very capitalistic systems that maintain such economic disparity in the first place. Marx argues that capitalism is predicated on suffering, one that makes "the accumulation of misery a necessary condition" (799). The "juggernaut of capital," defined by Marx, depresses and degrades the worker with little regard or feeling, yet it is the accumulated misery (mass suffering) that can spark working-class revolt. Thus Marx, among other radical political theorists, implies that the reaction to suffering provokes the impassioned impetus for the pursuit of change. The political radical or Chartist who witnesses and experiences suffering can no longer be a disinterested spectator, yet being entirely guided by feeling presents significantly rhetorical and ideological obstacles as well. Indeed, within politics, and within demands for the alleviation of suffering, there exists the tentative reminder for caution and sound parameters for judgment and response in both radical and conservative discourses.

As an 1855 article from *The Morning Post,* a moderate Tory periodical, cautions, sympathy is a virtue, but one that must take into account the vicissitudes of human nature and social propriety:

> To sympathize with pain, suffering, or deprivation, is a very angelic quality, no doubt, especially if the pain, suffering, or deprivation be traceable to no violation of properties; yet insomuch as mankind are not angels, there are innumerable

222

conditions of anguish, both mental and corporeal, which a hard convention of society regards as subjects of no pity at all. ("To sympathise with pain . . ." 4) Most clearly, the criterion is one of scale or proportion – "No one pities the toothache," the article summarizes ("To sympathise with pain . . ." 4). Thus, in order to justify responses to suffering as being appropriate, the very breadth of suffering must be suitably grand.

In espousing indignation at social and political inequalities, and making calls for action, Chartist periodicals attempt to provide consequent guidelines for sympathy with (and anger for) suffering, and in doing so, provide opportunities for resentment and anger as a unifying (and legitimate) political force. Many Chartist writers not only criticize the ostensible lack of feeling on the part of those with political power and wealth, but also critique responses of complacency at current social and political disparities. This charge of complacency is one leveled against not only capitalists or industrialists, but also would-be radical sympathizers and reformers whose proposed solutions do little to change the course of suffering. Perhaps most telling of this prevailing attitude is an attack on Charles Kingsley, published in *Lloyd's Weekly*[7]: a poetic satire titled "Parson Lot's 'Consolation' for the Suffering Poor" (11 June 1848). From the quotations around the word "consolation," the author is decidedly sarcastic about Kingsley's solutions for the relief of suffering. Instead, the author satirizes what he sees as the putative reformer's remedy of quiet submission to the misery of urban poverty. Kingsley's religious connections are evident by the pseudonym, Parson Lot, and likewise, the submission that the author satirizes is one tied to Christian notions of suffering.

223

The opening stanza of the poem relies on the glaring opposition between urban toil and heavenly reward in the Christian afterlife: "Oh, toil-worker! spite thy alley, / Crowded lodging and grimed suit, / I promise you a lovely valley – / A paradise of flowers and fruit" (5). This stark contrast between the urban and the pastoral is purposeful and the end rhyme of "alley" and "valley" intensifies this symbolic contrast. As such, it illustrates the incongruity, if not absurdity, between working-class urban life and an egalitarian (and pastoral) afterlife promised by many Christian reformers. In the stanzas that follow, the satirist presents a labourer's life reminiscent of much industrial fiction of the time: it features a waning wife, and a "departed crippled child" (5). Both figures are sentimental and potent symbols of a threatened working-class masculinity, whereby one's economic potential and power, or lack thereof, is indicative of one's status as head of household.[8] It is precisely the incongruity between the present suffering of the urban labourer and the promise of peace and paradise in the future that makes this providential submission so unsatisfactory to the author, and his accusation of complacency (as a kind of consolation) is reminiscent of the charge leveled against Sandy Mackaye by Crosswraithe in Kingsley's novel, *Alton Locke,* published years later.

This poetic satire underscores the fears surrounding the connection among suffering, sympathy, and resentment by pointing out a prevailing attitude of reformers. While sympathetic to the plight of the labouring poor, many reformers advocate avoiding feelings of resentment in favour of Christian virtues of acquiescence. Discussing Kingsley's novel, Joseph Childers notes how for the author and Church of England priest, suffering was "expressly providential and necessary for an increased awareness of moral

224

responsibility, or at least for an increased receptivity to the word of God" (137). Alton Locke's surrealistic dream near the end of the novel, argues Childers, engages the protagonist with "the necessity of suffering as a sort of purification of the intellect and the soul" (137). In much Chartist discourse, any submission to providence becomes a kind of political defeat. Advocating submission to, rather than anger at, miserable conditions can strategically supplant or altogether avoid the productive potential of anger as a reaction to suffering and the means of overcoming obstacles and facing injustices. Providence becomes a willingness to accept a kind of class-based rule, that, like Rousseau's critique implies, considers the rich as "ordained by God to rule" ("Parson Lot's 'Consolation' for the Suffering Poor" 5).

For the satirist in *Lloyd's,* Parson Lot's resolution to "[b]e contented and obedient" is one that justifies rich recompense: "Be contented and obedient / And you'll be rewarded yet; – / Yes, content's a happy meal, / If no other meal you get" (5). The last line, however, undercuts this compensation and reminds the reader that one must live on a metaphorical "meal" of contentment rather than subsistence. To envision that one must live on either one or the other is a bitter pill to swallow. Although it provides the fodder for satire in this poem, Chartist discussions of suffering often incorporate assertions of Christian virtues with the necessity of demanding or implementing radical political change.

In "The Spirit of the People," an article published in *The Northern Star* (7 July 1838), the "determined disposition of the people" becomes intentionally conflated with moral virtue in that the two are necessarily in the service of each other. For the author,

the "spirit of the people" is a refined sense of liberty and justice, a response to suffering that would ultimately prompt the populace to rally against gross inequalities (4). For the author, retribution, even in anger, is not the first reaction, yet it may be wholly necessary and a just alternative to long-term complacency: "Wrongs long endured, with whatever degree of patience, beget a desire of redress and when all hope of external succor fails, the sufferer naturally looks to his own power of remedying his own grievances" (4). This statement provides an antidote to the ineffective consolation ridiculed in the aforementioned poem: the natural progression of suffering is not submission but "redress."

Rhetorically relying on a force of incongruity similar to that found in the satirical poem, the author of "The Spirit of the People" compares the "drudge" of daily labouring life with a life of luxury, and this incongruity both intensifies suffering and the force of subsequent redress:

> But when insult is added to injury, the stern pride of honesty flushes the cheek with indignation, and produces a resolve that matters shall be thus no longer. The meekest of all spirits cannot bear to be both robbed and kicked; and hence, when the tax-ridden slaves of this miserable country found themselves insulted by the gorgeous and tawdry displays of that wealth which has been extracted from their sinews, sparkling in the bedizenments of foolish mummery, when they saw that which should have afforded comfort to their firesides wasted on 'an idle and useless pageant;' . . . their spirit refused to brook the insult, and they were induced

to manifest their consciousness of the wrongs they suffering by demanding the

restitution of their rights. (4)

The demand for political rights is ambiguous here, but contextually, it suggests political

action, such as the Chartist petition or organized strikes or boycotts of commodities.

While the author relies on biblical discourse – the "meek" spirit praised in the Sermon on

the Mount – his exposition of the conditions against this spirit are fierce descriptions of

current inequalities: the "tax-ridden-slaves" are juxtaposed against the "tawdry" and

"idle" who care more for their finery – a description that calls to mind the demanding,

and often piecemeal, labour of tailors and seamstresses that is later explored in novels

such as *Alton Locke*. Like Rousseau's deliberate comparison between rich and poor, this

disparity is detailed in terms of emotional affect as much as physical and mental "injury,"

and the extinguished "fireside" in this description functions as a poignant symbol of

failed or broken familial and domestic comfort for Victorian readers.[9] Luxury and reward

are not necessarily enjoyed only in the after-life, the reward of uncomplaining

submission, but the large-scale misery of the poor exists alongside (and because of) the

equally grand pleasures of the rich.

Yet, despite the revolutionary undertones implicit in calls for redress, the author

maintains a separation between the "flush" of indignation that motivates the cause for

retribution, and any causal link to violence. It is "only tyrants who require the argument

of bloodshed to maintain their cause"; the author advocates remedying adversities and

inequalities through organized acts of civil disobedience or resistance rather than

violence ("The Spirit of the People" 4). In this respect, the just response to suffering is

227

strong feeling, but one that entails political commitment, and this is decidedly different from the "humanitarian response" that Sanders discusses, which purposefully avoids attributing cause or blame on industrialists. Given that suffering befalls those without political representation, and adhering to the maxim that "[t]axation without representation is tyranny, and ought to be resisted," the author of "The Spirit of the People" insists that disenfranchised individuals should not pay taxes, and further, advocates a campaign of consumer activism to correct the imbalance of power and punish those complacent about or profiting from the current inequalities: "Let the ale bench be abandoned – the gin palace forsaken. Let the green fields of our own country be ransacked for sweet-smelling and nutritious herbs which may be used as substitutes for tea – break the tobacco pipe to atoms, and throw it on the dunghill" (4). Indeed, for Chartists, modes of redress in response to suffering are not solely intended for parliamentary institutions, even with the demands of the Charter, but also the very economic interests that are complicit within the current system.

To be sure, this particular call to action echoes much of the language of social and sanitation reform: the evocation of dirt alongside the address to the moral improvement of the poor by way of temperance. Yet, the onus for public response is placed on the sufferers, who must rally their own "spirit" and act accordingly through communal practices of resistance. In questioning authority, and constructing a shared sense of agency through such individual actions, the author also places accountability for suffering on those who may, even indirectly, profit from the current system. In particular, the

course of action recommended is targeted at merchants and governmental authorities that rely on the current political economy and systems of manufacturing and commerce.[10]

This call to action also includes an emphasis on the disclosure of suffering, particularly through the dissemination of personal narratives, which present a response to suffering from the individual who suffers as the preferred alternative to strictly spectatorial accounts and a means to sustain public opinion. These personal narratives also point to the sources of suffering, overtly ascribing blame and instilling responsibility in both sufferer and reader. During the period of the Hungry Forties, Chartist periodicals such as *The Northern Star* ran serial narratives recounting the trials, and in more melodramatic contexts, the "confessions," of individuals driven to crime by poverty or want, or being punished and imprisoned for their political convictions. One of the longest-running of such serials, spanning four issues (3 April to 1 May 1841), was the narrative of Mitchell, who while an accomplice to a robbery was arrested for murder. The first installment of the serial starts with an introductory statement by the periodical's editors and provides a prisoner statement from the "condemned cell," one signed by three witnesses ("The Barnsley Murder" 8). This legalistic document is, in the next installment, contrasted with Mitchell's personal narrative, which introduces readers to his family life and the unfolding of events that lead up to the incident. The periodical's editors repeatedly refer to Mitchell's trial and fate as "unfortunate" ("The Barnsley Murder" 8), and in his personal narrative, Mitchell explains that he comes from "tender and virtuous parents" and praises the conduct of his parents and siblings: "I mean to say that there is not a better conducted family, of a poor man's family, in Yorkshire"

229

("Narrative of Mitchell the Murderer" 1). Ultimately, it is Mitchell's association with a band of thieves ("gypsies"), one that is perpetuated by his hunger and their promise of food, that leads to his arrest and incarceration at seventeen years of age, and although staidly confessing to his thieving, Mitchell, and the editors of the *Northern Star*, maintain that the current punishment that has befallen him does not fit his crime. Despite his avowed crimes, Mitchell's narrative, both editorial and autobiographical, strives to present him as a worthy object of sympathy.

Another long-running serial was the "Narrative of the Imprisonment of John Watkins" (4 April to 9 May, 1840) in the *Northern Star,* which chronicles the arrest and containment of John Watkins (1808 – 1858) for giving a speech in Stockton in 1839. Watkins, a Chartist, penned political pamphlets in which he argued a connection between the political Charter and a Christian imperative: "Charterism is a secondary Christianity – Christians must be Charterists' (30). For Watkins, Christian virtue is not complacency and submission, but pointed political assertion. He was also a frequent contributor of poetry to *The Northern Star* and contributed the five-part "Narrative" detailing his arrest and imprisonment.[11] The first installment of his narrative opens with the very question that would later occupy both Gaskell and Kingsley – what made Watkins (or John Barton, or Alton Locke) a Chartist? The answer, according to Watkins' series, is the experience of suffering and injustice at the hands of the current legal and economic institutions.

Continued use of these serials provides a tacit argument about the need for narrative and its effect on mediating and guiding feeling, an attempt not only to answer

the question of why does one become a political radical, but also to document individual experiences of suffering. These serials demonstrate the very politics of suffering through these individualized autobiographical narratives, while also acknowledging pervasive discursive forms such as investigative journalism, sociological studies, and the explanatory social problem or condition-of-England novels. The "flush" of indignation decreed in "The Spirit of the People" becomes an important rhetorical force for rallying readers in shared feelings associated with suffering. One is meant to feel sympathy for Mitchell or Watkins – for their punishments, and consequent suffering, do not fit the scale of their misconduct or activities. Thus, like the article cited from *The Morning Post*, Chartist narratives are also suitably concerned with scale. In showing the unnecessary (and unwarranted) suffering of individuals, they provide the ethical impetus for responses to suffering.

If anger (and its variances) have traditionally been connected with notions of self-assertion (and thus, self-constitution) in theories of emotion, within the Chartist "politics of suffering" they become profoundly social emotions. Presumably, readers of these narratives, even if not having experienced imprisonment, are familiar with the conditions of poverty or destitution; they may also harbour their own political and moral convictions, ones which may, like Watkins, put them in danger of punitive treatment.[12] Thus, readers provisionally exist alongside these narratives, not as spectators, but participants in shared feelings of indignation or anger as a response to unjust or "unfortunate" suffering.

While attributing blame to the cause of suffering is both integral to the experience of, and response to, suffering, for Chartists, consequent redress, was, and still is, a complex process, particularly in politically-charged contexts. The threat of large-scale demonstrations was a viable outcome in the eyes of lawmakers, yet even for the most radical physical-force Chartists, these potentially retributive responses to suffering, in order to garner support, needed to make appeals to more than simply vengeance. As part of their campaign to garner public opinion (or sympathy), Chartists understood how instilling fear in their opponents, through angry displays of force or retribution, would ultimately harm their cause. Even Fergus O'Connor, famed advocator of physical force for the Chartist cause, advocated the primacy of controlled expression and "the deliberative reasoning quality in man's mind, which teaches him to bear" the inflictions and injustices brought upon him ("Physical Force" 2). In this way, the foremost Chartist response to suffering is associated with forebearance and deliberation, not violent retaliation or stark resentment. Like Watkins, O'Connor links working-class suffering, and its requisite "flush" of indignation, to Christian virtue as a means of providing suitable integrity to both suffering and its response. Redress may well be a necessity, but in the Chartist politics of suffering, it is not, nor should it be, a reactionary response to the injustices towards the labouring poor, but one of intentional commitment. Moreover, Chartist responses to suffering are not linked to any one feeling; rather, they validate strong feeling with a moral imperative. Feeling works as an energizing and articulate force, but one that must fuel initiatives for collective (political and consumer) action and class-based identification. To be sure, this approach also relies on the trenchant

232

affirmation of social difference, yet in contrast to the criticisms leveled against many mid-century industrial or social problem novels, this imperative does not follow the typical "change-of-heart" narrative.

The "change of heart" narrative is, foremost, a conversion narrative, whereby a pivotal character, through the witnessing of some "scene" (usually of suffering), experiences the moral force of sympathy and, from there, becomes invested in alleviating the cause of that suffering. The scene is one that both serves to reify differences between social groups, while also advocating ameliorative action both within the story world and within the diegesis as a means of plot resolution.[13] Patricia Ingham links this change-of-heart narrative to paternalistic discourses, whereby effective reform starts with a change of feeling towards one another, and in which the emphasis falls on the moral duties of the upper classes towards the urban poor (16). Within this narrative, Ingham argues, the urban poor must submit and suffer with the tentative promise to be redeemed either after death, in heaven, or by the moral rectitude of the middle and upper classes. Moreover, such a narrative requires and validates social differences. For Raymond Williams, feeling alone becomes ineffective, and as a plot device, this change of heart is the more subdued or inoffensive deflection of significant social and political reform. Williams criticizes the "structure of feeling" which emerged out of middle-class consciousness inherent in the industrial novels of the mid century (88), and he provides, as his example, *Mary Barton* (1848).

Gaskell's first novel has been subject to many such critiques, which declare both the emotional resolution between Carson and Barton, as well as the eponymous heroine's

emigration to Canada, as a too-tidy resolution that favours this change of heart conversion over the proposal of viable solutions to alleviate suffering in the first place. Yet I would argue that with its attention to suffering in both the Christian sense and as a builder of community, *Mary Barton* sustains an argument about feeling (and suffering) similar to that found in Chartist discourses. Despite its pivotal change-of-heart scene between Carson and Barton, Gaskell's novel demonstrates that "scenes" of suffering and sympathy that serve to solidify difference and emphasize inequality are not (and cannot be) resolved in political and social life. Instead, they serve to strengthen this inextricable connection between suffering and redress, prompting more hostility then amelioration.

III. The Case for Narrative: Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton*

Critics who discuss Gaskell's first novel vacillate between two contrastive positions: whether Gaskell's depiction of the Manchester poor espouses a radical critique of industrial labour and urban living conditions, or whether its depiction of social problems is mired in middle-class assumptions and fears about the industrial workforce. Those in the latter category often castigate the novel's turn towards the domestic, and the shift in plot from John Barton, the intended (political) hero, to the romantic plot of his daughter Mary. Others point to the novel's resolution of emigration, and its implication that domestic bliss can be found in the bucolic backwoods of Canada, which ultimately eclipses any viable political solutions to urban and industrial England. Those who critique Gaskell's proposed apolitical solutions to the condition of England base their argument on a direct opposition between feeling and political action.[14] On the other side,

234

critics argue that Gaskell's industrial fiction, and the illustrious reputation of Gaskell herself as the minister's wife and bestselling novelist, present radical departures from (and implicit critiques of) existing systems of authorship and publishing, gender asymmetry, and industrial labour.[15]

There are considerable claims and evidence for either of these critical stances, to be sure, but I would argue that this ambivalent and polarizing reception of Gaskell's industrial fiction demonstrates the complexity of the politics of suffering (and feeling) rather than the novel's deliberate political allegiances, or lack thereof. In fact, looking at the reception of *Mary Barton* by Gaskell's contemporaries shows a multitude of similar stances; her sympathy towards the suffering of industrial labourers has generated both acclaim and criticism among other nineteenth-century authors and critics. With such divided reception, it seems appropriate to refer to Schaub's pithy assertion that sympathy is, indeed, "dangerous" (15). I would add that part of its "danger" is sympathy's ability to serve multiple ends, depending on who is doing the sympathizing, and depending on how one interprets the motives for representing suffering: Lancashire weavers in the mid-nineteenth century pool their money to buy copies of the book (Recchio 10); school authorities in 1907 ban the book in Manchester-area schools for girls because it is too emotionally stimulating;[16] and contemporary scholars consider whether Gaskell's sympathetic portrayal of working-class life is political or apolitical (or more specifically, guided by class-based assumptions and fears). Gaskell's sympathetic portrayal of suffering has heralded varied reactions since its publication, and it also incited judgments about the then-anonymous author's identity.

As Angus Easson notes, Gaskell's sympathetic tone, which prompted Victorian critics and readers to speculate that the anonymous author of *Mary Barton* was a woman, is an intellectual perspective tied to gender and the novel form: "[women] had developed the novel, making it pre-eminently *the* female genre, with its domesticity, its presentation of emotion, its 'feminine' qualities of detail and empathy" (2, original emphasis). Easson maintains that this designation of "feminine" is not a disparaging marker, but one that denotes "an important critical insight, linked as it is to issues of realism, and how the language of fiction is experientially controlled" (2). The avowed purpose of the novel, according to its narrator, is to show "the romance in the lives of some of those who elbowed me daily in the busy streets of the town in which I resided," and who may well be "doomed to struggle through their lives" (*MB* 3). This statement echoes the tension between literary modes and subject matter that resides in many industrial or condition-of-England novels: romance and realism, sentimentality and objective distance. The implied author-as-sympathetic-observer arrangement is, understandably, most commonly conceived as a spectator's position.

For her part, Gaskell complicates this stance, acknowledging in her Preface that it was written out of both personal "circumstances," being the grief over the death of her son in 1845, and a "*little* manifestation" of sympathy along with a "*little* attention to the expression of feelings on the part of some of the work-people" of her acquaintance (*MB* 3; emphasis added). Gaskell's statement, which relies on personal experience, exemplifies the modest (if not self-effacing) tone that pervades her Preface. It also negates the strictly spectatorial role of the implied author: Gaskell's ostensible motivation

236

for writing the novel is both sympathy with the suffering of the labouring poor and her own suffering at haven lost a child. Despite assurances that her novel was not a timely or politically-motivated response to the 1848 revolution in France and elsewhere on the Continent (*MB* 4), critics such as W. R. Greg claim that Gaskell's portrayal of the feelings between rich and poor, manufacturer and labourer, is both exaggerated and potentially incendiary.

Writing an unsigned review in the *Edinburgh Review* (April 1848), Greg duly notes Gaskell's "intimate" position among, and her "undiscriminating" sympathy for, the Manchester poor, but he cautions that the novel will do much harm. For Greg, the novel's depiction of John Barton's vindictive anger, culminating in the murder of Carson, the representative mill owner, has the potential to cause readers to think that such feeling was "constant" and pervasive among industrial labourers. Instead, he attributes such ill will to "ex-workmen" turned trade union delegates and professional agitators (164, 169-70). He carefully emphasizes that such extreme feeling and subsequent actions were rare rather than characteristic, and he praises the "submissive hopefulness" of the novel's secondary working-class figures such as George and Alice Wilson (Greg 166). Yet, his critique makes a profoundly stark statement on the relationship between sympathy and class difference. The "want of sympathy" between rich and poor is part of a larger (and contentious) issue: sympathy can "only exist in its fullest extent among persons of the same condition" (Greg 168). Thus, "the agony of suffering without the sympathy of the happy" (*MB* 2), while unfortunate, is inevitable, argues Greg. Although the contented middle and upper classes may well have sympathetic feeling towards the suffering poor,

237

theirs is an "imperfect" sympathy (Greg 169), and he aligns his critique with existing narratives and ideologies of self-help and sanitary reform. Greg's own evaluation of this "imperfect" sympathy is that it the result of social difference, and in this respect, his discussion of sympathy, suffering, and social difference coincides with many of assumptions of sympathy and spectacle in contemporary Victorian scholarship. Raising the conditions of the working poor is the responsibility of the poor themselves, who must look to their fellow workers, and their moral improvement, to seek relief from suffering (Greg 176). For Greg, the novelist's sympathy ultimately fosters a kind of "desperate delusion" in readers and reformers. His praise of Gaskell's sympathy at the beginning of his review is subsequently deemed both unjust and imperfect by the end. The novelist's emotional response, in this respect, becomes woefully insufficient to epitomize the "state of feeling" that Gaskell attempts to represent in her novel (*MB* 4), and may even provoke considerable anger in itself.

In an unsigned review in the *British Quarterly* (1 February 1849), another critic aligns Gaskell's novel with literary fashion rather than an aim for sympathy or verisimilitude. For this reviewer, the "condition of the poor of England" is "fashionable" subject matter for the time that serves political and ideological interests rather than the dictates of humanitarianism or social amelioration (102) – a point that echoes Carlyle's opening statement in *Past and Present*. In this the reviewer is unequivocal:

> We do not for a moment mean to insinuate that [England's labouring
>
> population] have not suffered often and severely, or that there are not
>
> many things connected with their present circumstances that urgently need

238

amendment; but, making extensive allowance for all this, we are still of the opinion that a very exaggerated view of their condition and prospects has been and still is entertained in many quarters, and that the influence of intemperate partisanship has too frequently diverted attention from evils that were real to such as were mainly imaginary. (103)

By way of this political posturing (as "intemperate partisanship"), fact ultimately suffers, and the reviewer supports his or her claim by citing Lord Ashley's parliamentary campaigns concerning the Factory Act (1844), which relied heavily on the "persevering misrepresentations" and testimony of William Dodd (104).

Dodd's own personal story, *A Narrative of the Experience and Sufferings of William Dodd, a Factory Cripple* (1841), follows closely the purpose and form of the personal narratives serialized in Chartist papers. Yet, after much-publicized allegations of exaggeration and unreliability, Dodd's political and personal reputation suffered and he became an enduring example of how politics (variously interpreted as personal gain or self-interest) inflect first-person accounts of emotional and physical duress.[17] Despite Dodd's claims that he bears no ill-will to his former employers, the act of representing suffering, and publishing it, aligns it with allegations of partisanship or literary fashion – ultimately self-serving interests. Yet, these accounts exist as alternatives to the culturally-sanctioned (third-person) spectator accounts in journalism, novels, and studies, which much explain their hostile reception. Like sympathy, and its associated "dangers," the responses to Dodd's narrative illustrate the complex relationship between literary reception, authorial identity, and credibility. Indeed, many working-class authors (or

239

Chartists in particular, if we consider the allegations directed at Ernest Charles Jones, among others) were subject to similar charges of monetary self-interest, an allegation that undercuts truth claims based on personal experience and certainly makes explicit the class-based privileges surrounding authorship and literary production. I would venture further to say that such responses are also indicative of the profound discomfort with suffering, especially from the vantage point of the sufferer. If the expression of and response to suffering is "ineffable," then attempts to articulate such personal experiences are met with caution, even disbelief, judged as inadequate or false performances.

For the reviewer in *The British Quarterly*, Gaskell's description of both the condition of and the "state of feeling" in labouring Britain is, like Dodd's memoir of working-class life, an exaggerated vision, one prompted by an attention to fiction and the publishing market rather than claims to truth. The needs of masters and workmen, according to the reviewer, are more interdependent than misaligned or antagonistic (a point that, I think, Gaskell is also making in her novel); as such, the representation of such vengeance or ill-feeling is, argues the reviewer, a deliberate misrepresentation (104-05). Moreover, the author takes issue with Gaskell's stated impartiality in her Preface, claiming that by "not having judged, the writer left out one of the most necessary qualifications for writing such a tale" (107). On this point, the reviewer is correct: sympathy with suffering and the strong feelings that prompt redress require a judgment on the very merits of such strong feeling. Thus, the sympathizer cannot be impartial but must consider who may be accountable for the justifiable causes of feelings such as anger or indignation. By focusing on the politics of suffering, Gaskell continually comes up `

against issues of accountability, whether in charges exemplified by the previous reviewers or in the narrative itself.

Explaining John Barton's turn to vengeful (and politically-motivated) murder becomes a major narrative preoccupation, and even the novel's other protagonists draw their own inferences as to what prompted Barton's action. Moreover, the narrator must confront the problem of class-based sympathy (and identity politics), which presume that one cannot have "true" sympathy for the misfortunes of another unless one has been in the same situation. Gaskell's marked ambivalence also surfaces in the narrative itself and demonstrates the very "problem" with suffering and sympathy: it may have to address the potential for retribution. In this sense, both Gaskell and her narrator must confront the practice of vindication and redress as part of a politics of suffering, one that synthesizes accountability through multiple causes: the current social and economic system, innate and individualistic temperaments, and socio-environmental determinations. Gaskell advocates inter-class sympathy by demonstrating how suffering exists in both the toiling and the (ostensibly) contented classes, while acknowledging how it operates specifically in working-class contexts. As in Chartist discourses, Gaskell conceptualizes class-based feeling as an ultimately motivating and redemptive force, one predicated on similarity and experiential knowledge of suffering. Yet in doing so, she also disavows notions of sympathy solely based on class allegiances, ultimately praising working-class sympathy while advocating for inter-class cooperation.

It is this intense ambivalence both in the narrative and the Preface that fascinates critics and supporters alike, both then and now. My interest lies not in resolving this

241

uncertainty, for it is a pronounced part of the tensions surrounding strong feelings and their expression, but rather, I want to point out that this ambivalence most clearly exemplifies the relationships among suffering, accountability, and resentment. In representing and explaining working-class antipathies – the result of unmitigated suffering – Gaskell's narrator must confront blame, and in doing so, must represent, for better or for worse, the practices of redress and the enduring consequences of resentment within the context of class hostilities and economic recession. This provisional (and ambivalent) treatment ultimately resists the "knowability" of humanitarian responses of the time.

In *Mary Barton,* the experience of sympathy and suffering form a central structuring feature of the novel, and, more specifically, the plot. By representing the condition of England (or at least Manchester) as a condition of feeling, Gaskell's novel also demonstrates a profound debt to Carlyle, and not only through the quote from Carlyle on the title page. Yet, like Kingsley's own sympathetic rendering of the condition of working-class industrial labour in *Alton Locke,* Gaskell's intellectual devotion to Carlylean thought also demonstrates its limitations. Despite Gaskell's assertion in the novel's preface that her goal in writing this book was to "give some utterance to the agony which from time to time convulses this dumb people" (*MB* 3), a description that echoes Carlyle's own description of Chartists in *Chartism,* she nevertheless relies on working-class speech and discourse, whether eloquently uttered or sullenly gruff, for narrative authority. As Marjorie Stone explains, it is precisely through this Bakhtinian polyphony of voices that Gaskell legitimizes, rather than denounces, working-class

242

speech (175). Thus, rather than assigning working-class (and working-class radical) speech to a secondary position of either silence or ineloquence, Gaskell incorporates working-class discourses into her novel – the same combination of personal anecdotes, folk ballads, and biblical passages that serve as hallmarks of Chartist rhetoric (Surridge 335-36). Using examples of working-class speech and literary forms, Gaskell's narrator, more generally, validates working-class culture. Alongside Chartist and working-class discourses, the high-culture references that the narrator employs would be, argues Joanne Wilkes, recognizable to middle-class readers, yet ultimately, these literary allusions in the novel prompt readers to reject the master's viewpoint (154).

To represent speech is, argues Bakhtin, to represent a character's "ideological world" (335) and in *Mary Barton,* this is not the sole task of the narrator or the implied author, but also the prerogative of the novel's characters, who supply their own utterances (and narratives) and introduce cultural references strongly tied to working-class life and speech. Using Bakhtinian theories of language to discuss Gaskell's novel seems appropriate; Gaskell's use of vying discourses becomes part of her complex ethical gesture, especially if one considers how utterances – in the Bakthinian sense, units of meaning in infinite contexts of exchange or "open-endedness" [18] – are formed through processes that include considerations of a speaker's (or writer's) relation to other people, their words, and their lived experiences. Indeed, Bakhtin's discussion of dialogism in literary texts is a means of exploring his ethical and philosophical concerns: in dialogism, meaning is not fixed (or the interpretative property of the spectator) but is located through "interactions between speaking subjects, between texts and readers, between texts

themselves" (Lodge 86). In this sense, these interactions – alternatives to spectatorial

meaning-making – can form the basis for viable commitment from readers (as they do for

the characters in the novel).

I want to extend the argument presented by scholars such as Stone, Surridge, and

Wilkes by considering how the incorporation of various discourses, and the exchange of

personal utterances and stories, enables the narrator to discuss resentment and consider

how best to mitigate it. While critics have discussed how Gaskell uses language to garner

sympathy for the working classes, there has been little discussion about the influences of

Chartism on how Gaskell represents feeling, and particularly suffering, in the novel.

Discussing the intersection among authorship, class, and politics in the works of William

Lovett, a Chartist leader, Margery Sabin makes the apt point that language, as a form of

"property and power [was] systematically denied" to authors such Lovett, whose "verbal

enfranchisement" was a struggle that pervaded his work, most notably his autobiography

(42-43). Yet, while providing a compelling discussion of Lovett's style, characterized by

a "narrative sparseness," Sabin quickly establishes an opposition between Lovett and

condition-of-England authors such as Gaskell:

> Mainstream Victorian writers, even those most sympathetic to the working-class
>
> plight, pay little regard to the struggle for verbal enfranchisement central to
>
> Lovett's Chartism. Thomas Carlyle, Charles Dickens, Elizabeth Gaskell, even
>
> Friedrich Engels, all deny the working classes ability to function effectively in
>
> plain English, and base their sympathetic appreciation, as well as their disdain, on
>
> the very fact of this verbal exclusion. (47; 55)

244

Similarly, in his article on the representation of Chartism in *Mary Barton,* Chris Vanden Bossche argues that Gaskell represents Chartism, and historical events such as the presentation of the petition to parliament, in a way that disavows working-class agency and assumes that those in power will provide the necessary remedy (172-3). Those noting any resemblances to or usages of Chartist discourse or tropes often argue that Gaskell distances herself from radical politics, whether from middle-class bias or anxieties over working-class revolt. My discussion of Gaskell attempts to emphasize some important affinities that have heretofore been overlooked.

In *Mary Barton,* dialogues between characters provide key moments for the exchange of sympathy, and for the disclosure of narratives of suffering, injustice, and anger. Also important to this sympathetic rendering is Gaskell's narrator, who guides readers between the various domestic (and psychological) interiors of the characters: whether it be the damp cellar of the Davenports or the lavish but staid chambers of the Carsons.[19] Sympathy in the novel exists not as an attempt to avoid the political, but as the very vehicle for ideological concerns. In this respect, Joseph Childers's assertion that Gaskell proposes "a new community based on communication" is apt; yet, Childers proposes that this community is one modeled on Christianity (17), whereas I suggest that it is *also* one built around Gaskell's radical critique of sympathetic exchange based solely on spectatorship (an "imperfect" sympathy that is grounded in identity politics and social difference), which serves only to reinforce social differences and the misunderstandings and injustices that continue to perpetuate suffering.

The novel's plot is structured around moments of failed and successful sympathy. There are, in *Mary Barton,* certainly many "scenes of suffering," to use Jaffe's term, and these scenes assert the profound "ethos of care" that pervades the novel (Surridge 334). Through these juxtapositions, however, Gaskell presents her own radical critique of sympathy by appealing to narratives of suffering as the first step towards social remedy or "succor" ("The Spirit of the People" 4). Unlike the proclamation against these "wrongs long endured" in the *Northern Star,* however, Gaskell's remediation does not suggest that such remedy requires either "external" (social and political) aid or personal disclosure of such wrongs, but rather, maintains that one requires, and mediates, the other. Although writers such as Greg and Carlyle base their discussion of feeling upon differences in socio-economic classes, as contemporary scholars have also suggested – a difference that is predicated on control over feeling by the middle classes, and a lack of control by the working classes – Gaskell's treatment of feeling and its communication resists such class-based demarcations and anxieties about working-class expression. Throughout *Mary Barton* scenes of working-class sympathy become redemptive, even in light of John Barton's angry radicalism and subsequent act of murder. Her novel emphasizes exchanges of feeling among working-class characters, and, most interestingly, sympathy of the working-class characters towards the wealthy industrialist and mill owner, Carson, after his son's murder.

Suffering and sympathy abound in the novel and are intrinsically intertwined, whereby sympathy *with* suffering provides a necessary relief from suffering. For example, when Mary enters the Davenports' decrepit cellar after the death of Mr.

246

Davenport, she is ordered by her father to comfort the widow Davenport, a person she has heretofore never met. A potentially difficult encounter between the two women, however, is averted solely through Mary's capacity for sympathetic feeling, which supersedes any social awkwardness between two strangers in such an intimate moment: "Mary did not know what to say, or how to comfort, but she knelt down by her; and put her arm round her neck, and in a little while fell to crying herself so bitterly that the source of tears was opened by sympathy in the widow, and her full heart was, for a time, relieved" (*MB* 70). The scene is poignant, not solely in its momentary alleviation of suffering for the widow Davenport, but in that it also brings relief for the eponymous heroine. In her "anxious desire to comfort the poor lone woman," Mary forgets her clandestine meetings with the wealthy Harry Carson, the mill owner's son, her grievances at work, and, as the narrator enigmatically notes, "her anger," which one could presume is generally directed to her own social-economic realities and lot in life, especially in contrast to her would-be suitor's (*MB* 70). The scene emphasizes the ameliorative rather than retributive potential of sympathy with suffering. Moreover, such identification builds consensus rather than difference, mending relationships rather than causing rifts, and it is a type of exchange that is repeated throughout the course of the narrative. Despite the obvious lack of words, this "scene," nevertheless, communicates mutual relief.

In *Mary Barton* there is much necessity for respite: deaths occur repeatedly throughout the narrative, usually the result of poverty and want, and they function as the main catalysts for suffering. Discussing their importance, Thomas E. Recchio deems

them integral to the social impact of the novel, "for they compel readers to confront the suffering of imagined but recognizably particularized people" (8). Quite literally, they also demonstrate the disintegration of the family and familial bonds by factory labour and urban poverty: the Barton household gradually decreases in both size and affection, and after each subsequent death, Barton becomes more resentful towards the factory owners and less interested in Mary, his sole surviving daughter. Finally, the deaths of the characters throughout the novel provide the impetus for meaningful sympathetic exchanges and personal introspection. Mary's engagement with the suffering widow Davenport, for instance, prompts her to re-examine her meetings with Harry Carson and quell her feelings of resentment towards her own meager earnings and home. Most significant is the death of Barton himself, which motivates Carson to find out the cause of Barton's resentment, scrutinize his own behaviour and feelings towards his labourers, and consequently, re-examine his business practices. Importantly, this self-inquiry and transformation does not occur without the input of his fellow workers and Job Legh. Since reconciliation is impossible in death, or in anger, Carson's sympathetic (and ethical) transformation, which relies on inter-class cooperation and dialogue, has the potential to stave off further resentment and subsequent deaths.

Another subtle but illuminating moment occurs between Mary Barton and Jane Wilson shortly after the death of Mr. Wilson, the Bartons' long-time family friend. Jane Wilson's anger towards the girl who has rejected the courtship of her son is quelled through this two-sided exchange: "Mary's listening sympathy softened [Jane], and she went on to unburden her heavy-laden heart" (*MB* 116). Sympathy is reciprocal:

248

characters receive sympathy, often through words of comfort or shared feeling, and in turn, re-enter the plot to become sympathetic participants themselves. The progress of both Mary Barton's domestic plot and John Barton's political plot can only happen with the continued sympathy of friends and strangers.

It would be an overstatement to say that Gaskell rejects all the destructive potential of feeling; the presence of John Barton ensures that all is not rosy or simply tearful in the dank cellars and sparse domiciles of the labouring poor of Manchester. Indeed, Barton's presence in the narrative amid all these sympathetic exchanges exemplifies the persistent and harsh circumstances of the condition of England. Moreover, Barton exists as a necessary instructional foil to his daughter's emotive exchanges, a contrast that demonstrates both the social necessity of sympathetic exchange and the potentially destructive and retributive potential of sympathy with suffering. The exchanges between Mary and the two older women demonstrate that ameliorative sympathy, the temporary relief from suffering which can only exist with an unburdened heart (*MB* 117). This relief comes through the undisguised expression of suffering, whether as displays of intense feeling or through narrative disclosure, an exposition of one's situation or loss to another. It can also come from the humble acknowledgement of one's personal flaws or feelings: the ultimate example of which in the novel is Mary's public display of both during the trial of Jem Wilson. Indeed, it is through this willingness to acknowledge or disclose that Mary becomes the narrative's protagonist (rather than her father) and escapes the fate of her aunt Esther.

While Mary evolves as the novel's sympathetic and redemptive heroine, her aunt and her father represent an opposing fate: both Esther and John Barton initially, and too late, refuse to disclose their own narratives of hardship. Esther fabricates an idyllic (and respectable) domestic life for Mary upon their first encounter, which causes the younger girl to "shut up her heart instinctively against her aunt" and wonder why she did not share her happiness with her sister's family (*MB* 232); similarly, John Barton refuses to acknowledge that his mounting bitterness is potentially destructive and alienating. When he does attempt to disclose his anguish and anger to those around him, his narrative is couched in abstract political threats rather than personal disclosure, and this does little to garner sympathy or understanding from even his closest family and friends. As Barton's familial and communicative exchanges erode, so grows "the rage in his heart" (*MB* 61). In this respect, Barton is the failed political agitator,[20] whose political speeches fall on listless ears (*MB* 81-82).

Eventually, he refuses to provide sympathy as well as fails to receive it. When Mary seeks comfort after the death of Mr. Wilson, the exchange between the father and daughter is bereft of shared feeling, despite their familial connection:

> "Father, do you know George Wilson's dead?" (Her hand was suddenly and almost violently compressed.) "He dropped down dead in Oxford Road yester morning. It's very sad, isn't it, father? Her tears were ready to flow as she looked up in her father's face for sympathy. Still the same fixed look of despair, not varied by grief for the dead. "Best for him to die," he said, in a low voice. (*MB* 96)

250

Barton's downward spiral is one that the novel's narrator must face and attempt to explain. The narrator continually tries to disavow any endorsement of Barton's radicalism, explaining that although merciful, Barton's heart is "touched by sin" (*MB* 62). While his anger and bitterness at humankind come from his tendency to sympathize with the suffering of his fellow labourers, as well as his own personal anguish, it has nevertheless been perverted by his temperament and the misery of urban life and poverty (*MB* 57). In discussing the tension between determinism and idealism that pervades industrial novels, Gallagher makes the apt point that Barton's radicalism (and I would say, his anger) paradoxically functions both as "proof that he is incapable of making moral choices and as an emblem of his moral responsibility" (73). The inscription on Barton's tomb, which he pointedly shares with Esther, is a verse from Psalms (103:9): "For he will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger for ever" (*MB* 324). The Old Testament adage becomes a prophetic remark on the state of feeling, especially in the context of class relations, in the condition of England: anger may well provide the force and motivation to demand or enlist social change (the "flush of indignation" that becomes a powerful rhetorical trope in Chartist rhetoric and exists as a response to continued suffering). Yet, it is transitory and thus is neither personally nor politically affirming. In *Mary Barton,* socially valuable and ameliorative responses to suffering are those motivated by mutual disclosure and mutual cooperation, whether between families or friends, or industrialists and labourers.

The preoccupation with disclosure, or lack thereof, is a central aspect of Gaskell's social critique and commentary, and this concern extends to the representation of the

251

novel's middle-class characters: the factory owners, or masters, and the Carson household in particular. For Surridge, the juxtaposition of the highly emotional exchanges in working-class homes with the measured exchanges and lavish interiors of the Carson household implicitly favours the former over the latter, and calls to the reader to do the same; industrialist family life is automatic and cold, like machinery, especially compared with the vibrant scenes of working-class relationships and social gatherings at the beginning of the book (338). I would add that this contrast also serves to explain Barton's growing bitterness towards the masters, not unlike the purposeful distinction and incongruity between rich/poor and earthly toil/heavenly reward highlighted in Chartist critiques. Barton enters the luxurious Carson home as an outside observer and immediately after tending to Davenport in his putrid cellar dwelling; he returns to the Davenports to find his friend dead. Exemplifying the "problem" of this spectator-sufferer exchange, Barton's mounting bitterness and desire for retribution are carefully narrated through a series of spectatorial exchanges between Barton and the objects of his resentment.

The narrator explains that the relationship between masters and workers in the period between the first and second Chartist petition was one prompted by retributive responses to suffering: "In many instances the sufferers wept first and then they cursed. Their vindictive feelings exhibited themselves in rabid politics" (*MB* 83). Witnessing (and experiencing) dwindling jobs and wages, Barton fails to see any similar reflections in the domestic life of the factory and mill owners, and it is this vast contrast between the luxuries of his employers and his current misery that spurs him to question "[w]hy should

he alone suffer from bad times" (*MB* 23). Indeed, it is Barton's unmitigated resentment that perpetuates his steady moral decline, and the narrator's description of "rabid politics" seems fitting for Barton's animalistic devolution. His involvement with radical politics, and resentment, gets explained through a well-known scene in the novel that exemplifies how spectatorial exchanges do little to explain suffering or mitigate responses to it.

In this scene, Barton encounters the mill owner's wife, whose bags are laden with delicacies and purchases for a party. There is no exchange between the two characters – neither Barton nor Mrs. Hunter speak to each other – and Barton's position is that of the spectator, staring into a shop window "where all edible luxuries are displayed" (*MB* 124). Immediately after witnessing this seeming excess, Barton returns home to find that his sons have died from lack of proper food and medicine. The chance encounter between Barton and Mrs. Hunter is a scene of contrast rather than interaction – no words are exchanged and both parties do not acknowledge each other's presence. With this lack of exchange, coupled with the poignant contrast between luxury and suffering, begins Barton's "bitter spirit of wrath" (*MB* 24). With the high contrast, or incongruity, between Barton and Mrs. Hunter, this scene has the same rhetorical effect on the reader as the Chartist periodicals previously discussed: the reader, along with Barton, comes to the conclusion that suffering is unnecessary (and undeserved) given the wealth and luxury that exists along side of it. Yet Barton progressively becomes "wild and visionary," as he responds to the scenes of suffering around him internally but is unable constructively to express his mounting anger (*MB* 165). By staying away from suggestions of armed rebellion or revolution, the more overt manifestations of the politics of suffering, Gaskell

253

chooses, instead, to show the contrast that breeds such feelings in domestic scenes, whereby the domestic becomes the first political ground of the condition of England and the "two nations" exist, more specifically, as two homes.

As the plot progresses, the novel provides a repetition of this scene between Barton and Mrs. Hunter, but one realigned with a discussion of capital and wage increases in a meeting between the factory owners and operatives. The negotiations between the two parties and their interests prove futile, a fact that the narrator interprets to be caused by lack of communicative, and sympathetic, exchange:

> So class distrusted class, and their want of mutual confidence wrought sorrow to both. The masters would not be bullied, and compelled to reveal why they felt it wisest and best to offer only such low wages; they would not be made to tell that they were even sacrificing capital to obtain a decisive victory over the continental manufacturers. And the workmen sat silent and stern with folded hands refusing to work for such pay. There was a strike in Manchester. (*MB* 167)

Despite the evocation of the very terms of political and manufacturing economy – the concerns of the market competition and capital losses – this scene serves as an extension of the earlier scene between Barton and the mill owner's wife. Part of the distrust, the narrator argues, is a "want of confidence," a refusal of the masters to explain why wages were so low. "But the masters did not choose to make all these circumstances known. They stood upon being the masters, and that they had a right to order work at their own prices" (*MB* 166). Without significant discussion as to the causes of suffering (or the causes of low wages) between workers and employers – a discussion that requires a

254

response to Smith's question, "What has befallen you?" (the narratorial prompt for sympathetic exchange and moral judgment) – the result is contempt from both sides.

More specifically, Gaskell's narrator states that the refusal to disclose the personal stakes of the owners and industrialists is the direct result of class pride on the part of the masters, an anti-social recognition and reinstatement of class difference. Considering themselves to be different from their workers, and refusing to explain their own predicaments to the strikers' delegates, the mill owners do not think of "treating the workmen as brethren and friends" (*MB* 176). The appearance of the delegates, their poor physical condition and soiled clothes (the visual markers of class difference), become the very obstacles to sympathy. The narrator explains that those selected for the delegation were chosen with "regard to their brains, and power of speech, [rather] than to their wardrobes." This evident contrast does little to alleviate the subsequent mistrust and bitterness; rather, it serves to exasperate strong feelings, as "[s]ome of the masters were rather affronted at such a ragged detachment" (*MB* 177).

For the foppish Harry Carson, appearance, rather than speech or intellect, is the means by which he judges others, a fact that dooms this delegation and any possibility for labour negotiation, and points out the flaw in spectatorial sympathy. The visual cues that are meant to facilitate sympathetic exchange fall on the deaf ears, or rather, eyes, of the masters. The discomfort of the masters towards the workers' ragged appearance is not ameliorative because it fails to draw the sympathy of the masters towards their employees and their tell-tale suffering. Harry Carson takes his silver pencil and draws a caricature of the "lank, ragged, dispirited, and famine-stricken" delegates, an uneasy jest attempting to

255

displace the owners' initial discomfort at seeing the squalid condition of their workers (*MB* 179). The cartoon (and the pencil) become the tangible markers of this contrast; to the operatives, they exist as evidence of the masters' utter disregard for their suffering, and Harry Carson's trivial act becomes a searing indictment towards the factory owners.

Interestingly, although the delegates were chosen for the "power of [their] speech," the scene has no direct dialogue until the workers begin to discuss the cartoon at the public-house that evening. Similar to the scene between Barton and Mrs. Hunter, it is speech that is absent from this meeting between the workers and the owners. Harry Carson's picture, the blatant reminder of the indifference to suffering for the operatives and the failure of spectatorial sympathy, prompts the workers to pursue retribution for this exhibited lack of sympathetic feeling. As Harry Carson's fate is sealed, so is Barton's, and his redemption can only come from Harry's grieving father, who initially swears vengeance upon the man who killed his son. Barton cannot fully acknowledge the implications of his actions until he is confronted by Carson as the grieving (and suffering) parent, a position that Barton knows intimately. As Surridge argues, the "motif of the 'dying child'" becomes the vehicle or cause behind Chartist political conviction (335) – and Barton's own progression to "rabid politics" (*MB* 83) – whereby political action and increasing politicization become the result of personal (domestic) suffering. The important point for Gaskell's ameliorative vision is that Mr. Carson and John Barton both reconcile their personal and class differences through this very motif.

For this to happen, Carson must cast aside class pride and acknowledge his vulnerability (and similarity) to Barton; in response to Barton's confession and disclosure

256

of his own suffering, the mill owner asks, "'And have I had no suffering?'" (*MB* 352). It is a moment which foregrounds the inevitability of suffering (in the Christian sense) and the futility of it within the existing system of industrial labour and production. Carson supplies his narrative in response, recounting his own labour and his now-dashed hopes for his only son. By identifying with Carson's grief, Barton learns his redemptive lesson: "The mourner before him was no longer an employer; a being of another race, eternally placed in antagonistic attitude; going through the world glittering like gold, with a stony heart within, which knew no sorrow but through the accidents of Trade; no longer the enemy, the oppressor, but a very poor and desolate old man" (*MB* 353). It is this realization that prompts Barton to beg for forgiveness; his recognition of Carson's suffering can only occur through Carson's disclosure of pain and anguish, since the visual cues of suffering are simply not there in the factory owner's neat and immaculate figure. Thus, sympathy with suffering, and the experience of suffering, may well provoke feelings of retribution, a point made clear in both Chartist writings and in Gaskell's novel, but for Gaskell, sympathy must not be solely based on visual cues of difference. Sympathy that reinforces difference rather than similarity can provoke responses to suffering such as single-minded self-assertion and retribution, a profoundly unproductive and antisocial course, as Gaskell's narrator points out, because "vengeance does not care for other feelings" (*MB* 366).

Importantly, Carson's disclosure of suffering produces a desire for a more thorough understanding of "the circumstances and feelings that had prompted John

Barton's crime" in the first place (*MB* 366). In other words, Carson's exchange provides a social and personal awareness necessary to ameliorating injustice and social problems:

> There are stages in the contemplation and endurance of great sorrow, which endow men with the same earnestness and clearness of thought that in some of old took the form of Prophecy. To those who have large capability of loving and suffering, united with great power of firm endurance, there comes a time in their woe, when they are lifted out of the contemplation of their individual case into a searching inquiry into the nature of their calamity, and the remedy (if remedy there be) which may prevent its recurrence to others as well as to themselves. (*MB* 373)

The prophetic potential of suffering comes not from making one "perfect," as Carlyle once boldly asserted (*On Heroes* 92), nor does it end with a simple change-of-heart transformation. Rather, it becomes part of the novel's "ethos of care" (Surridge 334), whereby the sympathetic response to suffering becomes a means of community-building and enhanced interpersonal relations, one that imbues both sufferer and sympathizer with political conviction and agency. The answer supplied to the question, "What has befallen you?" becomes pivotal to such an experience, whereby the narrative of suffering provided also has the effect of appeasement from redress and even supplication.

In this sense, Gaskell's social and political vision is heavily indebted to Chartist discourses and tropes. Job Legh's gentle scolding of Carson reminds the newly receptive Carson that "one's often blind to many a thing that lies right under one's nose" (369). Carson's disclosure of what has befallen him, and his subsequent responsiveness to

258

fellow suffering, stand as the poignant resolution of the plot, rather than the oft-criticized emigration of Mary and Jem. Read in this way, the recovery of Margaret's vision becomes the literal counterpart of Carson's (and perhaps Barton's) own insight and revelation, and it is this awareness of suffering, on both sides of the great class divide, that Gaskell isolates as the all-important first (and continual) step of social amelioration.

IV. Conclusion: Narrating Sympathy and Action

Condition-of-England novels are structured by an epistemology of feeling that evokes sympathy as its moral mechanism, whereby sympathy for the suffering of characters would, ostensibly, induce a sense of duty and benevolence on the part of the reader. Increased urbanization, and its attendant problems, brought about a humanitarian sentiment in mid-nineteenth-century England, which, like eighteenth-century moral philosophy, culminated in a marked attention to feeling in interpersonal relationships. Susanna Engbers argues sympathy has an important role in the "rhetoric of the marginalized" in the mid-nineteenth century; appeals to sympathy acknowledged the place of affect in moral decision-making and sociability (307-08). This becomes evident in the literary and political discourses of the time, and in this way, Gaskell's first book is a typical example of a condition-of-England novel. In *Mary Barton*, the communication and disclosure of feeling promote the very conditions needed to approach and mitigate class antipathy or apathy.

In eighteenth-century thought, sympathy is both an innate ability, demonstrable in all levels of society, and a "social virtue" meant to build community and fellowship

259

(Harkin 175-76). The nineteenth century brought a newfound introspection as to the markers and innate qualities of class distinction; Smith's sympathetic spectator, a position open to both the "greatest ruffian" and the highest ranks, increasingly becomes the cultural prerogative of the middle-classes, a marker of cultivated feeling and social difference. This class-based distinction is one that requires, and reifies, the middle-class spectator's position, one of self-command and cultivated (or controlled) feeling. Yet the personal and social experiences of the characters in *Mary Barton* are not communicated solely through spectacle – the "fickleness of interest" of the crowd watching the factory fire (*MB* 54) is short-lived, much like the momentary awe and unease the crowd feels when watching the tight-rope walker in Smith's *Theory of the Moral Sentiments*.

Smith may have given primacy to the spectator position, but the sympathetic imagination in his philosophical discussion of the moral sentiments is, importantly, not singularly developed through visual cues and social difference, but through narrative. As Charles Griswold aptly notes, sympathy is "always seeking to flow and fill up another situation and to draw things together into a coherent story," one outside the spectator and his or her immediate experience and situation (116). For Griswold, the narratorial dimension of sympathy explains why Smith relies on examples from literature in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments:* "Literature can exemplify something of the essential nature of the sympathetic understanding or imagination that is at the heart of sociability as well as of moral evaluation" (116).

In *Mary Barton,* it is narrative that prompts sympathetic exchanges and helps alleviate suffering; importantly, the disclosure of one's suffering, and more largely, the

narrative act, has the potential to mediate the politics of suffering and the potential for redress. Scholars such as Elizabeth Starr have discussed the novel's attention to narrative, particularly as it relates to authorship. Noting the novel's concern with expression (and the authority of expression), Starr argues that "Gaskell's novels demonstrate an effort to present authorship as a legitimate part of an often aggressive, contentious world of public streets and factories" (385). Starr suggests that through this attention to authorship, Gaskell defends the significance of her industrial novels by suggesting that they can "materially intervene in the conflicts they represent, changing public life and commercial relations" (386). In this chapter, I have shown that Gaskell's novel demonstrates that it is not just novels themselves, but personal narratives, shared among individuals and not solely readers and authors, that have a social and political imperative. Narratives of suffering can provide the impetus for class-based solidarity or political conviction, but the plot of *Mary Barton* suggests that such solidarity or conviction alone cannot alleviate the causes of suffering. What matters are the emotional responses to and identification with such narratives, and a willing (if not spontaneous) disclosure of one's own suffering. Thus, the politics of suffering require a communicative exchange rather than unidirectional spectatorship, and Gaskell's pointed social vision anticipates many theories about the practice of reading fiction that develop out of this tradition of the sympathetic (moral) imagination.

Relationships among readers, characters, and narrators are intrinsically ones of sympathetic exchange, for it is narrative that prompts emotional reactions to fiction. For Oatley the act of reading narratives (or listening to them, as the case may be in *Mary*

261

Barton) is foremost conceptualized as one of spectatorship –"The reader becomes an unobserved observer in scenes of the lives of characters in the story world. He or she stands in their bedrooms, hovers at their dining tables, drives with them in their cars" (445). Oatley's description of the readerly act echoes Gaskell's own assertion in the Preface, in which she announces her intent to capture the daily lives of the people that bustle past her on the streets of Manchester. Yet, Oatley describes this position as one of observation and dialogue rather than a merely voyeuristic position (445), a point that may well suit Gaskell's own social and political vision. Indeed, Gaskell's appeals to a mutual sympathy are a call to action. It is not just Mr. Carson (and mill owners alike) who must respond, but also readers, who must first recognize that they too are not immune to suffering. In making such appeals, Gaskell must assume, as part of the sympathetic exchange, that commonality exists, and it is this faith in unity and shared aims, rather than difference, that structures the narrative.

In this sense, Gaskell's novel demonstrates a profound departure from Carlylean thought, not just because it embraces, rather than denies, working-class speech, but also because it attests that such speech is necessary for the mitigation of social problems. Similar to Kingsley's eponymous hero, Alton Locke, Gaskell presents Barton and his daughter, with all their flaws, as instructional examples to her readers; they serve as complementary (rather than divergent) exemplars of the interpersonal characteristics of feeling. In this sense, Barton's resentment, the result of continued struggles and familial deaths, is understandable, which is why the narrator displays an intense ambivalence towards Barton. Yet, Barton's retributive response to his suffering is one that refuses to

262

take the interpersonal quality of all feeling, even resentment, into account. The novel's preoccupation with the sharing of feeling with others, through disclosure and personal narrative, suggests a powerful political motive: class hostilities cannot be mitigated by the separation and demarcation of individuals, and their daily, material, and emotional lives. Both Kingsley and Gaskell represent Locke's and Barton's resentment as a potentially dangerous (and antisocial) feeling fueled by the witness to and experience of stark class difference and privilege; yet Gaskell's novel, structured around successful and failed moments of sympathy, is more intimately concerned with suffering and its potential responses.[21] Gaskell stresses the commonality of feeling – specifically, interclass cooperation and communication – as the means of addressing the division of classed individuals in an already-alienating system of industrial capitalism.

This attention to both the world within the text, and its corresponding reality, becomes a means of dialogic interaction between multiple identities, and presents to the reader multiple (daily) realities and an array of emotional reactions. Ultimately, the reader must make a judgment for the politics of suffering to become, appropriately, political, but this judgment is one affirmed through these series of exchanges, and as such, requires a consideration of others outside of the self and the reader's immediate world.

Endnotes

[1] The terms "sympathy" and "compassion" have their own connotations and vary across historical periods and disciplines. Within the field of literary study, M. H. Abrams distinguishes between *sympathy* and *empathy*. For Abrams, empathy was determined by "a spectator's identification with a person or object," one that produced a physiological response. Sympathy, on the other hand, is "not a feeling-into, but a feeling-along-with the state of mind and emotions of another." This distinction meant that sympathy was credited as fellow-feeling, while empathy produced a specific identification with another (48-9). See Abrams' *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. 4th Ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981.) More recently, Nussbaum discusses the definitional distinctions between pity, which has "nuances of condescension and superiority to the sufferer," and sympathy, which is "the imaginative reconstruction of another person's experience, without any particular evaluation of that experience." Acknowledging that the related terms sympathy and compassion were used interchangeably from the eighteenth century and onwards (302), Nussbaum further distinguishes between sympathy and empathy by claiming that the former is not sufficient for the latter: empathy certainly raises awareness of the plight of another, it may well be guided by curiosity or self-interest, and as such, is bereft of ethical import (330-33).

[2] In this respect, I am using this term within its philosophical context, particularly, Martin Heidegger's *aletheia* or Charles Taylor's disclosure, a practice of making the

world intelligible. See Heidgger's *Being and Time*. Trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany, NY: State University of New York P, 1996).

[3] Although much critical scholarship on the novel discusses how Gaskell's narrator makes appeals to predominately middle-class readers, and as such, is concerned with middle-class reception, Melissa Schaub rightly points out that Gaskell's first novel was read and praised by working-class readers and was available in working-class lending libraries (17).

[4] See Anderson's *Tainted Souls and Painted Faces: The Rhetoric of Fallenness in Victorian Culture*, Chapter 1.

[5] Jaffe uses this term as it was developed by Guy Debord, which she uses to critique Victorian middle-class ideologies of social and economic status.

[6] For further discussion, see Nussbaum, Part II, "Compassion."

[7] Founded at the start of the "Hungry Forties" in 1842, *Lloyd's Weekly* (originally called *Lloyd's Illustrated London Newspaper)* was a liberal, unstamped weekly founded by Edward Lloyd, the editorship of which was undertaken by Douglas William Jerrold a decade later. Under Jerrold's leadership, the periodical's circulation rose considerably; with the removal of the duty on papers, circulation reached one million by 1896. The publication aimed for a general, predominately lower-middle class readership, with topics that were deemed morally instructive and of general interest. Periodical information taken from the *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland* (Ghent: Academica Press Scientific, 2008) 371.

[8] For a more thorough discussion of working-class masculinities within Chartist discourses, see Surridge and Clark.

[9] The cold fireside or hearth is an enduring symbol in mid-nineteenth century literature and culture, one tied to discussions of social conditions and domestic virtue. It exists as a synecdoche for poverty, brought on by the conditions of industrial labour, and the concomitant dissolution of marriage and the family. See, for instance, the final paragraph of Dickens' *Hard Times* (1854), in which the narrator's direct address to middle-class readers evokes a similar comparison between the warm hearth and one that is "grey and cold" in order to inspire an emotional response to the fates of his Coketown characters (298). The gradual decline of the Barton household, and Barton's moral decline, is also narrated by way of the waning fireside, along with other domestic comforts, pawned and sold, in *Mary Barton*.

[10] The agitation between working-class radicals and shopkeepers is one largely predicated on the Corn Law movement during the 1830s and 1840s. The term "shopocracy" was one used in multiple Chartist periodicals of the period and in Lord Brougham's speeches in the House of Commons, 1839-40. Indeed, like factory and mill owners, shopkeepers or merchants in Chartist rhetoric are frequently vilified; one article in the *Poor Man's Guardian* calls them "vampires that prey upon [working-class] toil" (16 June 1832). This criticism becomes an interesting extension of Smith's well-documented critique of the Navigations Act (1651), which gave considerable power to merchants and provoked Smith to refer to England as "a nation whose government is

influenced by shopkeepers" in *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations.*

[11] Biographical information for Watkins is taken from Malcolm Chases' entry in *The Dictionary of Labour Biography.* Although well-known in Chartist circles as a political leader and lecturer, Watkins is not mentioned in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.*

[12] The history of working-class radicalism in England after the Peterloo Massacre is one marked by laws enacted to prohibit the expression of political dissent and mobilization of labourers. The Six Acts (1819) included the infamous Seditious Meeting Prevention Act, which restricted any public meetings declaring grievance against Church and State, and the Newspaper and Stamp Duties Act, which increased taxes on printed materials, such as periodicals and pamphlets, thus restricting freedom of the presses. Along with the Six Acts, eventually repealed by the mid-1820s, parliament passed the Combinations Act (1799), which made trade unions and workers meetings illegal. Repealed in 1824, this act was reinstated a year later with some concessions. Although it made trade unions legal, it provided ambiguously-worded conditions for union members' exertion of powers and duties, and the actions of trade unionists, whether legitimate or illegal or seditious, were left to the interpretation of the courts. One could make the larger argument that narratives of imprisonment, such as those by Watkins and Jones, among other known Chartist leaders, drew attention to the political persecution of radicals and labour activists at the hands of these laws.

[13] Jaffe's discussion of this "scene" of transformation includes one of the most enduring and well-known change-of-heart examples: Dickens' Ebenezer Scrooge, whose vantage point as invisible spectator (and spectre) allows him to witness the daily lives of the Cratchit family. See Jaffe, Chapter One.

[14] Such criticism abounds in Gaskell scholarship, which has grown considerably in the past decade. Most famous is Raymond William's discussion of the novel in *Culture and Society* (1958), which set the tone for such critique. Others who raise similar criticisms include Ingham, Shaub, and Wilkies.

[15] See Surridge, Freeland, Starr, and Hilary Margo Schor's *Scheherezade in the Marketplace: Elizabeth Gaskell and the Victorian Novel* (New York: OUP, 1992).

[16] *Manchester Guardian* (19 June and 22 June 1907).

[17] William Dodd, who worked in a textile factory in Kendal as a child, alleges that this work left him a cripple. When his condition worsened, his arm was amputated. He wrote about his experiences in *A Narrative of the Experience and Sufferings of William Dodd, a Factory Cripple* (1841); Lord Ashley arranged for its publication. As part of the Children's Employment Commission, Lord Ashley employed Dodd as a researcher on the use of children in textile factories, and Dodd's findings were published in *The Factory System: Illustrated* (1842). Dodd was famously attacked for his credibility and the reliability of his sources by John Bright in parliament. Later, he immigrated to Boston, where he continued to write about the labour system in Britain.

[18] See M. M. Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability: Early Philosophical Essays* Ed. Michael Holquist and Vadim Liapunov. (Austin: U of Texas P, 1990). See also Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel," *The Dialogic Imagination* (Ed. Michael Holquist. Austin: U of Texas P, 1981) 259-422.

[19] Starr makes a similar point by discussing the narrator as a "guide" able to move between these discourses and communities, and whose mobility enables both a sympathetic and public position of authority (389-92). I would suggest that in this respect, the narrator becomes the mediary between the two forms of narratives about suffering: first-person accounts (sufferers) and the third-person accounts (sympathizers) found in sanitary and sociological reports, and blue-book studies.

[20] Patrick Brantlinger explains that the political agitator, a recurring figure or trope in mid-nineteenth-century, middle-class industrial fiction, is usually a social outsider, often not belonging to the class for which he deems to represent or speak. In this respect, Barton is a marked departure from such convention. See *The Reading Lesson: The Threat of Mass Literacy in Nineteenth-Century British Fiction* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 199), Chapter One.

[21] Locke's involvement in radical politics is motivated not by great personal loss, or an overly sympathetic response to suffering, such as Barton's, but by his more sincere interest in literary authorship and a reaction to his thwarted desire for Lillian Winnstay.

Conclusion:

Victorian Activism and the Social and Political Life of Emotions

> We could have predicted beforehand that the great wave of reforming aspiration and activity which swept over our community in the second quarter of this century, and had not subsided in the third, though now it would seem to have spent its force, would infallibly make itself felt in every branch of literature as well as in the other incorporate members of the body politic. We could also have predicted that the novel, so quick to catch and reflect the passing moods of society, would in an especial degree feel the force of this influence.
>
> -- William Minto, *Fortnightly Review* (1878)

In a retrospective of Gaskell's fiction – and more widely, novels of the 1840s – William Minto, professor, novelist, and literary critic, traces the trajectory of mid-nineteenth-century novels to a specific literary work of the Regency period. Minto provides as his example Pierce Egan's *Life in London, or, The day and night scenes of Jerry Hawthorn, esq., and his elegant friend, Corinthian Tom, accompanied by Bob Logic, the Oxonian, in their rambles and sprees through the metropolis* (1821), a serialized and illustrated novel that, explains Minto, "gave a faithful picture" of individuals and groups in the urban space, groups "united by some common object of interest" (353-54). Minto claims that without the success of Egan's work, readers would not have had the benefit of mid-nineteenth-century novels such as those by Dickens and Gaskell, yet he aptly points out the unique contribution of the latter: mid-nineteenth-century novels concentrate on "humble" rather than fashionable life, "descriptive of the humours and the sorrows of the poor, and motivated by some reforming purpose" (355). This emergent perspective may be a humanizing one – a newfound interest in individuals

previously ignored as novelistic subjects – but this dissertation explores another consequence of this development of fiction: the necessity to address, explain, and represent anger that often comes about as a result of social and political inequities.

The metropolis, no longer just a scene for the carefree "rambles and sprees" of close friends, becomes a site of articulation for class divisions and political antagonisms, and as a consequence, enduring enmity. Minto acknowledges that the second and third quarter of the century – the period leading to and surrounding the reform acts – was one characterized by the "ominous sounds of deep-seated discontent" (355). This discontent may well be the result of divisions in the body politic that prompt large-scale social and political concerns over sociability and collectivity; Minto's characterization of the body politic as a "community" is telling, in this respect (355).

The major contention of this dissertation is that anger is necessary to the construction of these communities, as is the sharing and communication of feeling as a means of social, political, and moral approbation. These "communities of feeling" (Rosenwein 2) provide a means of articulating grievances, demanding action, and assigning values and legibility to particular feelings and their expression. In this sense, anger and discontent are not solely symptoms of the varying ideological and socio-economic divides in mid-nineteenth-century England and the urban space, but also points of articulation for these divisions and even, perchance, motivating forces to overcome them. They exist in tandem with the belief that Lane examines in his study of antisociability in Victorian literature and culture: that social progress will fix antipathies (35).

271

Part of the seemingly conflictive paradigm ascribed to anger in this period may well be a reflection of anger itself, and its vying definitions and classifications throughout the history of philosophy, sociology, and political theory. Despite Smith's categorization of anger as an "unsocial" feeling, anger can be a profoundly social, and socially-organizing, emotion – vital to exploring human experience and adaptation to a range of cultural forces and belief systems. It is both a basic and complex emotion: widely experienced and variously explained or justified. It resides in the self, as a form of personal assertion, and as an interpersonal force that dictates assessments of and relations with others. Richard C. Soloman explains emotions as "mode[s] of social action" (23), and in this respect, anger has a constructive function: it may generate solutions to interpersonal problems (Reiser 23), and when directed, rather than restrained, "its active exercise is necessary to eminence in any pursuit" (*EF* 54). Moreover, as an "escalated response," anger expresses a reaction to immoveable positions or attitudes in the body politic, after efforts of cooperation and coping with change fail or are considered futile (Averill 247). Martha Nussbaum makes this connection between anger and praxis in politics explicit: "extirpating anger would extirpate a major force for social justice and the defense of the oppressed" (394).

By way of these discussions of anger, I argue for its necessity in the representation of social and political "problems" or conflicts in the mid-nineteenth century: the rise of Chartism and working-class radicalism; fears over revolution, real or perceived, in the wake of demonstrations, mobs, and labour strikes; and the pervading sentiment that the nation has become, to evoke Carlyle, mechanical and unfeeling,

272

especially to the increasing numbers of the urban and labouring poor. Given that the period was concerned with the issue of discontent, and how to alleviate it, it is understandable that it was also preoccupied with sympathy – the communication of shared feeling – since as a moral sense in eighteenth-century moral philosophy, sympathy is intimately concerned with fellow-feeling with suffering. Among nineteenth-century authors and policy-makers, sympathy is a sentiment associated with the "condition[s] of adversity" (Himmelfarb, *Poverty and Compassion* 14). Yet, calls for sympathy in this period were matched with aspersions as to its efficacy and intentions, and I suggest that this has to do with its implications for action in the alleviation of suffering and its causes. Just like anger – as a reaction to injustice, oppression, or an obstacle – sympathy provides a salient bridge between feeling, awareness, and action – one that continues in more contemporary cognitive and psychological theories of emotion. Sympathy involves the awareness of a suffering that requires alleviation, an accompanied judgment as to the unfairness of the suffering, and, frequently, the desire to intervene and mitigate the suffering or its cause(s).

Both anger and sympathy find their expression in the social and political campaigns and discourses of the period. They have political roles insofar as the impetus and desire for the repression, controlled expression, or demarcation of both is part of a larger concern over conflicting interests in the body politic. In this respect, W. R. Greg's concern over the "undiscriminating sympathy" of Gaskell's first novel is apt (164), particularly given its varied reception. Sympathy may be effusive or ineffectual (as in the case of the weeping philosopher figure), or it may be dangerous in that it can motivate

273

strong feelings such as anger and resentment. To call sympathy "undiscriminating," as Greg does, is to imply also that there exists (or should exist) a means of controlling or directing sympathy to its proper ends or objects, and this raises questions as to who is privy to establishing such criteria. The texts explored in this dissertation variously attempt to provide such criteria, so as to make both anger and sympathy legible, and even necessary, to the Condition-of-England Question and Victorian activism.

The term "activism" is rarely used in Victorian discourses or in contemporary scholarship on Victorian literature and culture. Rather, the terms commonly used are "reform" – which signifies a divergent array of discourses, institutions, and interests that adhere to and recognize existing laws – and radicalism, which carries connotations of a kind of fervor or extreme akin to discourses of anger. Yet, in the case of working-class political movements, the term radicalism is apt, given that participants favour revolutionary change in government, society, and existing laws. Activism is a more contemporary term, ostensibly aligned with the practices and strategies allowed in a fully democratized society. Unlike the former terms, however, it can include a range of methods, ideologies and actions: both reformist and radical, judicial and artistic. Moreover, the word "activism" implies some form of action, whether ritualized or spontaneous – action that is tied to the pursuit of change or the overcoming of obstacles.

E. San Juan Jr., whose scholarship on Victorian activism provides the only sustained interrogation of the term as it applies to the nineteenth century, defines Victorian activism as "a fundamental courage and alertness of the heart and intellect" (583), a designation that implies an emotional and intellectual dimension. For San Juan

Jr., activist efforts are expressions of a "striving" – the possession of a "spirit" and will power that has the potential to reconcile "the conflicting interests and desires" of the age (583). This "striving" includes the collective campaigns of social, medical, and sanitary programs among the working and urban poor, but also personal improvement (or self-help). What connects these, he argues, is the effort for "union with the transcendent absolute over and against nature," a striving that goes beyond personal comfort (or gain) to "achieve a condition of complete expressiveness and inclusiveness, disclosing the essences of objects, capturing and reproducing the diversity and complexity of existence" (597). San Juan Jr.'s definition of activism may seem lofty – especially among those who question the likelihood of transcendence, either in religion or philosophy – but then again, activism is always, in some measure, a lofty enterprise. Certainly, activism is the deliberate organization of groups of people: the waving of placards; the gathering of individuals united by some shared feeling or purpose; the demand for change or action. Extending this definition, one could envision, as part of this endeavour, the invention of beliefs that shape the future, the creation of new sets of morals and social practices, and the definition of new ways, or routines, of living. In this respect, activism is as much about the politics of representation – the representation of these new beliefs, morals, practices, and routines – as it is about the pursuit of certain goals, however lofty. I suggest that anger, along with sympathy, are pivotal to this representation of "striving."

For these experiences and pursuits to be compelling, they must be integrated into some intelligible form (San Juan Jr. 589). Another main contention of this dissertation is that feeling becomes a means to ascribe to these manifestations of striving some

recognizable meaning, because emotions are organizing categories that make legible these experiences and pursuits. Given that my research explores a variety of discursive texts, I also suggest that language, and more specifically, narrative, are important to how writers (and readers) understand and recognize these manifestations.

The literary form of the novel, a central concern in my dissertation, attempts to explain and represent reactions to, and ideologies of, mid-nineteenth-century activism – Minto's "reforming aspiration" – within the realm of novelistic discourse and the organizational structures of plot, protagonists (and antagonists), and resolution (or lack thereof). Joseph Childers argues for the importance of the novel in mid-nineteenth century political and social life by suggesting that novels, and novelistic discourse, are a means of "reworking the world" (71). Novels participate in politics and constitute "the way politics represents itself to itself" (Childers 27). Within literary discourses – whether the condition-of-England novel, Carlyle's essays, or Chartist prose – anger and its representation are also emphatic, and thus rhetorical: variously providing urgency to the Condition-of-England Question, delineating anger from its variants or antitheses, creating a sense of righteous indignation, and addressing the reader directly in an effort to inspire a striving beyond the pages of the text. Within the context of class antagonisms, class identities (and identity politics), and varying and conflicting campaigns of humanitarian and radical reform, anger and sympathy, given a degree of social legitimacy, engender collectivity by creating the affective and emotional bonds between groups that are necessary for activism.

In *A History of the French Passions, 1848-1945* (1973 -1977), philosopher and historian Theodore Zeldin explores the history of France by examining not strictly historical events, but also the attitudes and feelings behind these events – a methodology that affirms the importance of feelings in the creation of collective identities and public opinions. For Zeldin, "the history of anger has yet to be written" (1120), a statement that affirms anger's complexity. This dissertation does not claim to have written such a history; instead, it follows a similar premise by asserting that an understanding of feelings, and their representation, is integral to the understanding of the political and cultural forces and forms of a distinct period.

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